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The Culture and Education District
A scoping review for the Arts and Humanities Research Council

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Appendix A: Literature Review

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The Culture and Education District: The Cluster in Context

Over the last 30 years there has been a steady growth in urban regeneration projects that seek to improve the built environment, provide employment opportunities and arts, culture and recreation possibilities. Stevenson (2004) has described this more active role of the state in shaping cultural reception in the urban environment, not uncritically, as the new 'civic gold rush'. These projects have often evolved around one or several large-scale interventions that attract media attention and galvanize broad stakeholder and community support over a concentrated period of time. Such interventions can be understood as '**mega-projects**'. These developments frequently seek the wholesale redevelopment of a part of a city, revitalizing areas previously occupied by industries and communities that are perceived as are no longer thriving. They vary in scale and approach from the creation of economic environments that are favourable to the growth of smaller creative industries, through tax breaks, creation of available space and other incentives, to the creation of iconic architectural developments such as opening new state-of-the-art museums in dramatic post-industrial locations, as was the case with the Guggenheim in Bilbao (see for example, Gonzalez (2010) for a discussion of policy and the 'Bilbao effect'). **One-off mega-events** (such as the Olympic Games) are notable variants of such mega-projects and are often used to 'kick start' wider regeneration projects by creating impetus and financial backing for the initial obstacles of change like land remediation (e.g. in Barcelona 1992 and, most recently, London 2012)

In parallel to the mega-projects trend, there has been a significant, more general upsurge in the **use of culture as a theme, focus or impetus** of urban regeneration policies. This has often been linked with consumption and tourism (as an effort to refocus economic development away from derelict industrial development), or as a means of attracting foreign direct investment into 'future industries' (in the latter case, the focus is on lifestyle and environmental factors). Interestingly, an often neglected perspective has been to invest in **cultural production** itself (as opposed to services and cultural consumption) as a means towards sustainable regeneration. However, over the last decade it has been recognized that the cultural economy is a source of both jobs and innovation in cities.

We define the CED as a 'megaproject' with many component parts that are orientated around the creation of a new urban cluster of cultural and education institutions. Efforts towards new forms of **urban 'clustering'**, in particular creative, cultural and educational clustering of activity, have been seen as way of advancing cultural production and aligned processes. Flew (2005) describes how the orchestration of 'creative clusters' has become a way that local governments have attempted to manage urban space through cultural policies to 'stimulate and integrate cultural creativity and economic innovation, as part of the growing 'culturalization of economic life'' (2005:5).

Such localised clustering is proposed as having positive impacts on the local area such as advancements in innovation, an improvement in quality of life, raising of land value and opportunities for employment. However, the generalisation of cultural mega-projects as catalysts for urban regeneration (be it in the form of one-off events or clustering strategies) has also been

the source of a number of concerns (see for example Watt (2013) and the example of the London Olympics and gentrification of East London). There are increasing calls for greater inclusion of local community voices in processes of urban regeneration, and a consciousness that change should be of benefit rather than detriment to those communities which are based in an area prior to the start of a new regeneration process.

These concerns highlight a need for further robust and more holistic research into the long term implications of 'mega-projects' in order to ensure a smoother navigation of the risks and opportunities they present. This report takes a multidisciplinary approach that incorporates the perspectives of economists, geographers, sociologists, anthropologists and researchers in cultural and communications studies. Each of the scoping studies work-stream leads conducted a full literature review for their specialist research area. These are reproduced in the complete work-strand reports of this scoping study (Appendices B-E) and should be consulted for a more comprehensive insight into the available literature on the impact of culture, creative and education clusters.

This literature review will focus on defining clusters, their relationship to the legacy of mega-events, and programmes of change led by culture, art and the creative industries. This will contextualize the objectives of the scoping study in contemporary debates about clusters and further an understanding of the definitions of clustering being used by the LLDC.

