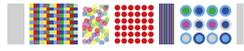


8

PRIORITY Area
CULTURE!



Steps for Successful Entering External Markets

Focus on music and fashion industries

Priority Area Culture Workshop Stockholm, October 29-30, 2014

music design art market
art market export
creative
export fashion product
music market style
style producer
fashion artists
visual arts

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INTRODUCTION

Exporting and internationalization have become in recent years one of those topics one cannot ignore. From being a 'nice to have', successfully operating on international scene has become often an essential element of survival, especially when we talk about creative goods .

Businesses in cultural and creative sectors, including both in music and fashion, have to adapt to new realities. On one hand creative businesses have many challenges – size, skills, competition, etc. On other hand, they have also their advantages – being flexible and innovative. With the rapid development of online distribution channels and social media, the way to foreign markets is no more a privilege of the few. It would be accurate to say that entering foreign markets has never been so easy as it is at the moment, and at the same time it has never been so complicated and crowded. The question is – what are the critical steps that creative enterprises need to take for successfully undertake this road?

The report “8 steps to successful entering external markets” is a result of the workshop on “How to enter external markets” that took place on October 29-30, 2014 in Stockholm within the framework of **European Union Strategy for the Baltic Sea Region Priority Area Culture**. Priority Area Culture¹ (PA Culture) aims at facilitating cultural cooperation in the Baltic Sea Region (BSR), with the ambition to contribute to regional development and economic growth of the region.

Cultural and creative industries mostly consist of micro and small companies. From the economic perspective, the export of cultural goods is essential for growth of the creative businesses and thus

¹ www.eusbsculture.eu



BSR economy at large. Therefore, the necessity to support micro and small companies on their way abroad is evident. Even though most of the issues related to challenges and good practices of exporting are relevant to most of the cultural and creative areas, each of the creative sectors has its own specifics. Idea of the workshop was to have an insight in daily business routine of creative industry companies and at the same time possibility to compare exporting challenges among the sectors. Therefore the workshop focused more closely on two selected areas of creative entrepreneurship - music and fashion.

The workshop brought together representatives of music and fashion industries from all Baltic Sea Region countries, who have gained some experience on the international scene, but are still facing difficulties on their path to be successful on the global market and thus they are seeking support for introducing their brands internationally. In addition to participants, the workshop invited a number of experts from Baltic Sea Region and beyond, representing both fields to share their experience and provide insight into successful exporting and internationalization models.

Internationalization needs cross-sectorial and cross-institutional cooperation as well as good inspirations.

In order to provide inspirational environment for creative business export discussion, PA Culture coordinators have invited music and fashion practitioners to Stockholm, the city that can be easily titled Baltic Sea Region capital of music export. Swedes are in fact known as a third world music exporting nation. Sweden is also largely represented by fashion brands worldwide.

Stockholm is also location for the Secretariat of the Council of Baltic Sea States² (CBSS), that warmly hosted PA Culture workshop in its premises. This is how cross-institutional collaboration of two largest platforms for Baltic Sea Region cooperation – CBSS and EUSBSR work for the benefit of creative entrepreneurs. Let's look into the outcomes of the workshop and see what are the main challenges that creative sectors face in order to expand its business globally.



2 www.cbss.org

MAIN CHALLENGES

It is possible to divide different challenges for the creative enterprises into three main categories: (1) challenges related to the Baltic Sea area and the specific characteristics of the market, (2) challenges related to the local, national and regional support structures and (3) challenges related directly to the creative companies as such.

Naturally, creative business share many challenges with other (mostly start-up) companies from other sectors, but there are also number of issues more relevant to the cultural and creative areas.

LIMITED LOCAL MARKETS

Most of the countries in the Baltic Sea Region (especially the Nordic and the Baltic countries) have very limited local markets. At the same time all BSR region plays significant role on global scale. BSR as a whole (including 10 countries of the region) is one of the biggest music markets in the world. Second after USA by population and third after USA and Japan by retail value. Of course diversities among interlan markets of the region are to hight to measure music and fashion market of the Baltic Sea Region as one, however shows the potential of the region as unity. Countries should be working more closely together to develop regional market and promote the creative products and services globally.

