Hubs and Business Skills Training for the Culture and Creative Sector - What's Working?

Final Report

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About WorkInCulture

WorkInCulture's Mission is to support the people who work in the cultural sector through life-long career development and business skills training. As a not-for-profit organization, WorkInCulture connects, creates and curates training and tools that help arts and culture professionals develop the business skills to match their creative talents.

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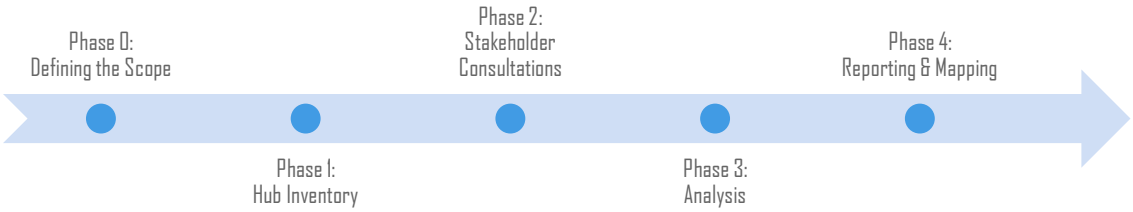
Introduction

Globally and in Ontario, "hubs" in the broadest sense of the term have emerged as both popular and promising mechanisms to tackle a wide range of sector-based and community-focused challenges. In general, hubs aim to provide a focal point for resource access and knowledge exchange. For this engagement, the team was most interested in the capacity of hubs in Ontario to support and strengthen business skills development (i.e., professional development, skills training and networking) for the arts, culture and creative sector.

The overall approach was designed to answer three main questions:

1. What is a "hub" and what role do hubs play in the sector's development?
2. What hubs currently exist to support the culture sector?
3. What are the characteristics of a successful hub?

The project team's research approach is shown in the visual below and covered in more detail in Appendix A at the end of this report.



Ontario's Hub Landscape

Defining the Hub

Arriving at a precise definition of what constitutes a hub, or even the agreed features, criteria and attributes of a hub has been an elusive goal for the technology sector as a whole and for this project. We included hubs in many forms from brick-and-mortar to virtual hubs, from formal and informal to permanent and temporary hubs. We included hubs that had formed within a community of interest or that united groups with overlapping or complementary interests and those that focused on a cluster of sector activity or that delivered services to a region or municipality. We also elected to include funders as hubs, however, post-secondary institutions and libraries, were excluded from the scope of this engagement. Ultimately, we recognize that this work is only a starting point and not a comprehensive inventory of all hubs that exist in the province.

Support for Hub Model

Interest in the hub model is evident locally in Toronto, at a provincial level and around the world. From a community perspective, the Ontario government is committed to "supporting and enabling the establishment and ongoing success of local community hubs in order to better serve Ontarians and their communities." However, the Province's reports and frameworks reports make little mention of the arts or the ways that the arts can complement or contribute to goals in the areas of employment, education and wellbeing. There are government agencies that support the success of hubs and hub networks, including the ONE network (or Ontario Network of Entrepreneurs) which connects some 90 entities around the province including the approximately 60 **Small Business Enterprise Centres**

(SBEC), the 18 **Regional Innovation Centres** (RIC) and various **Business Advisory Services**. These hubs support the arts and culture sector to varying degrees.

Hub Landscape in Ontario

We identified approximately 200 hubs offering business skills training or capacity building to some degree and with potential relevance to the arts, culture and creative sector. We are confident there are many, many more hubs, programs and services in the eco-system. However, we are presenting the findings of this report, which was selective (and representative) rather than comprehensive in its scope, as a foundation on which to build. Hub types included: **Arts Organizations**, **Incubators and Accelerators**, **Industry Associations**, **Virtual Hubs**, **Municipal Agencies**, **Conferences and/or Symposiums**, **Artist-Run Centres**, **Funders**, **Festivals** and **Informal Networks and/or Associations**.

Analyzing the hub database demonstrated the diversity of approaches to business skills training across the province but also common areas of focus. While a range of sub-sectors are served by hubs, all-purpose or general small business hubs were the most common (**22%**). The next largest share were hubs serving the visual arts and crafts community (**20%**). We posited that perhaps this was because of the multi-functional use of art galleries in many communities, as well as the tradition of artist-run centres across the province. Regardless of subsector served, the majority of hubs studied are actively engaging with culture, while a further **43%** had, in our esteem, the potential to adapt to the needs of cultural workers and arts organizations. The focus of training activities was fairly evenly split between marketing, leadership, finances and digital technology. The most common format for business skills training, both within and beyond the culture sector, were workshops and sessions, most of which were offered at no cost to participants.

Factors for Success

We drew on the stakeholder consultations to consider select approaches and processes that appear to be working well as far as hubs and business skills delivery in the arts, culture and creative sector. At a glance these factors or conditions were as follows:

A climate of culture: A community or municipality with cultural assets to build on tends to infuse its otherwise general business support services with an awareness of and openness to the needs of a cultural entrepreneur. The best example of this effect is perhaps seen through the SBECs. In communities with a "climate of culture" the network of experts and mentors the SBEC can draw on may include individuals with an artistic or creative background (be it a performing arts center or music festival, leading museum or heritage site etc.). This network can contribute to SBEC staff developing an understanding of the unique needs of the culture and creative community. This awareness or climate, as mentioned, can be derived through a range of sources such as local leadership or the presence of a cultural attraction such as a performing arts space or festival. In building the hub inventory, we observed that about **75%** of the approximately 60 SBEC's across Ontario operate in municipalities with either a culture plan or culture department.

A balanced approach to business skills delivery: Despite the broad definition of hub which guided this engagement, there were nonetheless many shared themes, practices and concerns across hubs from arts councils to industry associations, and SBEC's to artist-run-centers. One of these themes was the constant and almost iterative learning cycle as far as "find the appropriate balance" in the delivery of business skills training for one's members and/or community in areas such as:

1) Specialized vs. Diversified
2) Long-term vs. Ad hoc
3) Provide vs. Refer

4) Face-to-face vs. Online Resources

5) Paid vs. Unpaid

In practice, this balance tended to unfold as a basic cost-benefit analysis as far as a desire to be efficient or judicious with resources, work where the needs were most urgent and not duplicate the work of other hubs.

Accommodating career fluctuations and varied memberships: One challenge for hubs attempting to support the delivery of business skills training for the culture sector was the unpredictability of artist's careers. Creative industry entrepreneurs and companies may stand more of a chance of working through stages of development and growth, but for individual artists there is rarely a direct path from "emerging artist" to "established artist." This reality can make it more challenging for hubs such as industry or discipline specific associations to provide business skills training efficiently and successfully to their members. For some associations serving the culture sector, however, business skills training did occasionally converge around specific issues or training topics which allowed for direct delivery. If needs were too diverse or specialized, partnering with other organizations and experts was one way to be able to address them.

Hubs and Collaboration

Gaining a better understanding of the potential for collaboration amongst hubs – both culture-focused and non-culture focused – was a key objective of this engagement. Motivations for collaboration included the need to cross-fertilize ideas and experiences and embrace a sort of fluidity between hubs. Hub experts suggest that while many hubs thrive in their niches, hubs themselves also need to get connected to other hubs. Today there is a slow but growing trend towards increasing interconnectivity among hubs. This interconnectedness is now seen as a potential strength and advantage for the future of Ontario's hub eco-system and so is one motivator for collaboration. One related motivation for collaboration is the increasing pressure (and desire) for hubs based in Toronto to expand their regional outreach and impact.

Four factors which emerged as important to guide successful hub collaborations in the arts and culture sector included:

- Understanding each hub's strengths and challenges
- Presence of shared and/or complementary interests
- Organizational sustainability
- Knowledge share

Beyond collaboration, another area of interest for this engagement was understanding the potential for *non-culture-focused* hubs to adapt to, and welcome, a cultural audience. Understanding one's niche and one's criteria for entry, is extremely important to certain hubs, and particularly the RIC's. However, there is some suggestion that better collaboration amongst the technology sector resources and the arts and culture community could benefit stakeholders on all sides, although there are strict criteria to guide which creative and cultural companies those technology hubs will work with.

When stakeholders were challenged to consider how the hub model, or collaboration between hubs, might help arts and culture hubs better serve their audiences, two important needs emerged as almost "pre-conditions" for greater collaboration to take place. First, the need to encourage awareness and understanding of the eco-system. Second, the need for a central eco-system node to help support awareness building and understanding of each hub's strengths.

1. Introduction

Globally and in Ontario, "hubs" in the broadest sense of the term have emerged as both popular and promising mechanisms to tackle a wide range of sector-based and community-focused challenges. In general, hubs aim to provide a focal point for resource access and knowledge exchange. In some cases, hubs are considered to be in closer contact with - and more accessible to - communities than alternatives such as colleges, universities and private training services. For this engagement, the team was most interested in the capacity of hubs in Ontario to support and strengthen business skills development (i.e., professional development, skills training and networking) for the arts, culture and creative sector. In this section, we describe the study's objective, approach and methodology.