1 The Chaotic Concept of Clustering

The **cluster** is a rather 'chaotic concept' (Martin and Sunley, 2003), the variety of scale, structures of governance and purposes, and their tendencies to cut organically across established distinctions of industries, make them difficult to manage, and define. It is a term that is often applied in both theory and practice to diverse groupings of organizations, interagency structures and industries. As Mommass (2004) describes:

"The search for new forms of urban cultural governance can easily be frustrated by a combination of unclear goals, a lack of mutual understanding and involvement, over generalised models and inhibitory attitudes" (Mommaas 2004:531).

Wood and Dovey (2015) argue that it is important to distinguish the idea of clustering from other terms like hubs, quarters and districts and that these terms are neither interchangeable nor innocent. We distinguish '**hubs**' as specifically describing the co-location of a number of (usually smaller) organisations in one location, that is often managed by an overarching landlord or other administrative body (see Dovey et al 2016). Both '**quarter**' and '**district**' are used to describe areas of city that contain a high density of specific creative industries or an affluence of cultural institutions. Wood and Dovey describe how 'clustering' is preferable to quarter or district when seeking to describe the mixture of interconnections between organisations of different scales and purpose. Clusters are primarily defined by the relationships and kinds of connectivity between groupings rather than simply by their co-location (Wood and Dovey 2015:54).

However, although not interchangeable, hubs, districts and clusters are often interconnected and the various terms are used liberally by policy makers. The CED is a proposed co-located grouping

of big name, independent, (inter)nationally important, arts and cultural institutions. In addition to being a proposed cluster of interrelated organisations it is also as its name suggests, 'a district' and has ties to specific industry 'hubs' like Here East. It's scale, governance and development differs in a number of ways from 'creative clusters' that are usually the focus of research which tend to involve smaller organisations not usually orchestrated by a central facilitating body like the LLDC or planned according to initial investment from central government.

2 Culture, creative industries and education

The CED has been described as a culture and education institutions cluster. In addition to encompassing institutions from a range of sectors, as discussed in the main body of the report, it relates to and will connect to other creative industry and cultural clusters of Hackney Wick, Fish Island and Stratford. It is important for us to draw out some of the distinctions between the terms used to describe the clustering of these related spheres of activity to inform how we might define clustering in the context of the CED.

Evans (2009) claims that despite economic, social and cultural distinctions between cultural and creative industry quarters, (The former with more emphasis on boosting the local economy; preserving heritage, and heightening existing identities. The later is being primarily oriented toward the production and development knowledge and creative economies) they are far from mutually exclusive, can be interlinked, co-develop and share goals. As Pratt argues in the case of media clusters in London, clusters overlap and possess considerable variance of experience, organisation and form (Pratt 2004: 2011).

3 Critical Mass

Early definitions of 'industry clustering' date to the 1890's. Alfred Marshall in Principles of Economics (1890) describes how clustering together allowed firms "direct access to a dedicated infrastructure and collective resources, a pool of skilled labour and complementary industries providing specialised inputs" (Marshall 1890 in Heur 2009:1541). Porter, who popularised the notion of a business cluster in the 90's, argued that despite advancements in communication technology and transportation, the embedded nature of innovations and productivity in social interaction made **locality** more important than ever (Porter 1998, 2007).

"Geographic, cultural and institutional proximity leads to special access, closer relationships, better information, powerful incentives and other advantages in productivity and innovation that are difficult to tap from a distance". (Porter 1998:89)

Porter emphasises the importance of achieving 'critical masses' or clusters of interconnected, geographically co-located companies and institutions in a particular field. In theory, co-location gave advantages to these companies by enabling economies of scale and scope, greater knowledge exchange and improved value chains. Porter argued that if activity reached a critical

mass¹, it would become self sustaining and self reproducing. This is an idea that has shaped corporate strategic planning, economic policy and urban redevelopment in the subsequent decades. Porter claims that the boundaries of clusters are 'defined by the linkage and complementarities across industries and institutions that are most important to competition' (1998:79). Such clusters may arise from one or two innovative companies that stimulate the growth of others by taking certain risks. However as more and more organisations become involved risks decrease for new investors and smaller businesses. Clustering allowed industries to grow faster, raise productivity and resist shocks through the access to shared and more robust economies, pooled labour and spillovers in knowledge (see Duranton and Puga 2004).