However, with some exceptions (notably Nordic countries), there is no functioning common market with strong identity covering the entire region. Music audiences are fragmented and rarely creative products and services (including music and fashion brands) have successfully crossed the borders and had significant success.

Despite the fact that BSR region and local markets are relatively small, the creative professionals are often not aware of other key players, organisations and networks in the region. There is also lack of community spirit within music and fashion industries in the region.

LIMITED SCOPE OF SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Do the creative entrepreneurs have necessary skills to be success on international arena? Do the higher education institutions prepare creative professionals for entering external markets? While there are many positive developments in the recent years, the situation still remains critical.

University curricula for creative professionals often do not include necessary level of business skills development; there are only few examples of joint programs between creative students and students from other areas (including business and marketing, engineering, ICT, etc.).

In addition to general business skills, the education system doesn't prepare creative professionals and entrepreneurs sufficiently for internationalizing their activities and exporting their products and services. There are not enough cross-border exchanges with the emphasis on building networks and learning about new markets.

While it is assumed that language skills of the artists, musicians, designers as well as the managers are sufficient, it turns out that in many cases the lack of English proficiency is still a serious obstacle, more in some countries than others.

LIMITED ACCESS TO FINANCE

Funding measures do not often take into account the whole value chain of the cultural and creative industries, concentrating on few isolated elements of the entire system and ignoring other key functions. The government might be funding showcase festivals, but not supporting previous trainings and subsequent touring, which in turn is often the most expensive part of the music exports and often defined as biggest obstacle or otherwise.

Overwhelming majority of creative businesses, especially in the music and fashion industries, are micro or small enterprises, which leads to number of problems related to business operation models, lack of resources, limited production capacity, etc. This leads to the lack of professionalization of the creative companies – the artist is at the same time a manager, sales representative, producer, web editor, etc.

LIMITED AWARENESS ON ALL LEVELS

Even though the market is small, as well as the number of players on the market, there is still a lack of communication on all the levels, which in turns leads to low awareness within (1) creative companies in relation to funding possibilities and joint marketing efforts, (2) policy makers and support organisations in relation to establishing and implementing targeted support measures and strategies, and (3) general public in relation to valuing the products and services produced locally and regionally.

Rapid development of ICT and role of social media has revolutionized most of the cultural and creative sectors, but many creative entrepreneurs haven't managed to fully tap the potential that these new tools create for innovating, promoting, marketing and exporting their products and services.

Creative companies are often not ready to take risks and instead stay in their comfort zone. When the artists have been successful in their own country, they are not willing to take risk again and start from zero on international ground. Failures are often stigmatized by our culture and education. On the other hand, success creates success, which is why there should be more initiatives to bring together practitioners from different areas to share their experience.

Next, the report presents eight critical steps that most of the creative companies have taken to successfully enter the foreign markets.

1st Step: HIGH QUALITY

The rule of thumb is pretty straightforward – to be successful in international competition your product or service has to be good! It has to stand out. It has to have a high quality.

Too often people think that good idea is enough. Good idea is not enough, if the execution of the idea is in poor quality and poor format. This is true not only in the case of finding export markets, but also being successful on your home markets over a longer period of time.

Good quality is important element throughout the process and it is equally relevant for all the cultural and creative sectors. Regardless of the sector, the key component of achieving the good quality product or service is the existence of competent team. And while everyone expects the creative team to be professional, the same is true for the entire supporting chain.

Creative professionals – artists, musicians, designers, etc. – need supporting services of high quality. Professional management, marketing, public relations, booking, administration, legal services and many other areas are all critical for providing competitive advantage for the company.

Quality is a silver lining connecting all other steps described in the next paragraphs. It is connected with the professional team and business model, necessary skills and capacity building, knowledge of industry and markets and readiness to innovate.

New technologies and software, innovative materials, new practices and innovations within particular sector are constantly changing the way business is done. To be successful in this always-changing environment, creative professionals have to adopt an open and sharing attitude and commit themselves to lifelong learning.

In the short-term it might be possible to gain a competitive advantage with lower labour and production costs (especially in the Baltics and Poland), but in the long run it will not be solution, in particular with regards to entering competitive foreign markets. For the successful entering of external markets, the great artistic idea needs to be matched with the quality of materials, the quality of design and the quality of execution.