1.1 Objective

This project arose from the proposition that hubs, and the "hub model" merited further exploration for building the business skills capacity of the arts, culture and creative sector. Furthermore, WorkInCulture (WIC) had a hypothesis that, for these sectors, the hub model may be at its most effective when the *intersections among hubs* (e.g., partnerships, collaborations, and cross-sector alliances) are fostered and/or leveraged. In other words, though many hubs are not specifically oriented for a culture sector audience, when those that *are* work collaboratively - with each other or with non-culture hubs - value can be created for the sector.

Through this project, we are aiming to provide the arts, culture and creative sectors - from individual artists and entrepreneurs to not-for-profit to for profit organizations and the hubs themselves - with a better understanding of the current hub landscape as it relates to the provision of **business skills training**. An enhanced understanding could include, for example:

- **Culture and creative sector hubs -** Ways in which a stronger cross-sectoral delivery model and increased access to business skills development for the arts, culture and creative sector can be achieved - in other words, "what is working?" as far as hubs and business skills training;
- **Technology or business hubs -** How *non-cultural* hub resources and offerings can be better geared toward and made accessible to the culture sector – thereby improving accessibility and quality of experience for the arts and culture audience.

Ultimately, this report aims to highlight the intersections between existing hubs and/or clusters of activity, and point to strategies for increasing the impact of hubs in delivering business skills training to the arts, culture and creative sectors.

1.2 Approach

The overall approach was designed to answer three main questions:

1. **What is a "hub" and what role do hubs play in the sector's development?**
2. **What hubs currently exist to support the culture sector?**
3. **What are the characteristics of a successful hub?**

The project team developed a five-phase approach in order to deliver on the stated objectives and answer the above questions. These steps are introduced below and covered in more detail in Appendix A at the end of this report.

Figure 1 Project approach

Phase 0 - Defining the Scope: The first step of this project was to define and delineate the various forms and models of hubs and define what a "hub" is in the context of this project. For example, though very much hubs in their own right, post-secondary institutions and libraries, were excluded from the scope of this engagement.

***Phase 1 – Building the Hub Inventory*:** The next step was to assemble an inventory of existing hubs delivering business skills training and support to the arts and culture sector in Ontario, largely through secondary research. Building on Phase 0, the aim of this report (and this hub inventory) was to be representative of the landscape, rather than comprehensive in nature.

***Phase 2 – Stakeholder Consultations – Interviews and Roundtable*:** The team interviewed representatives from a diverse range of hub types (culture-focused and non-culture focused) and hub experts to understand more about the challenges and strengths of delivering business skills training to culture and creative sector audience. The project team also convened a roundtable with hub representatives to review the initial findings and further the discussion of issues and opportunities as far as delivering business skills training to their constituents.

Phase 3 & 4– Analysis, Reporting and Mapping: The team worked to synthesize all lines of research, to identify shared experiences and factors for success. Finally, the analysis was pulled together in this short report and the separate inventory map. The map was developed with Tableau's software and will be accessible online at workinculture.ca.

2. Ontario's Hub Landscape

In this section, we provide some context for Ontario's support of the hub model, particularly community hubs. We then turn to the analysis of our hub inventory to provide insights about the culture hub landscape in Ontario as it relates to the delivery of business skills training.

2.1 Defining the hub

Arriving at a precise definition of what constitutes a hub, or even the agreed features, criteria and attributes of a hub has been an elusive goal for the technology sector as a whole and indeed for this project. This challenge around definition has created some concerns globally regarding how one measures hub performance and compares activities and results from one hub to another. One research group, called *Entrepreneurial Spaces and Collectivities* – based at University of London – identified four features that "appear to characterize innovation hubs." According to their research synthesis, hubs:

- **Build** collaborative communities with entrepreneurial individuals at the center;
- **Attract** diverse members with heterogeneous knowledge;
- **Facilitate** creativity and collaboration in physical and digital space;
- **Localize** global entrepreneurial culture.[1]

With the above features in mind, we worked to characterize the types of hubs we would include for this engagement – recognizing that this work is only a starting point and not a comprehensive inventory. Acknowledging that hubs exist in many forms, we considered hubs that could be:

- "Brick-and-mortar" and/or place-based entities such as the Artscape Launchpad program in Toronto, or distributed across multiple locations (e.g., a meet-up or networking group that is hosted at different locations every month), or completely virtual – such as websites with training resources and recommendations;
- Formal or informal, permanent or linked to temporary or periodic events such as a festival (e.g., Hot Docs and TIFF) and conferences or meet-ups;
- Formed within a community of interest or that united groups with overlapping or complementary interests (e.g., Creative Mornings Toronto), and;
- Focused on a cluster of sector activity (e.g., Music and/or Visual Arts) or that delivered services to a region or municipality (e.g., Small Business Enterprise Centres).

Perhaps surprisingly, we elected to include funders as hubs because many have programs that support business skills development, organize and fund capacity-building and business skills events. As stated, however, post-secondary institutions and libraries, were excluded from the scope of this engagement.

2.2 Support for the hub model

While it is beyond the scope of this report to provide a global profile of the hub presence, it is important to recognize that interest in the hub model is evident locally in Toronto, at a provincial level and around the world from the UK to Silicon Valley and from Berlin to Boston. From a community

[1] Friederici, Nicolas and Tuukka Toivonen, "Time to Define What a "Hub" Really Is." *Stanford Social Innovation Review* (April 7, 2015). Retrieved from: https://ssir.org/articles/entry/time_to_define_what_a_hub_really_is

perspective, the Ontario government is committed to "supporting and enabling the establishment and ongoing success of local community hubs in order to better serve Ontarians and their communities."

In 2015, an advisory group led by Karen Pitre was tasked with reviewing provincial policies and best practices to develop a framework for community hubs in Ontario. The research process included an online survey, stakeholder consultations throughout the province and engagement with ministries. These activities identified challenges facing community hubs in the areas of planning, integrated service delivery and community infrastructure, which include issues of uncoordinated funding, conflicting policies and program silos spanning both municipal and provincial levels of government.

The resultant report, "Community Hubs in Ontario: A Strategic Framework and Action Plan," released in August, 2015 defines community hubs as: "a central access point for a range of needed health and social services, along with cultural, recreational, and green spaces to nourish community life" and emphasizes that each hub is unique to the community it serves. The plan also explains provincial interest in community hubs in terms of the need to keep pace with projected population growth and the needs of diverse communities. Moreover, existing community hubs demonstrate a high social return on investment, an attractive feature in the current fiscal environment.

One year later, the advisory group released a progress report updating the strategic framework and action plan. This document identifies three areas of progress:

1. The first area is making **better use of public properties**, which considers what to do in the case that the sale of surplus facilities such as schools are not in the public's best interest.
2. The second area is **removing barriers**, which range from providing capital funding to facilitating integrated service delivery.
3. The third area involves **strengthening local planning** and refers to coordination between different levels of government and alignment with provincial land use plans.

Taken together, these three areas confirm a focus on social services and highlight the potential of surplus schools across the province. The report emphasizes the ways in which public properties can be repurposed to help meet the objectives of the Ontario Poverty Reduction Strategy. For instance, several projects have already integrated affordable housing units and space for local agencies at former school sites.

Despite sustained study of community hubs, these reports make little mention of the arts. Arts groups could be among the nonprofit organizations who become tenants of new spaces yet most of the examples given are agencies serving vulnerable populations such as seniors and urban Indigenous communities. Moreover, although the documents acknowledge the potential for training and skills upgrading, they do not consider the needs that arts professionals may share with other segments of the workforce. In effect, although community hubs are a provincial priority, the conversation to date has focused on social outcomes largely without taking into account the ways that the arts can complement or contribute to goals in the areas of employment, education and wellbeing.

At a more sector-specific level, there are various government agencies that support the success of hubs and hub networks, including the ONE network (or Ontario Network of Entrepreneurs) which connects some 90 entities including:

- **Small Business Enterprise Centres** (SBEC): some 60 centres, often co-located with municipal services and which offer "Main Street" businesses a range of support services from one-on-one consultations on business planning to seminars on business skills;

- **Regional Innovation Centres** (RIC): there are 18 RIC's around the province that provide specialized assistance such as mentorship, customer development support and access to financing to innovation and technology-based firms;
- **Business Advisory Services**: provide export-oriented, high-growth or high-growth aspiration firms with personalized assistance including link to government and private-sector support programs.

As we will explore in more detail throughout this report, these hubs support the arts and culture sector to varying degrees.

