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## CREATIVE INDUSTRIES INNOVATION CENTRE: submission regarding the City of Sydney Cultural Policy Discussion paper

The Creative Industries Innovation Centre (CIIC), part of the Federal government's Enterprise Connect program and hosted at the University of Technology Sydney in Ultimo, is grateful for the opportunity to submit the following comments in response to the City of Sydney's Cultural Policy Discussion Paper (discussion paper).

The discussion paper rightly highlights the importance of place making and of physical environments and infrastructure as an enabler of cultural life.

The CIIC recommends that supporting a flourishing environment for creative and cultural businesses is a key thread in developing a truly rich cultural life for the city. Cultural activity is dependent upon many things, not the least upon a vibrant and diverse business community which can support, can kick start or commercialise any one of many cultural pursuits.

Given the CIIC's remit as advisor to and advocate of Australian SME creative industries businesses, this response is largely directed at measures relating to creative and cultural industry businesses.

This response also refers in part to the CIIC's recent submission to the NSW Government's Creative Industries Taskforce Draft Industry Action Plan – this response is attached, and the CIIC invites the City of Sydney to take into consideration all of the recommendations made there.

The City of Sydney discussion paper calls for contributions and comments on the opportunities for the city to engender a rich cultural life, and the role the City of Sydney can and ought to play in this.

This response outlines the CIIC's support of the five underlying principles contained in the discussion paper, and focuses also on two of the discussion paper's eight directions about which the CIIC is best placed to respond: direction 3 - a vibrant, creative economy; and direction 4 - fostering precinct distinctiveness through cultural and creative expression.

**Leadership** – the City of Sydney is a key partner, supporter and enabler of cultural life in the city. The council's continued engagement with culture and creativity in our community is paramount. Supporting strong leadership within the community itself is also vital, and can be supported by the council through various means, from linking industry leaders with business

support services and mentoring; to recognising achievement through awards and access to publicity.

CIIC and its network of business advisers and others can provide leads on suitable high potential creative businesses and key industry leaders.

**Optimising strengths** – the CIIC’s interactions with over 1000 of Australia’s creative enterprises has allowed the Centre to gain deep insights into the pitfalls that businesses and their creative leaders come up against. The CIIC would agree with the discussion paper’s statement that a lack of “fertile ground for innovation and experimentation have inhibited Sydney from reaching a greater potential.” Across all levels of government streamlining of processes and systems, simplifying access to support infrastructure, and co-ordinated services would greatly assist in this area.

The CIIC has been operating for almost four years from its base at the UTS in Ultimo. In that time the Centre has built up a detailed picture of the creative industries in Sydney – from an individual business perspective. The Centre has also participated in, and generated a number of inter-government programs.

The Centre recommends that the intelligence and experience of the CIIC be harnessed, where appropriate, to support and inform the initiatives of the City of Sydney. This could include joint-programs or co-operative programs managed and delivered through the CIIC. This would, of course, depend upon the availability of appropriate levels of co-operative funding and resourcing.

**Whole-of-organisation commitment** – The CIIC strongly supports a co-ordinated approach by all levels of government to fostering culture in the city. As in the CIIC’s submission to the NSW Government Creative Industries Taskforce Draft Industry Action Plan, all government-funded programs should be collaborative and access, whenever possible, existing programs – government and non-government – to ensure efficient use of limited resources, commonality of purpose and alignment of goals.

An integrated strategy from the council with the NSW government’s digital and creative industries strategies will strengthen possible outcomes.

**Harnessing new technology** – As above, an integrated strategy with the NSW Digital Economy action plan would likely result in stronger outcomes in building digital capabilities in the cultural and creative sectors. Strategies to support technology businesses and also to enable greater technology use by creative and cultural enterprises are vital.

The CIIC was involved, in a lead capacity, in the Interactive Skills Integration Scheme (ISIS) - an industry development project researching, modelling and showcasing strategies for integrating interactive media expertise across ‘non games’ industry sectors. (See a longer account of ISIS at the end of the IAP document attached.) This program is one possible example of the ways in which innovative uses of technology, with commercial outcomes in mind, can be supported.

**Partnerships** – The CIIC strongly supports closer collaboration between business, government and research institutions. The Federal government's proposed Innovation Precincts program is a significant opportunity for government, research and business to interact and build efficient and complementary services that do not overlap. The Innovation Precincts are only in the expression of interest stage but it is highly likely that while the initiative has a national focus, there will be a creative industries or creative industries related precinct established in Sydney by leading tertiary institutions and business. The CIIC is working with various parties to bring this to fruition, and encourages the council to support the development of the precinct proposal being developed.