2nd Step: PROFESSIONALIZE YOUR BUSINESS

There are basically two ways to look at exporting. Exporting is either something separate from whatever you 'normally' do or it is a part of your company's DNA. Even though many creative enterprises are in principle born global, they see exporting and internationalization as a cherry on the cake – nice thing to have.

Firstly, if a company want to be internationally successful, it must a have a clear strategy how to become internationally recognized name or brand. Working on an international scene is a serious business; therefore your business needs to be serious as well.

Too often the creative enterprises are basically self-managed artists. And you can't be professional in everything. That also leads to other obstacles, e.g. getting things done within deadlines. Different industries have different rules, but in any case you need to get your stuff together on time.

In fashion you need your collection ready, photo shoots done and all the preparatory work finished before the season or fashion event; if you miss the deadline, you have to wait a long time for the next chance.

Successful companies need to create a professional structure. In music, international labels usually will not offer a contract to artists who are their own managers.

There will be many people willing to work with you, but not necessary competent enough to deliver results. Creative professionals need partners – educated, knowing markets, passionate about the core idea, being credible and caring. The question is - how to facilitate passion? It might sound surprising, but even creative people need discipline and from time to time some bossing around.

It is smart to invest into great team. Usually we hire from within the sector, but be ready to look also from outside. And you don't need to have all the services in-house; it is possible to outsource many supporting services.

Have a critical look at your business plan. Use for example Osterwalder's business model canvas to map your key partners, activities and resources, value propositions, customer relationships and segments, distribution channels, cost structure and revenue streams. And save money. Put a side some money you earn on local markets to be able to invest into exporting, touring and participating the international showcases.

And of course, don't forget to have some fun!

3rd Step: KNOW THE INDUSTRY

To be competitive in the international markets, you need to know more than just about the artistic or business development part of your company. It is important to understand how your industry functions.

Do you know the latest trends in your sector? Are you up-to-date with latest innovations in technologies and materials? Do you know changes in laws and regulations (including issues related to intellectual property rights)?

These are many other questions are critical for understanding your industry and operating within that environment. Understanding the trends can be a source of new business innovation. In music it might be the question of how new digital technologies keep changing the music industry. In design the growing theme is sustainability – recycling and upcycling and tapping into the new and more ecological consumer behaviour.

General awareness about starting a company has increased rapidly – today it is easier than ever to start a company. The question is how to stand out from the crowd? That also means, that companies have to focus not only on developing supply side, but also how to develop demand side and engage with their customers and fan base.

For governments – knowing the industry means designing support measures that take into account the entire value chain of the specific sector. The creative industry strategies need to be more holistic.

Too often governments and business support agencies provide simplified or fragmented solutions for business development or export promotion. They either focus on a narrow area of activities (e.g. training, innovation voucher scheme, organising festivals or showcases), but the support should be systematic and look at the life cycle of a creative company from idea generation and start-up phase to successful export phase.

Another problem is that often governments are impatient, expecting quick results from isolated projects. Being successful on international level requires building relationships and networks over a longer period of time and gradually strengthening the market position. It all takes time and resources.

4rd Step: KNOW THE MARKETS

You might have a vague understanding that your product or service could do well in a certain market, but where do you start from? The key challenges that were identified by the creative enterprises were lack of local knowledge and local contacts. Where to start from and whom to trust when entering to a new market?

It is essential to do a market research. You can use services provided by national business development agencies (e.g. export advisers), as well as cultural institutes and embassies. Also, ask around other companies with previous experience. In Iceland, for example, fashion designers have created a Facebook group to ask questions and share information.

Before entering to the external market, there are lots of aspects to be considered – adjusting prices to different markets, different regulations and taxes, different currencies, standard of living, cultural background, custom regulations, shipping costs.

Do you have a local partner in the markets you are interested in, who can help with contacts or information? Who can represent you when you leave? Having a local partner increases the effectiveness of activities. There are number of international networks (e.g. European Creative Business Network or European Business Network) offering 'soft landing' type services, helping aspiring companies find necessary services in other countries with their partner organisations.