Porter's emphasis on density and locality lends itself to the assumption that the defining feature of clusters is co-location. The increased density of organisation may lead to benefits like the lessening of supply chain costs and advantageous economies of scale, and 'network effects'. The idea here being that the value of each node increases with the number of nodes in an identifiable cluster. This value occurs not through economies of scale but due to the interactivity of the nodes. That is not to say that proximity is not important. Advantages occur from both density and network effects that give clusters a particular 'capacity for connection, adaptation and transformation' (Wood and Dovey 2015:55). Although necessary, shared proximity is insufficient when describing clustering. Effective clustering depends upon both co-location and interaction. It is from the combination of these that innovative collaborations emerge (see also Boschma (2005) and different types of proximity). Bass van Heur writing about clustering in the London and Berlin music industries, describes how the 'economic imaginary' that seeds the creation and governance of clusters with the aim of cultural and creative production as part of a 'knowledge economy, often ignores the value of network interactions (Heur 2009 :1548). There is a need to recognise that (successful) clusters are more than just a close grouping of organisations. As Heur argues "clusters need to be understood as concentrations of nodes that are reliant on spatial proximity" (Heur 2009:1547) rather than geographic concentrations of either industries or creativity. Knowledge between actors or firms can only take place if they share a common social context, which is largely locally defined (Heur 2009:1542). These shared contexts have a 'disciplinary function' that produces forms of subjectification that encourages participants to identify as 'strong' entrepreneurs oriented towards individual achievement, economic growth and competitive advantage (Styhre 2005 in Heur 2009:1544).

Clustering presents specific benefits to the creative industries. It allows smaller organisations to strengthening identity, influence and market position and stimulates a more 'entrepreneurial' and competitive atmosphere that like in other industry clusters will hopefully lead to innovation. In a practical sense the creative buzz created by the density of such organisations encourages new use for old buildings and derelict sites and can encourage certain kinds of cultural diversity and Democracy (Mommaas 2004). Gospodini (2006) conducted research into the role of clusters in transforming the urban morphology, density and land use of post industrial cities. Clusters in 'creative urban islands and edges', both organic and those led by new governance strategies to encourage their growth, are epicentres for a mixture of economic activities that occur on a 'glocalised' scale.

¹ The notion of 'critical mass' was also used by Boris Johnson in his announcement of Olympicopolis (now the Culture and Education District or CED). The then London Mayor Boris Johnson described the different institutions involved and the need to create the 'critical mass' and visitor number the site deserves (The Evening Standard 4th December 2013 <https://www.standard.co.uk/comment/comment/boris-johnson-the-olympic-park-will-be-the-albertopolis-of-the-east-8982871.html>).

The transformative potential of these effects on the localities they are based in is difficult to determine. Lloyd (2004) seeks to show the impact of 'neighbourhood spaces' created by clusters of arts and cultural activities in the Wicker Park area of Chicago. Lloyd argues that the environment of the cluster plays a quasi-institutional role in the network of relationships that constitute contemporary culture industries. Nathan and Vandore (2014) in their work on the East London digital industries cluster 'Silicone Roundabout' described how large, economically diverse 'urban cores' encourage the simultaneous growth of multiple start-ups and SMEs. Initial levels of entrepreneurial activity acts as a fertile bed for further self replicating growth. In theory this growth should occur organically. However, they find constraints in knowledge exchange, finances and the poor decisions of inexperienced smaller organisations often impede or derail natural development leading to a precedent for policy interventions that facilitate or plan cluster growth or even aim to create new clusters. Despite the adoption of clustering museums and galleries as a strategy of urban renewal by policy makers there is little empirical evidence that demonstrates with certainty its success at achieving benefits for local economies, creative practice or communities²

Drawing upon interviews with education and industry intermediaries, Virani and Pratt (2015) explore collaborations between higher education institutions (HEIs) and creative industries in London. Their work highlighted a number of hindrances and disparities between academic and corporate partnerships in terms of their expectations and timescales for development, dissemination and profit motives. They argue that intermediaries that broker, translate and build networks are essential to making such clustering partnerships effective.