**Direction 3: a vibrant, creative economy** – The CIIC is a key supporter of creative industries enterprises, providing business advice and delivering a range of programs to support the 'business of doing business' in the creative industries and market development for Australia's creative economy. This includes through:

- the Centre's business advice services, the *Business Review* and *Biztro* services
- the Enterprise Connect Design Integration Program, run through the CIIC, which has worked with state governments to deliver a program based around design-thinking for manufacturing businesses
- Business Model Generation workshop series for 50 high potential creative enterprises
- GENERATE program which focussed on business incubation and invested in Australian music enterprises
- Digital Marketplace program targeting Tasmanian cultural and creative enterprises
- Interactive Skills Integration Scheme (ISIS) supporting the integration of interactive media skills in varied industry sectors
- The CIIC's website, creativeinnovation.net.au, provides the entire creative industries cohort with online access to high-quality tools, inspiring stories and sector specific editorial

The CIIC is able to offer significant expertise in how the City of Sydney might support the city's creative enterprises, including through the adoption of above models of business support which the Centre has run.

**Direction 4: fostering precinct distinctiveness through cultural and creative expression** – The discussion paper rightly recognises the importance of embedding culture and creativity into the fabric of our urban environment.

A key dimension in Sydney's current cultural life is the richness, buzz and thriving community the many creative industries businesses have brought to the inner city areas of Ultimo, Surry Hills, Pyrmont and their surrounds.

As above, the Federal government's proposed Innovation Precincts program presents an opportunity for a creative industries related precinct established in Sydney, led by leading tertiary institutions and business. The CIIC is working with various parties to bring this to fruition, and encourages the council to support the development of the precinct proposal being developed.

The precinct will create networks that build critical mass across both physical and virtual organisation groupings to: create new growth opportunities; enhance the competitiveness of Australian creative and digital businesses; boost productivity and enable innovative practices to emerge.

The diagram at the end of this attached IAP submission shows the intersection between the CIIC and other government policies and programs in the creative and cultural industries space.

The CIIC is offering, subject to the availability of sufficient funding and resourcing and agreement with other government providers, to take a facilitation role in the delivery of business advisory and support services for Sydney's creative and cultural enterprises; and to work with the City of Sydney in devising its approach on how best to support creative enterprise.

It is the CIIC's intention that by working more closely with the City of Sydney and other government providers, we can ensure there is no unnecessary cross over, minimal wastage of government resources due to duplication and efficient deployment of services to business and creative industries practitioners.

**Lisa Colley**  
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**Enterprise Connect Creative Industries Innovation Centre**

### **Further Information on the CIIC:**

The Creative Industries Innovation Centre (CIIC) was one of six Innovation Centres established in early 2009 as part of the Australian Government's Enterprise Connect program. Since its inception, the CIIC has also been supported by a program of services offered by the University of Technology, Sydney (UTS).

The Centre's task is to support Australia's creative enterprises, helping them to increase productivity, operational efficiency, competitiveness, and provide a platform for innovation enabling business owners and managers to build their businesses and grow their creative output. Most importantly, the creation of the CIIC plugged a gap - supporting the business of creative enterprise.

Countless businesses in the creative industries sector have acknowledged the advice they have received from the CIIC team as critical to their business improvements.

In the years since its inception the CIIC has interacted with more than 1000 creative enterprises through its business advisory services, almost one third of these have been Sydney businesses. The CIIC has made available tens of thousands of dollars in Tailored Advisory Services grants through Enterprise Connect. It has worked with a further 1000 businesses nationally through its other key programs, events and workshops.

Other key programs have included:

- Business Model Generation workshop series for 50 high potential creative enterprises;
- GENERATE program investing in Australian music enterprises;
- The Digital Marketplace program targeting Tasmanian cultural and creative enterprises;
- Design Integration Program (DIP) transforming manufacturing design businesses through design;
- Interactive Skills Integration Scheme (ISIS) supporting the integration of interactive media skills in varied industry sectors
- The CIIC's website, [creativeinnovation.net.au](http://creativeinnovation.net.au), provides the entire creative industries cohort with online access to high-quality tools, inspiring stories and sector specific editorial