Once a company has defined target markets, it is important to map the key events for entering those markets. Where to invest money and where to save? For example, fashion weeks that really matter are Paris, Milan, NYC and London. In European terms also Berlin and Copenhagen. And the picture is changing over times. Similarly complicated is the music scene.

Case:

Olga Tuszewska representing Polish label music KAYAX and international newcomer Brodka had a strategy at first! They put aside some money earned from every single gig they made. Since Brodka is highly appreciated artist in Poland, after a year that was already reasonable amount saved for international tours. Desired markets were not obvious at first. Brodka performed at any showcase and concerts abroad where she was invited (or accepted). After some time they already new where chemistry with foreign audience lies and which markets are potentially promising for her music. Surprisingly USA happened to show the highest interests and they are about to sign a first international contract there.

Markets are rapidly changing. Internet, new technologies and social media are changing the consumption patterns in an unprecedented pace. What might have worked 5 or 10 years ago is no more relevant.

Lastly, what brands sell and what don't in which markets? What brands give competitive advantage – Scandinavian, Nordic, Baltic, European? Surely, it depends on the sector and target market, but in general Scandinavian and Nordic brands carry significantly more weight than Baltic, because people don't have a understanding what a 'Baltic design' or 'Baltic music' might be. It is true for many individual countries.

When you are going to Poland from UK with you music show, your origin may help you sell the show. However when you go to UK it really doesn't matter if come from Nordic, Baltic or any other countries. It's just you and you music that matters, said Danny Keir, Director at Sound Diplomacy UK.

5th Step: BUILD CAPACITY

It is not only about a single company, it is an entire ecosystem that needs to be supported - starting from basic education and emerging new talents until nurturing those that have a potential to become global brands.

The cultural and creative ecosystem has five pillars: (1) content creation, (2) education, (3) institutions, (4) media and (5) market (distribution channels, customers and fans).

There are many support measures available in different countries, but often the creative professionals are not aware of them. In many countries it is possible to use mentors, participate in business and export trainings, study-visits. Many cities around the Baltic Sea area offer specialized incubation services, there are number or creative clusters, hubs and development centres, all dedicated to help to build capacity and link creative enterprises with other players to create synergies.

At the same time it is important, that governments wouldn't only direct funds into intermediaries, but also invest into companies and talents.

As was mentioned earlier, the key success factor in exporting and internationalization is competent team with necessary skills. It is widely accepted that university education does not prepare creative professionals to successfully operate on international arena.

You cannot create company successful on international level at home. Music managers and label owners, as well as designers should first gain experience by trainings and apprenticeships in well functioning companies (both in the country and abroad) and then create their own business. The government and universities should develop joint programmes for cultural students and business development students, also to initiate internship programmes.

Even though there are number of existing programmes available that creative entrepreneurs could benefit from, there is a low level of awareness. The communication channels used by the business support agencies are often unknown to design and music sectors. In Estonia, Creative Estonia programme rewrote generic business development materials from the perspective of creative companies with specific examples. This helps to digest the relevant information better for the cultural and creative companies.

6th Step: BE PRESENT, BE VISIBLE

To enter foreign markets, you need to be 'out there', people need to talk about you, your product, company or brand. Even though it is one of the most expensive parts of exporting, it is important to be present where the industry meets. You should be touring and showcasing on international events as much as you can.

Do you have your own network of people that can be helpful with international contacts? If not, then you should start building it right now. Creative professionals should work together to share information through informal communication platforms (e.g. Facebook groups).

Being present is not only physical presence, but also virtual. Is your website attractive? Is it accessible in different languages? Has it been optimized for search engines? Do you know what do your clients do and think about your website and online distributions channels?

Social media is revolutionizing the way we do business. It has both its opportunities and threats. With a small budget and Facebook branding it is possible to have a good coverage and mobilise lots of fans. Often it is not about who has the idea first. It is about who is the loudest.

People from Nordic and Baltic countries are stereotypically not very good in presentation skills. In addition to have a great idea, it is important, how to pitch, how to sell and how to promote your products and brand.

Many successful creative companies have found a way to create lots of international media attention through the use of global celebrities. Sometimes it is that one name, one recommendation, one like or one Instagram photo that could make all the difference.

Case:

Local Heros Polish fashion brand find their innovative way to be really visible. How 2-3 persons company does it? Let Justin Biber wear your t-shirt and post it on Instagram!