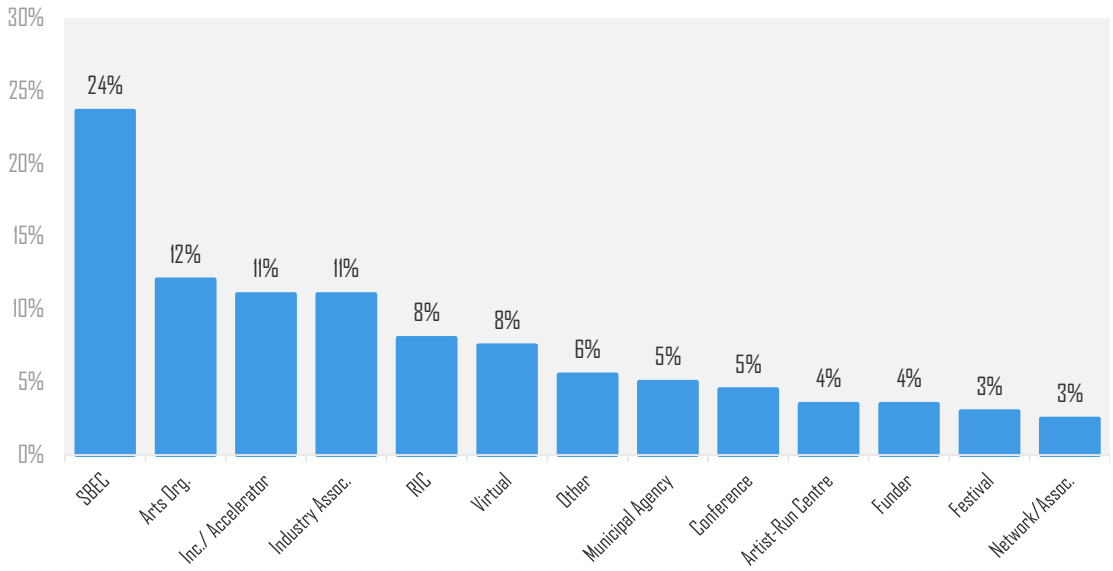
2.3 Hub inventory findings

As described earlier, this report takes as its starting point an extremely broad definition of "hub" and focuses on those hubs providing some manner of business skills training or capacity building support. For the purposes of this report, hubs exist in many forms from a physical space to a virtual resource, a permanent destination or a periodic event. One interviewee suggested that the essence of a hub is simply that it is a "connection place." With these parameters in mind, we identified approximately 200 hubs offering business skills training or capacity building to some degree and with potential relevance to the arts, culture and creative sector. We are confident there are many more hubs, programs and services in the eco-system, particularly when one factors in informal meet-up groups but the full list as covered by this report is available in Appendix B.

The first chart shows, broadly, the type of hub captured in the hub inventory (and accompanying map) and the share of the total inventory that hub type represents. In addition to the already introduced SBEC and RIC hubs, hub types include:

- **Arts Organizations** e.g., National Arts Centre; TETT Centre for Creativity and Learning
- **Incubators and Accelerators** e.g., DOC Accelerator, Toronto Fashion Incubator, The Theatre Centre;
- **Industry Associations** e.g., Craft Ontario, Association for Canadian Publishers, MusicOntario
- **Virtual Hubs** e.g., Ontario Network of Entrepreneurs, Cultural Human Resources Council
- **Municipal Agencies** e.g., Municipal culture centres, Chambers of Commerce
- **Conferences and/or Symposiums** e.g., Culture Workers Unwind, IWCC Salon Series
- **Artist-Run Centres** e.g., Niagara Artists Centre
- **Funders** e.g., Trillium, OMDC, Ontario Arts Council, Toronto Arts Foundation
- **Festivals** e.g., Hot Docs, TIFF
- **Informal Networks and/or Associations** e.g., BookNet Canada, SPARC

Figure 2 Type of hub

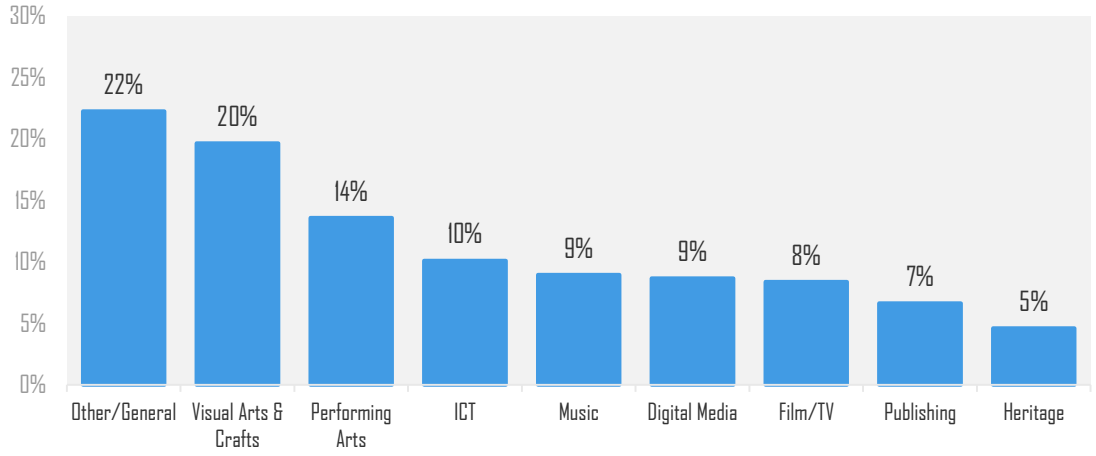


Source: WIC/Nordicity - Culture Hub Database (2016)

- Within the WIC/Nordicity Culture Hub Database, the largest share of hubs (**24%**) were SBECs. Ontario is home to 60 SBEC's but we chose to include specifically those 45 SBEC's in which the "host" community had either a culture plan or a culture department in place;
- Apart from the SBECs there is a wide range of hub-types in the eco-system, owing in part to the broad definition of hub guiding this assignment.

The figure below shows the approximate breakdown by sub-sector focus. Bear in mind that many hubs are open to multiple sectors and this classification was "check all that apply."

Figure 3 Sub-sector focus

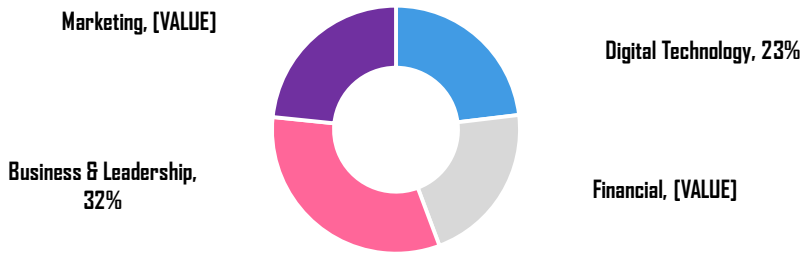


Source: WIC/Nordicity - Culture Hub Database (2016)
N.b. Check all that apply

- "Other" in this instance is such a large category (22%) because sector-agnostic, general business supports such as the SBEC's were placed in that category.
- The next largest sub-sector focus is, perhaps surprisingly, Visual Arts & Crafts at **20%**. We found two possible explanations for this share –
    - The long history of artist-run centres in the province, many of which date back more than 40 years. These established structures may have encouraged the emergence of visual arts-focused hubs before interest in the model spread to other disciplines.
    - Art galleries in cities and smaller communities occasionally functioned as mixed use spaces, and thus acted as community arts "hubs" e.g., hosting industry experts (in areas of marketing, finance, etc.) to speak to group of artists.
- One can also note that music is itself a performing art. If hubs supporting music were combined with those supporting performing arts, the "music and performing arts" focus would be larger category than visual arts and crafts (n.b., however because this question is a check all that apply, you cannot simply add the two together, because some hubs support *both* music and performing arts).

The figure below shows the focus of business skills training currently being delivered by hubs:

Figure 4 Business skill focus area

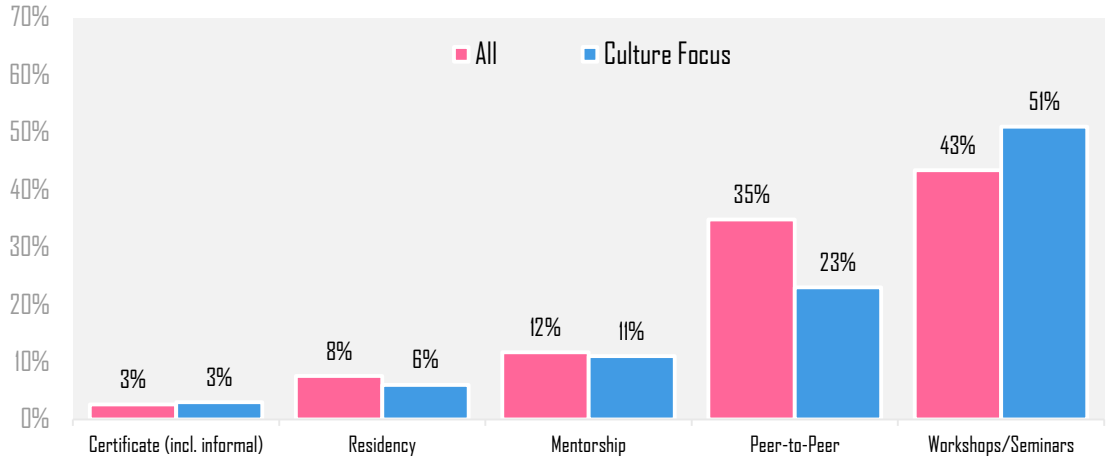


Source: WIC/Nordicity - Culture Hub Database (2016)

- As far as areas of emphasis, this question was again a "check all that apply" – and skill areas were split relatively evenly across the four categories with slightly more emphasis on Business and Leadership (**32%**) skills training than on Financial (**21%**) skills training.