Although clusters may possess qualities that may generate positive feedback loops that self-reinforce their agglomeration economies, a critical point that must also be made is that clusters may also generate negative feedback loops. The combination co-location and interaction breeds competitiveness and a survival of the fittest dynamic that may not be sustainable in times of economic hardship. Despite potentially decreasing certain supply chain costs clustering may increase other expenses, particularly as rents may rise due to crowding and gentrification (Nathan and Vandore 2014, Combes et al, 2005). Yet these proximities and connectedness may also lead to the poaching of staff space and ideas. Evans emphasises the role education has been perceived to have in development, describing universities as the "stormtroopers of regeneration" that risk creating exclusionary, mono-use spaces, disconnected from the communities in which they are located' (2009:52).

Clustering therefore might be said to present both significant risks and opportunities for cultural and creative organisations. There is also a strong argument that the achievement of a 'critical mass' of clustering activity is not necessarily sufficient to ensure long term success of the organisations and institutions that co-locate.

² The scoping study explores the potential impacts of clusters through the individual workstrand reports included in the appendices of this report.

4 'Types' of Clustering in the 'Creative Industries'

The way clustering occurs and its effects are neither homogeneous or always harmonious. Mommaas (2004) argues that there needs to be a greater consideration of this diversity of cultural and creative clusters and the heterogeneous policy priorities of local governments that attempt to encourage their growth. Using five case studies of 'cultural clusters' in the Netherlands, Mommaas describes six axes by which clusters could be defined:

1. Horizontal portfolio of activities, intra-cluster collaboration, and the level of integration;
2. Vertical Portfolio of the cultural functions;
3. The organisational framework and level of governance of the cluster;
4. The financial regimes that surround them;
5. level of openness/adaptability;
6. The developmental trajectory of the cluster, has it occurred organically or been organised from the top down.

Hitters and Richard (2002) examine the impact of top-down and bottom up management approaches of two creative industry clusters in Amsterdam. Roodhouse (2006) in work on Sheffield's creative industries argued that cultural clusters 'have invariably developed from an existing embryonic cultural presence, as a result of a public sector initiative'. The Sheffield Creative Industries Quarter is highlighted as an example of urban regeneration that started from the personal initiative of a number of creative individuals who took over a vacant industrial building in a run-down area of the city centre and turned it into a venue for popular music. Policy would typically intervene in this bottom-up process once the area was ripe for investment and gentrification. The result in the Sheffield example was the displacement of the original community of music fans and artists as the area became a more desirable place to live. The issue of commercial and community displacement and gentrification is more thoroughly addressed in the creative and community work strand literature reviews in the appendices (see Appendix C)

Wood and Dovey (2015) conclude that rather than distinct clusters of identical organisations successful clusters are synergies that emerge from a 'mix of mixes', offering different but complementary forms of production, exchange, reproduction and recreation.

5 Legacy Clusters and Mega Projects

There is a long established history of the emergence of creative clustering from large scale events. Early examples of The 1851 Great Exhibition in London and the 1855 World Fair in Paris show are the two most well known early examples of how cultural events have provided an impetus to fundamentally alter parts of the city through the creation of lasting institutions and infrastructure (Flew 2005:8). However despite extensive literature about the potency of arts and culture for tourism and the marketing of cities there was little attention paid to the use of art and culture as a tool of urban renewal until the 1990's when events like the European Capital of Culture in cities like Glasgow showed how cultural programming could play a role in radically shifting a city's image and reputation (García 2004, Flew 2005).