The idea behind gaining recognisability by Local Heros is as simple as fun may be. It all started with **JUSTIN BIEBER** wearing the iconic **DOING REAL STUFF SUCKS T-SHIRT**. How they made it? Just delivers the t-shirt to his home and he actually worn it and let paparazzi being "cought" wearing it. Now the Local Heroes team consists of **RIHANNA, RITA ORA, CARA DELEIVINGNE, SELENA GOMEZ** and many more - helping Local Heroes to drive international press coverage and become available on five continents and within major retailers such as asos.com and Urban Outfitters

Some creative professionals work with blogs. It is good way to grow client base, but also to interact with your followers and have feedback for your products and services.

Good news for creative companies from Baltic Sea region is that people globally are increasingly

interested in new things – new faces, new tastes. People are ready to experiment. This creates new opportunities.

Support organisations should be cooperating more within countries and between the countries in the region. Showcase festivals already have some cooperation in the field of music, so should the fashion weeks. There are too many fashion weeks (and other kind of events) in the Baltic Sea region. They should cooperate more with each other to have a bigger effect on the industry.

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7th Step: KEEP INNOVATING

You went through all the previous steps and after hard work managed to have a breakthrough to international market. If you think that getting it to the stores in New York is the most difficult part of the journey, think again! It's even harder to provide new products every season, because you are constantly expected to do better and innovate.

Playing in the 'international league' means serious business. It requires you to be ahead of your game. If you stop innovating, you are out of the game. As said before – you don't only have to create new products or services, but also create new markets. Innovating is not only about innovating your products, but also your business model.

"It's easy to be stucked in what you do, especially when you see how hard it is to move forward" said Nico Mollindar, Swedish song writer and producer working for 17 years with such artis like Lady Gaga, Jonas Brothers, Kylie Minogue or Hannah Montana Disney show. Nico stressed that his key to success was to see the new possibilities. "I've been really good in seeing new opportunities, to look where you can put your music, where you can find new directions that you didn't even think earlier that was possible". Niclas has created a platform called "Audlly" that brought to music producers innovative models for making money on music. His own way to break throught was rather innovative as well and all started with making music for toys. And from there Niclas found himself one day making music for Disney show Jonas Brothers.

You have to think about new business models for new revenues to reach new customers. In music and in fashion alike you have to be able to differentiate yourself from your competitors. What is your competitive advantage? What makes you to stand out in the market? What is your unique selling pointing?

You have to think outside the box. Push away the box, forget about the box altogether! You have to constantly innovate, but you also need to know what already works. What are your signature products and services?

To innovate, look around what is happening within your industry and in other related industries? Involve your customers in your innovation processes – ask their feedback and input.

Collaborate with other partners, those, that you have maybe never worked with or never though of cooperating. Surround yourself with people with different backgrounds, skills and competences. Allow free flow of ideas and discussions. New ideas and innovations might grow out from unexpected sources.

8th Step: TAKE RISKS AND BE READY TO FAIL

When we analyse the success stories of companies that have made it internationally, we find out that it usually involves hard work and lots of experience. Some luck. And quite probably some failures.

If you want to be successful, be ready to fail a lot before you rise. You need to change your tactics, but be consequent with your strategy – don't give up at the first setback.

You need to be ready to fail. You have to be ready to make wrong decisions many times before you will find the right one. Exporting is expensive. You risk losing money. That is part of a business. And you don't only have to learn from your own mistakes and failures. Even better is to learn from other people's mistakes. Analyse other good and bad practices, what worked well and where did they do mistakes?

When you decide to invest into exporting and internationalisation, you need to be consistent. If you are at the showcases or showrooms, you need to be there many years in a row. These connections often take time and if you are impatient, you might lose your chance (especially in Asia). Do not expect that the world will open its doors for you just the very moment you start going abroad with your products. Exporting creative products is a long process and you need to be ready for it. Often it takes few years before you see the results of your investments. You need to be patient, but also aware that you probably may not afford not waiting for the turn over? If you try once and go, you may be almost sure that your money goes with you. However if you invest your time, talent and money in export for few years in a row it is highly probable that you will make it.