The figure below shows the various types or methods of business skills training at hubs across the province. The blue bars showcase the results for all hubs in the database. The pink bars exclude the RICs.

Figure 5 Type of Business Skills Training

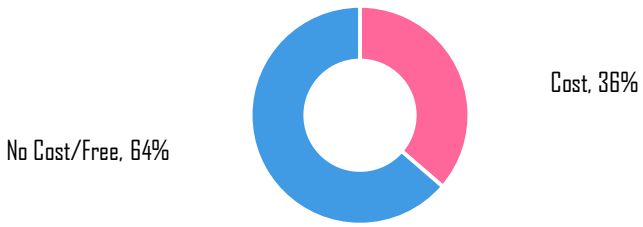


Source: WIC/Nordicity - Culture Hub Database (2016)

- At **43%** and **51%** respectively, the majority of business skills training offered were workshops and seminars, followed by Peer-to-Peer learning by which we mean entrepreneurs and artists advising each other (e.g., one partner is not necessarily more experienced as in a mentorship arrangement).
- What is most interesting is that when we exclude RIC's from the analysis, the shares of Peer-to-Peer Learning and "Residency" (in which a company or entrepreneur would be hosted at a physical hub) drop. Residencies may simply be more geared towards those technology companies that can scale (a topic we will discuss in more detail below) and not necessarily an easy fit for artists and arts organizations.
- The drop for mentorship, while very slight, may indicate that there is a greater challenge locating experienced arts professionals to act as teachers or mentors for others in the sector.

The figure below shows the share of business skills training offered for free or with an associated cost to participate:

Figure 6 Cost to participate

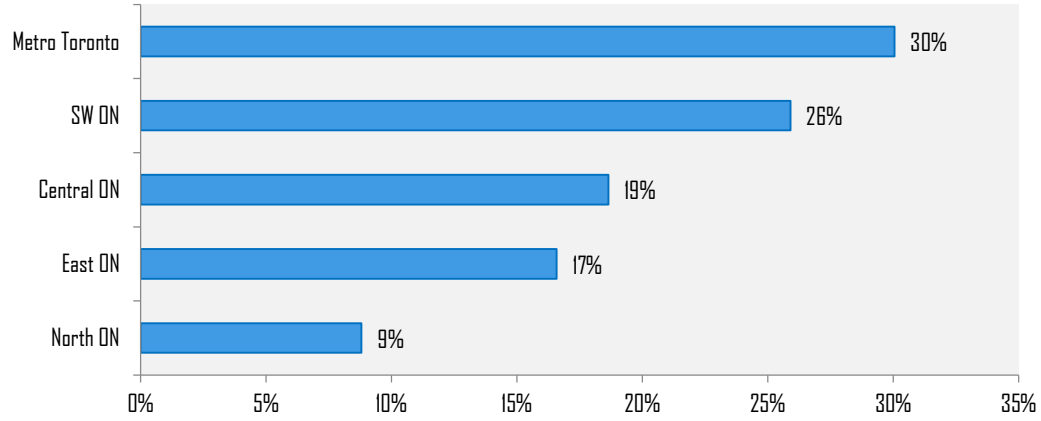


Source: WIC/Nordicity - Culture Hub Database (2016)

- From our analysis, the majority of business skills training – nearly two-thirds – was offered at no costs to participants. We will discuss the issue of paid training in more detail later in this report (page 20).

From a geographical perspective, as will be more evident with the online map, but also presented in the figure below, most (**56%**) of the hubs identified in the inventory were clustered in Southwestern Ontario, including Metro Toronto.

Figure 7 Hubs by location



Source: WIC/Nordicity - Culture Hub Database (2016)

- Clusters outside the GTA included Central Ontario (**19%**), Eastern Ontario **(17%**) and Northern Ontario (**9%**). Of course, that mirrors the major population centres, but does illustrate that each part of Ontario has its hub assets.
- Further, some hubs are Toronto-based but have other offices across Ontario. These hubs could only be listed with one location so, for example, the Ontario Arts Council shows up as a Toronto hub, though it has offices in Thunder Bay and Sudbury as well.

2.3.1 Summary of hub inventory findings

In effect, the hub database demonstrated the diversity of approaches to business skills training across the province but also common areas of focus. While a range of sub-sectors are served by hubs, we found all-purpose or general small business hubs to be the most common (**22%**) followed by visual arts and crafts, (**20%**), perhaps because of the multi-functional use of art galleries in many communities, as well as the tradition of artist-run centres across the province. Regardless of subsector served, the majority of hubs studied were actively engaging with culture, while a further **43%** demonstrated – in our estimation - the potential to adapt to the needs of cultural workers and arts organizations. The most common format for business skills training, both within and beyond the culture sector, were workshops and sessions, most of which were offered at no cost to participants. The focus of training activities was fairly evenly split between marketing, leadership, finances and digital technology.

This inventory has captured a snapshot of the hub eco-system for the arts and culture sector, but is mainly a starting point or foundation to build on. For example, training provided at post-secondary institutions, by unions and private training operations was largely excluded from this research. While this inventory *identifies* the business skills training hubs, eventually, one could explore how and whether the training offered a) *complements* other training and b) *matches* the needs of the culture and creative sector.

3. Factors for Success

In this section, we draw on the stakeholder consultations to consider select approaches and processes which appear to be working well as far as hubs and business skills delivery in the arts, culture and creative sector.

3.1 A climate of culture

Municipalities tend to build on the assets and strengths they have within their communities – be that local talent, leadership, attractions, resources, industries or some combination of them all. Perhaps obviously, a community or municipality with cultural assets to build on tends to infuse its otherwise general business support services with an awareness of and openness to the needs of a cultural entrepreneur. Conversely, in municipalities that lack access to a set of experienced and successful artists or arts organizations and institutions, it can be a challenge to build lasting arts and culture community support – especially outside of Toronto.

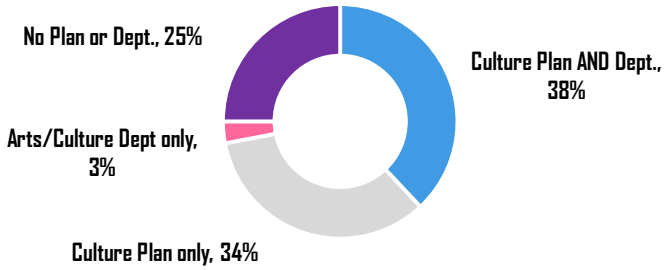
The best example of this effect is perhaps seen through the SBECs. In communities with a "climate of culture" the network of experts and mentors the SBEC can draw on may include individuals with an artistic or creative background (be it a performing arts center or music festival, leading museum or heritage site etc.). This network can contribute to SBEC staff developing an understanding of the unique needs of the culture and creative community.

Denise Sherritt, Manager of The Business Centre in Nipissing-Parry Sound, explained, "Our clients tend to be small businesses, occasionally home-based and/or just starting out. Our arts and culture clients fit right in because they are definitely running businesses - there's no question. As we develop a business plan, the initial revenue we're talking about pursuing might come from a grant, rather than sales – sure. But artists will still need to apportion that revenue appropriately and take into account their expenses. If you treat it like a business, I don't see any difference."

What is interesting in this quote is that Ms. Sherritt is familiar enough with the arts and culture community to understand the role of grants and grant applications. It may be that her SBEC is simply in tune with the needs of a significant share of the Nipissing-Parry Sound community (home to cultural attractions such as *Festival of the Sound* and *Art in the Park*) and/or that she has acquired a level of expertise that allows it to adapt tools and training for the arts entrepreneur without much of a challenge. This illustration indicates that even hubs such as SBECs that are not overtly or specifically geared towards an arts and culture audience can be open and inviting to artists and cultural entrepreneurs.

This awareness or climate, as mentioned, can be derived through a range of sources such as local leadership or the presence of a cultural attraction such as a performing arts space or festival. In building the hub inventory, we observed that about **75%** of the approximately 60 SBEC's across Ontario operate in municipalities with either a culture plan or culture department. Overall, the breakdown was as follows:

Figure 8 Presence of Culture Plan/Arts and Culture Department



Source: WIC/Nordicity - Culture Hub Database (2016)

- An arts and culture department (or director, committee or advisory group) *and* an active or current culture plan (**~38%**);
- At *least* a culture plan (**~34%**) – occasionally in partnership with the broader region, but nonetheless present;
- A culture department (or director, committee or advisory group) but no culture plan (**~3%**).

These resources and infrastructure may support municipalities and economic development departments as they develop a heightened awareness of the business skills and training needs of their local culture community. There is no suggestion that artists and creative industry entrepreneurs should only seek out SBEC in select communities. Neither are we suggesting that SBEC's in "non-culture-focused" communities cannot serve the needs of artists. Simply put, when an SBEC *is* located in a community with a climate of culture, there may be the greatest potential for a successful engagement with the culture and creative sector audience.

