

'CREATIVE KYRGYZSTAN': CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

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Outline of the presentation

- **My background in the creative business and education sectors**
- **The expanding global market for cultural goods and services**
- **What are the ‘cultural and creative industries’?**
- **Multiple funding and business models**
- **Preconditions for a successful creative economy**
- **The opportunity: ‘Creative Kyrgyzstan’**



'The Life of Pi', 2012



The expanding global market for cultural goods and services (pre-Covid)

A 21st century growth story

- ***Creative Economy Report 2010*** ***Creative Economy: a Feasible Development Option*** (UNCTAD/UNDP)
 - Continuing growth of creative economy through global financial crisis of 2008
 - Especially marked growth in the Global South
 - Vast amount of comparative data (cultural production, cultural exports)
 - Examination of cross-cutting issues (eg.links between culture and ICT sectors)
 - Emphasis on interdisciplinary nature of policy considerations
 - Highlighting of national success stories (e.g. Brazil, Jamaica, Morocco)
 - Central Asian countries do not feature (no hard data available)
- **British Council work on the creative economy**
 - [Introduction to the Creative Economy | Resources | Creative Economy | British Council \(2010 and later updates\)](#)
 - [New Report: Informal Economy and Culture in the Global South | Blog | Creative Economy | British Council \(2021\)](#)



Key message from the *Creative Economy Report 2010* (UNCTAD/UNDP)

10th message

“Each country is different, each market is special and each creative product has its specific touch and splendour. Nonetheless each country might be able to identify key creative industries that have not yet been exploited to their full potential so as to reap developmental benefits. *There is no one-size-fits-all prescription; each country should formulate a feasible strategy to foster its creative economy, based on its own strengths, weaknesses and realities.* The time for action is now”. (emphases added).

Creative Economy Report 2010, page XXV.



British Council: promoting the creative economy concept, 2010 - present



What are the 'cultural and creative industries'?

- The 'marriage' of art and commerce, or of culture and business
- **Confusing and contested terminology**
 - 'Cultural industries'
 - 'Creative industries'
 - 'CCIs' (European Union)
 - 'Entertainment industries'
 - 'Creative economy'
- **Working official definition of the creative industries (UK, 1998):**
 - *"...have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property".*
- **New terminology and language signifies a change of mind-set**
 - creativity as a generator of wealth and opportunity (not just a cost to the Exchequer)



Multiple funding and business models

Defined by sub-sector and risk profile: bewildering range

- **Old-style patronage (art galleries; painting; sculpture)**
- **Traditional arts subsidy (museums, opera houses, theatres)**
- **Corporate sponsorship (BP, Google, Ten Cent etc., substantial but declining in many countries)**
- **Ad-funding (old and new media – channels often obscure in the digital world)**
- **Micro-enterprises predominate: distinguish between services and content creators**
- **Producers for hire (project-based: eg. festivals and other cultural events, TV programmes)**
- **Freelancers for hire (serial projects: precarious work)**
- **Grants, loans and equity**
- **Crowd-funding and peer-to-peer lending**
- **'freemium' and in-game merchandise: myriad models in mobile games**



What are the pre-conditions for a successful creative economy?

In the Central Asian context

- **Changing the Soviet-era mind-set: from an industrial to a post-industrial, knowledge-based economy**
- **Recognition by government that the CCIs can be a key driver of economic growth**
- **Advanced IT infrastructure for uploading and downloading of creative content**
- **Government commitment to free and diverse cultural expression**
- **Robust IP protection**
- **Independent representative structures and intermediary bodies**
 - Trade associations, consultative bodies, networks and lobbying groups
 - New Association of Creative Industries in Kyrgyzstan
- **Developed policies for cultural and entrepreneurial education, management and training**
 - Small-scale international support through British Council's Creative Spark programme
- **Boosting international trade: strong orientation towards promoting cultural exports**



The opportunity: 'Creative Kyrgyzstan'

An opportunity for national reinvention?

- **The expanding global market for cultural goods and services (UNCTAD/UNDP)**
- **The Asian Century?**
- ***The New Silk Roads?***
 - *“All roads used to lead to Rome: today they lead to Beijing”.* (Prof. Peter Frankopan).
- **Serious questions posed by the pandemic**
 - But likely to affect Central Asian countries less than advanced creative economies
- **Most countries in the region now aiming to boost their creative economies**
- **Therefore a highly competitive regional landscape**
- **With good leadership the future is bright!**