Talk to positive people. Find inspiration from other's success. If you surround yourself only with pessimists and those who see threats, you will never be ready to make that one big step.

Be ready to 'kill your darlings' if it doesn't work out. You have to focus on your key messages and key products. You have to have only few messages, because your customers will remember only these.

You have to know what are your strengths. You can't be best in everything. If a restaurant has a menu of 10 pages, it is not a top class restaurant. Do less, but be excellent in those things.

When everything else is changing, focus on your identity. Stick to some things that don't change and that your fans and clients and customers can always relate to.

And remember the old proverb: 'He who doesn't risk never gets to drink champagne.'

PARTICIPANT PROFILES

JONAS SJÖSTÖRM

music expert (SE)

Jonas is the owner and CEO of Playground Music Scandinavia AB, the largest independent music group in Scandinavia. Previously he was Managing Director of MNW Records Group 1978-1999, CEO HNH (Naxos International) Hong Kong and external consultant for Edel (Germany). Jonas was one of the founders of the European independents association Impala and has served on the board since 2000 and is Chairman as of September 2011. Previously he was Chairman of Swedish Independent Record Producers Association for 25 years. Jonas is presently also Chairman of Swedish Label Rights Association and a Board Member of IFPI Sweden.

HELEN SILDNA

music expert (EE)

Helen has been involved with music industry for over 14 years as a promoter, artist booker and a spokesperson for the new generation of local music entrepreneurs. She is the founder and director of Tallinn Music Week, an annual talent showcase festival and music industry conference in Tallinn, Estonia. She also runs and owns a music promotion company Musiccase and is an active member of various cultural development associations.

ANNA HILDUR HILDIBRANDSDÓTTIR

music expert (IS)

Anna has lived in the UK for over 20 years. Working as a London-based correspondent for National media in Iceland from 1992 and freelancing for the BBC and NHK, she went on to launch her own artist management and consultancy company, Hill Media, in 1998. She later worked with several Icelandic and UK bands and set up a UK brand of Icelandic label Smekkleysa. From 2003 to 2006 Anna consulted for Icelandair and Mr Destiny on building the Iceland Airwaves brand, before taking over its management in 2010 as part of her work as the first MD of Iceland Music Export. From 2012 she is Nordic Music Export's Programme Director.

LINDA PORTNOFF

music expert (SE)

Linda is a researcher and entrepreneur interested in the relation between cultural and economic value and in creating a sustainable financing solution for cultural creators. She holds a PhD in accounting and finance and has studied the changes in the music industry landscape since the beginning of the 21st century. Together with the Swedish music industry, she has developed a model and method to measure the worth of the Swedish domestic and export music markets including sales of recorded music in physical and digital formats, copyright revenue, and concert revenue. Linda Portnoff is part time researcher at the Center for Arts, Business and Culture at the Stockholm School of Economics, and part time Acting Director at the Swedish interest organization Musiksverige

TONE SKÅRDAL TOBIASSON

Nordic Fashion Association/NICE (NO)

Tone is a journalist, who holds her degree in media and sociology from Stanford University. She was editor-in-chief for Norway's leading fashion magazine, also having written several books. Tone was main driving force behind the establishment of the NICE project (Nordic Initiative Clean & Ethical) and nicefashion.org. She has written for fashion magazines and media in general, locally and international, on the theme of sustainability. She was instrumental in establishing the Textile Panel in Norway.

DOROTA STĘPNIAK

fashion expert (PL)

Dorota is a founder of Łódź Design – International Design Festival. She co-organised Fotofestiwal – International Photography Festival, Łódź Biennale 2006, O!to Design. Currently she is working with FashionPhilosophy Fashion Week Poland as operational manager, also as a journalist for magazine 2plus3D and is a lecturer at Viva Moda Fashion School. She studied Material technologies and textile design at Łódź University of Technology.

LOTTA ALHVAR

fashion expert (SE)

Lotta has an impressive fashion career and holds significant influence in Sweden's fashion industry with her former role as the CEO of the Swedish Fashion Council. She is a board member and one of the founders of the Nordic Fashion Association, which champions sustainable fashion through the regional project, the Nordic Initiative Clean and Ethical (NICE). Previously, she worked as a fashion designer, at H&M and Esprit de Corp, after studying fashion design at Beckmans College of Design.