The Business of Culture

"The way I think of it is, what you do is an art, what you do *with your art* is business. You know your art, you know how you want to develop it… but do you know who your customer is? and how you're going to reach them? Our support can help provide artists with more of an edge for success. In that way, everything we do is relevant to artists."

Denise Sherritt, Manager – The Business Centre – Nipissing – Parry Sound

3.2 A balanced approach to business skills delivery

Despite the broad definition of hub which guided this engagement, there were nonetheless many shared themes, practices and concerns across hubs from arts councils to industry associations, and SBEC's to artist-run-centers. One of these themes was the constant and almost iterative learning cycle as far as "find the appropriate balance" in the delivery of business skills training for one's members and/or community. In practice, this balance tended to unfold as a basic cost-benefit analysis as far as a desire to be efficient or judicious with resources, work where the needs were most urgent and not duplicate the work of other hubs. At the root, however, the motivation for hubs to "find the balance" was to support the best possible outcome for the entrepreneur or artist at hand. This balance was sought out in several areas including:

1) **Specialized vs. Diversified**
2) **Long-term vs. Ad hoc**
3) **Provide vs. Refer**
4) **Face-to-face vs. Online Resources**
5) **Paid vs. Unpaid**

Once can consider these dynamics on a sort of continuum on which each hub must navigate or decide where they fit at a given time, or for a given program. Below we describe each continuum in more detail as far as hubs and business skills training.

1. Specialized vs. Diversified

We discuss this concept in more detail later in the report (page 21), but, during consultations, many hubs described the pressures of being pulled to provide "everything for everyone." Whether because of their resources and expertise, access to a desirable network, influence, or possibly facilities such as a built space, there can be a tendency to look to hubs to provide a vast array of services to a wide audience. In fact, what works, from the perspective of hubs, is a keen understanding of one's own mandate and strengths, be that advocacy for members or a certain type of business skills training.

That being said, many hubs were nonetheless experimenting with diversification, attempting to maximize the potential of their resources and expertise by expanding into new areas. For each hub, it seems there is a constant balance to be found about assessing new opportunities and being open to experimentation, while simultaneously fulfilling mandates and leveraging core strengths.

Elizabeth Radshaw, from Hot Docs, explained that business skills are "essential at all levels and stages of filmmaking." She emphasized that for a content creator, whether emerging or established, the key skills are discoverability and curation, which are themselves constantly evolving. As a result, Hot Docs – itself an annual film festival – has expanded its scope and begun to help filmmakers understand the market in which they are making products. Hot Docs has expanded to conducting audience research, offering business skills training, networking opportunities and support to the broader not-for-profit and culture community year-round.

In a similar vein, as mentioned earlier in the report, art galleries in cities and smaller communities take advantage of their facilities and otherwise "idle time" to occasionally function as mixed use spaces. In this way, they are diversifying beyond what might be their core mandate and acting as community arts "hubs." On occasion, even local bookstores or record stores can become multi-use spaces, hosting networking events or information sessions that gathers the culture and creative community around a single topic such as marketing.

2. Long-term vs. Ad-hoc

For some hubs, the success of delivering business skills training could not be measured in any depth after a one-off module or program. In fact, a learning program's impact could take some years to assess. For one organization with a niche business skills focus this was particularly true in terms of offering their training programs in different geographic areas and outside of Toronto. For context, one should note that the organization services primarily small to mid-sized organizations with, what were described as "tiny budgets." This organization began to see evidence of meaningful change and learning in communities after about "two years" of running a given program. Prior to then, learning was more fleeting and did not seem to "stick." While that type of long-term involvement is not always realistic or feasible given limited resources, it can have positive effects in the eco-system and could possibly be explored as a factor for success in certain skill areas.

Of course, responsive and timely, ad-hoc learning opportunities have their own strengths and can be very attractive to time-starved artists and creative entrepreneurs. A lower commitment threshold can occasionally encourage a wider audience to test out a given event or session. For one hub in business skills training, their offering was described as, "timely, short, face to face opportunities to interact." That being said, with so much activity in some seasons, it can be a challenge for those hubs offering the training to devote the appropriate resources to promoting a one-off event and attracting a sizeable audience.

For one hub, whether training is long term or à-la-carte, the pressure is on the participant to invest themselves fully, saying, "When we run a workshop I don't expect everyone to keep up, don't expect everyone to be successful. People get out what they put in." This "tough love" approach is communicated at the outset and seems to contribute to a strong level of commitment on the part of participants.

3. **Provide vs. Refer**

For many hubs, balance was also sought as far as whether to provide business skills training themselves or whether to refer to another resource or entity that may be a "better fit." Again, for hubs under pressure to provide support to anyone and everyone, this equation may result more often in a "provide" outcome than "refer." The ability to refer successfully is rather contingent on having access and awareness of what activities are taking place in the region or locally, what services are available, and where the highest quality online resources can be found.

For the RICs, the decision around whether to provide or refer, is more connected with their entry criteria. RIC's have very clear goals and mandates around performance for which they will be evaluated. As a result, they tend to have equally specific criteria as far as what companies and entrepreneurs they will accept into their system – for example, the ability or potential to scale. We will return to this thought later in the report in dimensions of adaptability (page 23). Often RIC's will refer arts and culture entrepreneurs that lack scalability to the local SBEC.

Emily Trottier from the Great Sudbury Development Corporation sees her role largely as a connector between arts professionals and relevant services. Ms. Trottier does not have the resources to meet all the needs expressed by members of the cultural community but she is happy to introduce local individuals and arts organizations to other groups that have expertise and experience in areas ranging from marketing and promotions to bookkeeping. Although creating connections is an important and even vital function of hubs, consultations also suggested that many existing hubs are poorly supported in this regard and struggle to keep up with opportunities available in the culture sector, thereby limiting business skills training for community members.

4. **Face-to-Face vs. Online Resources**

A constant challenge for hubs delivering business skills training is finding the balance between leveraging the best of online resources - be they webinars, how-to's, template and top tips – and face-to-face training (e.g., mentoring, events, peer-to-peer support). Online support has many benefits, including the potential to extend a hub's geographical reach and enable a wider audience to access hub resources. The hubs in our consultation tended to agree that face-to-face business skills training, overall, is more desired and leads to stronger outcomes. However, for many organizations, including arts councils, improving online presence and performance is a major strategic goal for the coming period. Online presence and resources were seen as the main way to maximize scarce resources and still fulfill services to members and constituents.

Extending a hub's reach online

"Our current focus is the website, where we want to create better profiles of our artists and feature local arts events. The challenge, once it is up, is to maintain it, especially if we put too much time-sensitive material on it.

We also want to use the website to contain information re: all relevant professional development opportunities in the region (i.e. those that are artist-focused as well as those that are relevant without being specifically targeted to artists). We want to use the website as a repository of online professional development tools that we feel are excellent, e.g. Cultural Human Resource Council's training materials. We don't want to reinvent the wheel by creating new tools, and we want to leverage scarce resources across arts and heritage organizations in the area to share content and initiatives. Ideally, the website would also include a skills bank."

Municipal Arts Council

Online training efforts are not without their challenges of course. That is true for smaller arts organizations and for well-resourced hubs such as the RICs. As one RIC representative observed, "Training is expensive and resource intensive. We are trying to put more of our training online but this is limited because entrepreneurs want to meet and get together. They want to share stories with people who lie awake thinking of the same things they do." For one SBEC, the decision criteria between online and face-to-face came down to stage of development or maturity, "I think that face-to-face is vital if you are a novice at something. And it helps someone become part of a community. Once you become more experienced and want to go deeper into a topic, that is when online can be very beneficial." This principle was not true for all hubs, in fact for some the reverse seemed to be true, but it shows how hubs are navigating for themselves the balance of online vs. face-to-face to deliver the best training for their members and constituents.

"Wine Down," Meet-Up

We recently adopted "wine down" Friday afternoons from the co-working movement. It's open to any partners, you can bring a friend and it's a fantastic way for people to get to know each other and learn about what else is going on in the building.

Shannon Brown, The Tett

5. Paid vs. Unpaid Training

The question of whether to charge for business skills training is a perennial one. Indeed, our consultations described a range of approaches and factors which determine whether to charge for training. Earlier we observed that roughly two-thirds of training (**64%**) captured in the hub inventory was provided for free while the remaining third (**36%)** had some manner of cost associated, however nominal. For both culture-focused and broader hub consultations, the consensus seemed to be that "Free is best." Indeed, some hubs explained that paid was just not a feasible model for their members and would mean sacrificing potential uptake and risk losing sight of the ultimate goal.

However, at least one major hub agreed that, while free is certainly best, "paid training can get results" explaining that their hub charged for access to training in order to create commitment amongst

participants. One of the ways suggested to evaluate whether to charge or offer free training was to consider the company's stage of development. Some hubs suggesting that at the early stages, free programming may be best and then as the training investment becomes more sophisticated and niche, one may find that there is more willingness to pay on the part of participants. So, while the overall trend was towards free, many hubs offer a mix of paid and unpaid programming, even if the payment in question is rather nominal.