According to Flew (2005) the 1992 Barcelona Olympics was another key development which drew attention to the links between major events, culture and the development of global creative cities. Prior to this there had been little attention to either peripheral cultural activity alongside the sporting events or the wider potential of the games as a force of urban regeneration. In fact Olympic Games were often associated as having a negative legacy on the host communities and their economies. The success of the Barcelona Games provided the city with a global reputation as cultural centre, a reputation that persisted to make Barcelona the sixth most desirable city to relocate a business to, as voted for by leading CEO's in 2002 (Flew 2005:10).

Nikolic (2012) describes how the museum and museum clusters have come to occupy an unparalleled position "as a tourist magnet, an architectural manifesto, and a symbol of the postmodern city and the culture in which we live." (2012:01) She explains that the museum cluster represents a paradigm shift in both museums and the mobilization and dissemination of culture and cultural information in the city. They are instruments of change that allow cities of the past to be reimagined as cities of the future. However a physical concentration of museums only achieves these kinds of clustering effects if common spaces allow staff and visitors to participate in joint actions that are attributed meaning by the group (Nikolic 2012). The crucial role of innovation and flows of ideas makes density and network benefits crucially important in the creative industries, education and cultural activity.

There is a specific area of research in tourism literature that focuses on the role of **clustering**. Guisti's (2012) longitudinal case study of the Motor Valley cluster in Modena, Italy, examined the link between cultural heritage clusters, tourism and competitiveness between regions and nations is explored. Richard and Wilson (2006) argue that culture tourism is encouraged as a means of social and economic development, particularly the saturation of specific areas with attractions, cultural routes and heritage centres. However the success of such places often depends on the way such initiatives are interwoven with opportunities for connection with other local creative industries and experiences.

In *Fantasy City: Pleasure and Profit in the Postmodern Metropolis*, John Hannigan (1998) has identified the growth of 'urban entertainment destinations' (UEDs) as one of the most significant developments transforming cities throughout the developed world since the 1980s. Cultural and sporting attractions, festivals and mega-events have indeed become key, over the past thirty years, to urban strategies of renewal and regeneration, and place branding campaigns. Pratt (2016), argues that big name brands like the Guggenheim in Bilbao and The Queen Elizabeth park are used to 'pimp a city's image' and encourage competition between cities on a national and international stage. Pratt argues that visibly striking architecture and contemporary galleries are often used to anchor and justify the financial spend of otherwise untenable regeneration projects. This strategy of place-branding uses artistic and cultural activities to symbolically transform tired and dilapidated areas. This confirms the suggestion put forward by Davidson (2008:2385) that gentrification has been 'embraced by policy-makers as a potential urban renewal solution'.

Although often hailed as the cultural hearts of vibrant new urban districts orchestrated big brand clusters like the CED will inevitably form part of nuanced existing, interconnected, creative and cultural environments that are finely balanced and intimately woven into the social and economic contexts of their wider locales.

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Key readings by work strand

1 Economic Impacts

The following four studies could be useful evaluation case studies:

U.S. Cultural Districts (Diff-in-diff):

Noonan, D.S. (2013). How US Cultural Districts Reshape Neighborhoods. *Cultural Trends*, 22(3-4), 203-212. [Study 327 from our Sports and Culture review]

European Capitals of Culture (Diff-in-diff):

CREMA European Capitals of Culture and Life Satisfaction [Study 324 from the WWC Sports and Culture review]

Public sector relocation:

Giulia Faggio, and Henry Overman, The effect of public sector employment on local labour markets, *Journal of Urban Economics*, Volume 79, January 2014, Pages 91-107

Estate renewal (Diff-in-diff):

Schwartz, A.E., Ellen, I.G., Voicu, I., and Schill, M.H. (2006). The External Effects of Place-Based Subsidized Housing. *Regional Science & Urban Economics*, 36, 679–707. [Study 726 from our Estate Renewal review]

Local Enterprise Growth Initiative (RDD):

Einiö, E. and Overman, H.G., 2016. The (displacement) effects of spatially targeted enterprise initiatives: evidence from UK LEGI. [Study 1315 from our Area Based Initiatives review, available [here](#)]

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