3.3 Accommodating career fluctuations and varied memberships

One challenge for hubs attempting to support the delivery of business skills training for the culture sector can be the unpredictability of artist's careers. Creative industry entrepreneurs and companies may stand more of a chance of working through stages of development and growth, but for individual artists there is rarely a direct path from "emerging artist" to "established artist." Careers may ebb and flow and sustainability is often elusive. This reality can make it more challenging for hubs such as industry associations to provide business skills training efficiently and successfully to their members.

This challenge of "variety," can also be true for industry associations or hubs who primarily serve companies/organizations. One association described serving a membership that ranged from what were described as "super-tanker" organizations at the one end – i.e., national institutions with enormous (by comparison) resources, staff/employment, audience reach etc. but which may be few in number. At the other end of this organization's membership scale, were a larger number of much smaller, even micro-sized organizations with tiny staff and more niche audiences. In this director's experience, there was rarely a point of convergence as far as the business skills needs of the full swath of organizations, and yet the association was a hub at the center, working to support them all.

For some industry associations serving the culture sector, however, business skills training did occasionally converge around specific issues or training topics. One association described a membership of primarily companies that tended to struggle for at least their first five years – constantly pitching concepts and scrambling to assemble the necessary funds to go forward with a given project. During this period, a company's business training and support needs are somewhat wide-ranging or may be focused on the core business and management skills required to survive. Once a company entered a period of growth, however, more targeted needs may emerge. This association recognized a growing demand for support with export development skills and training and had partnered with other hubs – including funders like the OMDC – to develop and deliver appropriate guidance and training in this regard.

4. Hubs and Collaboration

Gaining a better understanding of the potential for collaboration amongst hubs – both culture-focused and non-culture focused – was a key objective of this engagement. The main aspects of collaboration covered included the motivations for collaboration as well as selected factors for successful collaboration.

4.1 Motivations for collaboration

One might ask why hubs, which can tend to be somewhat self-contained, specialized entities designed more or less to deliver supports independently, would *need* to collaborate with other hubs – especially cross-sectorally. One leading expert in hubs and cluster development, Valerie Fox of The Pivotal Point (and former Executive Director of Ryerson's Digital Media Zone), explained that the same way that many physical hubs build in "collision spaces" for companies and entrepreneurs to cross paths and share expertise, so too does the network of hubs need "collision spaces" to cross-fertilize ideas and experiences. She describes that achieving a sort of fluidity between hubs is crucial for knowledge share.

While many hubs thrive in their niches, Fox explains that, "whether you are an artist or a company in a hub for animation, or whether you *are that animation hub* - you also need to be getting connected and exposed to other hubs that are more broad-based." To Fox, as a hub, "saying yes" to new opportunities, including collaboration is crucial. She says, "it is important for hubs to know their brand, know their space - but also to have blurry edges. Say yes to everything and anything as long as you can monitor your resources appropriately."

While in the past, for example, Toronto especially and Ontario generally, may have been more fractured (and indeed competitive in a possessive sense) as an eco-system of hubs, there is a slow but growing trend towards increasing interconnectivity among hubs. This interconnectedness is now seen as a potential strength and advantage for the future of Ontario's hub eco-system and so is one motivator for collaboration (alongside the various resource/scarcity issues described earlier).

One related motivation for collaboration between hubs is the increasing pressure (and desire) for hubs based in Toronto to expand their regional outreach and impact. For instance, Ms. Trottier of the Greater Sudbury Development Corporation spoke positively of the activities she has participated in when WIC and other organizations visit Sudbury to offer regional programming. As evident in the eco-system figure on page 15, much of the hub activity is focused on the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) and certainly the Southwestern Ontario.

Shared Interests

We've realized that sometimes informal partnerships are the most successful because they are not about money, they are about shared interests.

Elizabeth Radshaw, Hot Docs

4.2 Factors for successful hub collaborations

Four factors which emerged as important to guide successful hub collaborations in the arts and culture sector included:

- **Understanding each hub's strengths and challenges:** This awareness and understanding may require a degree of trust and transparency between hubs which is not always easy to gain

ahead of first attempts at collaborating. In most of the successful collaborations described during consultations, each hub had a clear understanding of the strengths and value each partner brought to the initiative and how their roles and responsibilities would flow from those strengths.

- **Presence of shared and/or complementary interests:** Although it may seem counter-intuitive given scarce resources, particularly in the culture sector, we heard during consultations that some of the most successful collaborations were based on common interests and goals with little other formality in place (e.g., funding agreements and so on). For instance, Elizabeth Radshaw at Hot Docs gave examples of how many of the organization's most enduring partnerships were based on a shared commitment to a goal or idea rather than on financial rewards for either partner.
- **Organizational sustainability:** While one-off collaborations and partnerships certainly have their place and their successes, interviewees and roundtable attendees agreed that a certain degree of sustainability or longevity was desirable when embarking on new collaborations. Collaborating with a hub that has some degree of secured funding and a track record was seen as more desirable than attempting to monitor and approach informal meet-up or one-off event series for collaborations.
- **Knowledge share:** Hubs were unanimous in their hunger for more information about what was working, what programs or models had been successful and so on. The ability to share knowledge and iterate on the lessons learned in like-minded regions and/or settings was seen as a strong factor in successful collaborations.

Knowledge Share and the Artpreneur Program

Some ten years ago, stakeholders in York Region recommended that the SBEC take on a creative economy focus. Partially in response to that recommendation, alongside other factors, York Region Arts Council developed and ran a successful program called "Artpreneur." Among other activities, the program adapted the traditional business skills material from the SBEC to gear it for a cultural audience. Artpreneur was developed and delivered in partnership with the municipal arts council, the SBECs, RICs and York University and so in itself represents a successful hub collaboration. Beyond that first step, however, York Region Arts Council has successfully exported the program to other communities such as Barrie, Simcoe and Collingwood. As such, there was no need for those communities to reinvent the program from scratch. Similarly, with each new setting, the material developed and grew even stronger.

4.3 Dimensions of adaptability

Beyond collaboration, another area of interest for this engagement was understanding the potential for *non-culture-focused* hubs to adapt to, and welcome, a cultural audience. As we saw earlier, understanding one's niche and one's criteria for entry, is extremely important to certain hubs, and particularly the RIC's. However, there is some suggestion that better collaboration amongst the technology sector resources and the arts and culture community could benefit stakeholders on all sides.

The Creative Hub

"The ideal hub for artists would actually be a hub for "creatives", not just artists; it could include other creative sector entrepreneurs such as graphic artists and advertising or marketing specialists and so on. This approach would give artists a better network of contacts outside their specific discipline, and trigger new opportunities to develop audiences, promote work and better use technology."

Peter Honeywell, Ottawa Arts Council

A spring 2016 post on the Communitech blog similarly explored the need to "build stronger connections between the arts and tech communities." The author interviewed visual artist Jennifer Gough who believed there was a lack of support between the tech and arts community in Kitchener-Waterloo and explained that the problem is not with one or the other community:

> "There is work to be done on both sides," Gough said. "I believe we need to foster the connection between artists and tech companies. Create more opportunity for collaboration and bridge the gap. Open lines of contact and communication and provide a starting point for those relationships to grow and conversations to happen." To that end, she suggested tech companies adopt artist-in-residence programs, not simply to support artists, but as a way to improve their businesses. [2]

While the article discussed the ability of technology companies to support the arts by purchasing art, it also raised the trend of looking at STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) as *STEAM* – including A for arts or artists. But even when one acknowledges the importance of arts, design and the creative industries to innovation and technology - how realistic is it to expect RIC's and others to welcome the arts and culture community? The answer seems to depend on the willingness of potential participants to adapt to the criteria of the RICs. In short, the onus is on the artist to adapt.

For example, "fit" is a huge success factor for the RICs. From our discussions, it seemed clear that RIC's cannot be expected to experiment or dilute their niche by "opening up" their doors to arts and culture-focused entrepreneurs. Serving the arts and culture community is simply out of scope. As one RIC representative explained, resources must be managed diligently and if a creative is not going to consider their concept scalable, they will only have very limited access to the team and RIC network.

And yet, even within this steady focus, there were exceptions to the criteria. One RIC, while explaining its focus on fit and scalable technologies also mentioned that their portfolio included writers and book publishers, graphic artists, musicians and even sculptors. The crucial differentiator was that these artist entrepreneurs and companies were looking at some sort of *scalable innovation* within their craft. The publishers had a unique idea related to technology and self-publishing. The graphic artists and sculptors were each pursuing new developments pushing the boundaries of 3D printing. Finally, the musicians were developing a new service delivery model for one of their products.

[2] Anthony Reinhart – May 19, 2016 - http://news.communitech.ca/columns/on-arts-and-technology-and-the-need-for-leadership

For these artist entrepreneurs, the fit was there and the RICs were the appropriate venue to seek the support and business skills training and/or advice they required to grow. As well, those RIC supports were not likely tailored or adapted for arts and culture clientele (beyond the bespoke type of support any client would receive). More often, the RICs asks clients to "think differently about their concepts and about their business" – not the reverse.

One RIC representative did, however, describe a desire to forge greater connections with the cultural community and may look to build some capacity or knowledge share with the culture community over its next five-year strategic period. This work would be alongside efforts to expand connections with First Nations communities, youth and embrace more remote and regional learning. From the local film industry (and film festivals), art gallery and theatre, this RIC understands that becoming more connected with the local assets could be win-win situation as far as the RIC's community impact and growth. Adapting for the arts and culture audience in a more deliberate fashion, however, did not seem to be a likely path or outcome.

Gaining Access to RIC Supports

"If you're building a tech company then we support you. In fact, if you're building a company then we are agnostic as far as industry or sector. Your company is creating a platform to play live music? Excellent. The arts and culture companies that are going to benefit from RICs are the ones building platforms that could scale and that are looking for venture capital. We know about innovation. We can provide the mentorship and connections to funding. It's just that scale doesn't tend to be the most pressing issue for arts and culture organizations – though it may be more relevant to the creative industries. Ultimately, if you are an entrepreneur building a scalable business, we support you."

RIC Representative

5. Next Steps and Considerations

This report attempts to capture and explore the current landscape of hubs for the arts and culture sector including "what is working?" as far as hubs and business skills training and a look at how *non-cultural* hubs might relate to that eco-system. When stakeholders were challenged to consider how the hub model, or collaboration between hubs, might help arts and culture hubs better serve their audiences, two important needs emerged as almost "pre-conditions" for greater collaboration to take place.

5.1 Encourage awareness and understanding of the eco-system

Stakeholders expressed a need for greater awareness-building amongst hubs in the eco-system, including what hubs exist, focus areas and core audience. Before understanding how hubs can work together, each hub needs a stronger understanding of other, relevant hubs and the baseline of activities being offered. As one stakeholder explained, right now, "people don't even know each other. How can we avoid duplication if don't understand what we are doing and how we overlap?"

Fear of duplicating skills training activities or devoting resources to areas that were not proven to be in high demand was a major concern for culture sector stakeholders – perhaps another key differentiator from the technology industry landscape. One industry association director commented, "Hubs and collaboration are great in theory but how does that play out in an environment of scarce resources? There are already so many creative hubs. We see lots of duplication in different sectors. This duplication makes hubs less distinct and certainly makes it more difficult to harness new money. Competition is intense. How do we intersect and collaborate in a way that does not compete or dilute?" The need for greater awareness and understanding also extended to the very definition of training and skills needs. One stakeholder suggested that transferability and knowledge share between hubs would be enhanced if there was consensus around an explicit definition of training, curricula, needs and priorities.

One hub expert cautioned that, despite fears of duplication and overlap, it may be too soon to describe the landscape as having arrived at "peak hub" (that is to say having reached a sort of maximum hub capacity). Until there was widespread awareness of the entire eco-system, and the activities and impacts of each hub, fears around having "maxed out" were unfounded.

5.2 A central node

One of the ways we began to think about the arts and culture eco-system in Ontario, was that – in a sense – rather than hundreds of hubs, we could look at it as a network of nodes – each connected to other nodes in various capacities. What became clear during consultations was that each of these hubs or nodes is resource-starved and under pressure to do more with less. Stronger collaboration was perceived to be a positive step, but one for which no single node currently had an ability to lead.

A central node could also develop or lead the development of franchise or asset sharing model with the full hub network. Assets could include toolkits, programs and services based on best practices and which are tailored for the needs of the culture and creative sectors. The role of the central node would range from simply connecting nodes to existing top quality resources and activities of interest, monitoring the need for new resources, programs and services within the eco-system, delivering the necessary training, sharing relevant news and research and eventually training the local trainers to develop capacity among the distributed network. One intended benefit would be for hubs across Ontario to integrate culture and creative sector materials into their business training activities, but with little additional cost or effort, owing to the efficiency gained through the central node.

As far as awareness-building, the cross-sectoral roundtable in July was itself a unique moment that gathered a group together with many shared interests and challenges and that stand to learn a great deal from one another, but that rarely have a chance to meet face-to-face. In this context of growing momentum and interest, the possibility of looking for a central or convening node arose. WIC suggested that it could review how such activities would align with its own mandate and strategic plans – with a view to, at minimum, bringing the participants of the roundtable back together, along with others, to continue exploring possible areas for collaboration and priority needs.

The first step before collaboration, as mentioned above, would be to work to build awareness of the network or eco-system, which is one of the intended goals of this report and the accompanying map.

5.3 Summary of findings

While typically thought of as part of the technology sector, **hubs play an increasingly vital role in building the capacity of the culture and creative sectors**. The question of hub adaptability, that is to say, how non-culture-focused hubs might begin to integrate a cultural audience yielded a range of results. We found that general business hubs, such as the SEBC's, based in communities with strong cultural assets, were often well-versed in the unique needs of artists and creatives seeking their services. **For the technology-focused RIC's, however, the onus of adaptability lies with the participants, not the hub itself**. Clear criteria, such as scalability, tends to dictate whether one can access a RIC's programs and services – it is not simply a matter of opening the door to a new sector. Nonetheless, **adaptability in general was attractive to hubs as each described working with limited resources**. Hubs reported an almost constant pressure to find a balanced approach to delivering business skills training. From leveraging the best online vs. face-to-face training, providing a mix of paid vs. free training, selecting between highly specialized or more diversified training areas, long-terms vs. ad-hoc modules and even whether to provide training themselves or refer to another hub, hubs were constantly assessing their own capacity and the needs of their communities to offer relevant and timely training.

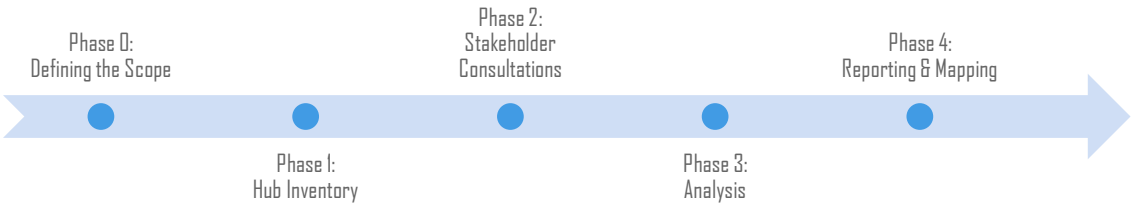
Consultations confirmed the **need for stronger intersections between existing hubs, beginning with greater awareness of the eco-system**. Without awareness of each other's strengths and activities, the potential to collaborate and even share knowledge was predicted to be limited. **In a climate of limited funding, hubs expressed concerns around duplication of activities**.

As far as next steps, **the notion of awareness-building was deemed to be a pre-condition to contemplating or committing to future partnerships and collaborations**. It was suggested that because no one hub would have the resources to lead such efforts, **a central node with an overall understanding of the landscape would be better placed in the role of convener.** This report, and indeed the stakeholder consultation roundtable itself, were seen to be important first steps towards awareness building and eco-system understanding and there was certainly an appetite to build on its efforts.

Appendix A – Approach and Methodology

The project team developed a five-phase approach to deliver on the stated objectives and answer the above questions.

Figure 9 Project approach



Phase 0 - Defining the Scope

The first step of this project was to define and delineate the various forms and models of hubs and define what a "hub" is in the context of this project. It was acknowledged that hubs exist in many forms. They can be "brick-and-mortar" or distributed across multiple locations; they can be completely virtual; they can form within a community of interest or bring together groups with overlapping or complementary interests; they can be formal or informal; they can arise from a cluster of industry activity in a region or municipality; and, they can be permanent or linked to a temporary or periodic event such as a festival or conference.

However, though very much hubs in their own right, post-secondary institutions and libraries, were excluded from the scope of this engagement.

Phase 1 – Building the Hub Inventory

The next step was to assemble an inventory of existing hubs delivering business skills training and support to the arts and culture sector in Ontario. The inventory was populated largely through secondary research and is not intended to be comprehensive. The inventory was the foundation for the development of a map of business training hubs in Ontario and is important to understanding the current hub landscape. If the map is perceived to be useful to WorkInCulture's core stakeholders, the map could be updated on an ongoing basis with new hubs – see Appendix B for hub inventory.

Phase 2 – Stakeholder Consultations - Interviews

The research team worked with WorkInCulture to identify eight culture-focused and non-culture focused hubs to consult for an interview. The goal was to understand more about the challenges of delivering business skills training to an arts, culture and creative audience as well as what seemed to be working well. The team interviewed representatives from a diverse range of hub types and other hub experts including:

Table 1 Stakeholder consultations

Interviewee	Organization	Location
Don Duvall, Executive Director	NORCAT (RIC)	Sudbury
Emily Trottier, Business Development Officer, Arts & Culture	Greater Sudbury Development Corporation	Sudbury
Elizabeth Radshaw, Industry Programs Manager	Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival	Toronto

Interviewee	Organization	Location
Valerie Fox, Chief Innovation Consultant	The Pivotal Point	Toronto
Chris Plunkett, Director of External Relations	Communitech (RIC)	Kitchener-Waterloo
Peter Honeywell, Executive Director	Ottawa Arts Council	Ottawa
Victoria Steele, Executive Director	Ottawa East Arts Council	Ottawa East
Denise Sherritt, Manager	The Business Centre	Nipissing-Parry Sound
Shannon Brown, Community Engagement	The TETT	Kingston

Through a synthesis of these initial stakeholder consultations the team could ascertain certain shared needs, interests, priorities gaps and challenges as far as hubs and the cultural and creative sector were concerned. The team then convened a roundtable with some thirteen representatives of industry associations, hubs such as Artscape, municipalities, WIC and the OMDC. Importantly, the group represented a range of arts, culture and creative sectors from music to publishing and the performing arts, both for-profit and not-for-profit. As well, the inclusion of MaRS introduced a non-culture-focused perspective:

Table 2 Roundtable attendees

Roundtable Attendee	Organization
Samantha Rodin, Executive Director	York Region Arts Council
Matthew Holmes, Executive Director	MagazinesCanada
Bruce Pitkin, Executive Director	Theatre Ontario
Jacoba Knappen, Executive Director	TAPA (Toronto Alliance for the Performing Arts)
Kate Edwards, Executive Director	Association of Canadian Publishers
Brian Hetherman, Interim Manager	MusicOntario
Karen Keskull, Small Business Consultant	City of Toronto, Small Business Enterprise Centre
Aida Aydinyan, Vice-President	Business for the Arts
Jon Worren, Senior Director & Entrepreneur-in-Residence	MaRS
Steve Billinger, Director, Creative Entrepreneurship	Artscape
Kelly Stahl, Senior Advisor for the Creative Economy	City of Brampton
Cynthia Lynch, Managing Director and Council	FilmOntario

At this roundtable, the group reviewed the initial findings and results of the interviews and discussed the core issues they faced as far as delivering business skills training to their constituents.

Phase 3 & 4– Analysis, Reporting and Mapping

The team worked to synthesize all lines of research, i.e., stakeholder consultations, the hub inventory analysis and other relevant secondary research. While it was not possible to assess "best practices" per se, shared experiences and factors for success did emerge from the research.

Finally, the analysis was pulled together in this short report and the separate inventory map. The map was developed with Tableau's software and will be accessible online at workinculture.ca.

Appendix B – Hub Inventory

This inventory can be provided as a separate excel file and is also mapped at:
https://public.tableau.com/profile/publish/WICAssetmap/Map#!/publish-confirm

401 Richmond	Canadian Film Centre (CFC)
4elements Living Arts	Centre3 for Print and Media Arts
Accelerator Centre (Stratford)	Centres for Social Innovation
Accelerator Centre (Waterloo)	Chatham Cultural Centre
Art Reach	Chatham Small Business Centre
Artcite	City of Barrie Department of Culture
Artist-Run Centres & Collectives of Ontario (ARCCO)	City of Belleville Community Arts & Culture Fund (BCACF)
Arts Council Haliburton Highlands	Coalition of New Canadians for Arts & Culture
Arts meets Business	Common Roof
Artscape Launchpad	Communitech
Artscape Launchpad 2018	Communitech REV
Artseverywhere	Community Arts Guild
ArtsVest	Community Heritage Ontario
Available Light Screening Collective	Contemporary Art Forum Kitchener and Area (CAFKA)
AVNU	Cornwall Business Enterprise Centre
Barrie Small Business Centre	Craft Ontario
Belleville Small Business Centre	Creative Mornings
Bitmaker	Creative Muskoka
Boarding House Arts Incubator	Creative Ontario East
Book Publishers' Professional Association	Cultural Human Resources Council
Booknet Canada	Culture Workers Unwind
Brainstation	Dance Ontario
Brampton Entrepreneur Centre	Dance Umbrella of Ontario
Brantford-Brant Business Resource Centre	Dancer Transition Resource Centre
Broken City Lab Artist Collective	Debajehmujig Creation Centre
Bureau des regroupements des artistes visuels de l'Ontario (BRAVO)	Definitely Superior
Burlington Chamber of Commerce	Directors Guild of Canada (Ontario Chapter)
Business Advisory Centre Durham (Whitby)	Doc Accelerator
Business Advisory Centre Northumberland	Durham West Arts Centre
Business Enterprise Centre of Sarnia-Lambton	eBound Canada
Business Enterprise Centre Serving Bruce County	Ed Video Media Arts Centre (Guelph)
Business Sault Ste. Marie	Elgin/St. Thomas Small Business Enterprise Centre
Button Factory	Elora Centre for the Arts
Caledon/Bolton SBEC	Enterprise Renfrew County
Canadian Alliance of Dance Artists (CADA-ON)	Enterprise Temiskaming
Canadian Alliance of Dance Artists (CADA-ON)	Enterprise Toronto

Canadian Artists' Representation (CARFAC)	Factory 163
Factory Media Centre (Hamilton)	MaRS
Festival House	MaRS Jolt
Festival of the Arts (Huntsville)	Mississauga Business Enterprise Centre
Firefly Creative Writing	Modern Fuel (Kingston)
Folk Music Ontario Conference	Musagetes
Generator at One Interactive Media Generator	Music Ontario
Guelph-Wellington Business Enterprise Centre	Muskoka Small Business Centre
Haliburton Creative Business Incubator	National Arts Centre
Halton Region Small Business Centre (Oakville)	Niagara Artists Centre
Hamilton Small Business Enterprise Centre	Niagara Falls Small Business Enterprise Centre
Hillside Festival	Norman Felix Inc
Huron Business Centre	Northwest Business Centre (Kenora)
ImagineIt	Northwestern Ontario Innovation Centre
Independent Filmmakers Cooperative Ottawa	Oakville Art Society
Innovate Niagara	Ontario Arts Council
Innovation Factory	Ontario Association of Art Galleries
Innovation Initiatives Ontario (iiON)	Ontario Chamber of Commerce
InnovationGuelph	Ontario Media Development Corporation (OMDC)
Interactive Ontario	Ontario Network of Entrepreneurs
Invest Ottawa	Ontario WorkInfo Net
IWCC Salon Series	Ontario Trillium Foundation
Joe Fresh Fashion Incubator	Orangeville & Area Small Business Enterprise Centre
Jumblies Theatre	Orchestras Canada
Kawartha Lakes SBEC	Ottawa Arts Council
Kingston Arts Council	Owen Sound Business Enterprise Centre
Kingston Entrepreneur Centre	Perth Arts Connect
Ladies Learning Code	Peterborough Business Advisory Centre
Lake Field Music	Prescott-Russell Entrepreneurship Centre
Langs Centre	Professional Association of Canadian Theatres
Launch Lab	Purple Hills Arts & Heritage Society
Leeds and Grenville (Brockville) SBEC	Research Innovation Commercialization Centre
Liaison of Independent Filmmakers of Toronto	RICCentre
London Arts Council	Richmond Hill Small Business Enterprise Centre
London Heritage Council	Sault St. Marie Innovation Centre (SSMIC)
London Small Business Centre	Saw Video Media Arts Centre
London Writers Society	Shenkman Arts Centre
Lot 41	Smith Falls Small Business Advisory Centre
MABELLEarts	South Georgian Bay SBEC
Magazines Canada	SPARC
MakerSpace Creative Hub (Brampton)	Spark Centre
Making Room	St. Catharines Enterprise Centre
Manifesto Festival of Community and Culture	Start Writing

Mariposa Folk Festival	Stratford Arts and Media (SAM)
Markham Small Business Centre	

Stratford Off The Wall	Toronto Alliance for the Performing Arts (TAPA)
Stratford Perth Centre for Business	Toronto Arts Council
Sudbury Regional Business Centre	Toronto Fashion Incubator
Techalliance	Toronto International Film Festival (TIFF)
Tett Centre for Creativity and Learning	Toronto Musicians Association
The Arts and Culture Roundtable of Elliot Lake	Trinity Square Video
The ARTS Project	UrbanArts
The Business Centre - Nipissing Parry Sound Inc.	UW Velocity
The Centres for Employment & Learning	Vaughan Business Enterprise Centre
The Creative Destruction Lab	Venture Lab
The Creative Hub	Wasaga Film Festival
The Creative Space (Barrie)	Waterloo Region Small Business Centre
The Founder Institute	WE-tech
The Foundry	Whitby Chamber of Commerce
The Next 36	Windsor Endowment for the Arts
The Ryerson DMZ	WindsorEssex Small Business Centre
The Theatre Centre	Women in Film and Television Toronto
The Working Centre (Kitchener)	Woodstock & Area SBEC
Theatre Ontario	Word by Word/Ontario Writers Conference
Thunder Bay & District Entrepreneur Centre	York Small Business Enterprise Centre (Newmarket)
Timmins Business Enterprise Centre	