RAGNAR SIIL

*workshop moderator,
managing partner of Creativity Lab (EE)*

Ragnar is a founder and managing partner of Creativity Lab - Estonian creative economy think tank and consultancy group. Previously he was Estonian Undersecretary for the Arts. Ragnar was chairing the EU expert group on cultural and creative industries from 2011 to 2014. Ragnar is an expert of the European Creative Industries Alliance. He is currently appointed by the European Commission to assist the governments of Ukraine and Georgia in implementing their cultural policy reforms.

MIIA KOSKI

Pre Helsinki (FI)

Miia Koski has a Master's degree from the Helsinki School of Economics and is currently working as a freelance producer within the fields of fashion and design. Previously Miia worked for the global design initiative, World Design Capital Helsinki 2012, where she was responsible for the corporate partners participation to the program.

Pre Helsinki is a platform for Finnish fashion by Finnish designers and professionals. Pre Helsinki organizes yearly event in Helsinki in May, the programme consists of fashion shows and presentations, seminars and talks, as well as parties and visits to designers' ateliers. Pre Helsinki also participates to international fashion weeks by organising showrooms and press events. Miia is in charge of overall project management at Pre Helsinki as well as for production and partnerships.

THORHALLUR JONSSON

Crunchy Frog/Crunchy Tunes (DK)

Thorhallur works for Crunchy Frog Recordings in Copenhagen, which just celebrated 20 years in business and is one of the leading indie labels in Denmark. Crunchy Frog Releases records digitally worldwide and the markets include Scandinavia, Germany, Austria, Switzerland, France, UK, Benelux and Canada. It also includes a publishing company Crunchy Tunes.

TONY DUCKWORTH

Mystic Production (PL)

Tony has been music professional since 1981 having worked in various areas of the industry. In 2004 a move to Poland resulted in setting up his own sales, marketing, PR and distribution company. In 2009 he joined forces with Mystic Production, the leading independent music distributor in Poland. Mystic Production has over 15 years of experience in the Polish music industry. The company has developed steadily becoming one of the largest and most successful independent record labels and distributors in Poland.

LIVA BREMERE

The Red Jackets (LV)

Liva represents The Red Jackets movement that is a non-governmental organization creating the story about Latvia through the lens of our best exporting brands. In 2014, 25 enterprises were awarded with the title of 'Red Jackets', that have proved their excellence in export, brand marketing and sharing the values and treasures of Latvia. Liva holds a Master's degree in Political science from the University of Latvia.

MARTA TOCA

I'M Your Shirt (LV)

Marta is a co-founder and graphic designer for I'M Your Shirt. I'M Your Shirt is clothing and accessory brand with the main theme being a shirt. The company created a design tool, which could be used by anyone to create their own shirt or blouse according to their taste and size. Marta holds her degree in fashion design from Art Academy of Latvia; she has previously worked as a graphic designer in various advertising agencies.

MEGAN HORAN

Bedroom Community (IS)

Megan is a label manager for Bedroom Community. Bedroom Community is an Icelandic record label/collective formed in 2006. Like-minded, yet diverse individuals from different corners of the globe all creatively orbit around an inconspicuous building and its inhabitants on the outskirts of Reykjavík Iceland - Greenhouse Studios - where the music is mostly created. Megan has been working in the music business since 2009 when she began managing bands in Sydney Australia.

JUSSI HAUTALA

Result Entertainment Management (FI)

Jussi is head of artist management at Result Entertainment, an entertainment company focusing on artist management and branded entertainment. He is a born-global manager focusing on exporting some of the best talent in Northern hemisphere and taking care of business on the side. During the past few years Jussi has been involved with recorded music business as well as management and consulting. He has a bachelor's degree in Music Management & Artist Development and he's focusing fully in exporting talented artists outside the borders of Finland.

MINDAUGAS MORKUNAS

Fashion Infection Festival (LT)

Mindaugas is a founder & managing director at Sick Service, which manages the FASHION INFECTION festival – one of the most prominent fashion events in the Baltics. Event is distinguished for its conceptuality, bohemian spirit, extraordinary and unconventional fashion shows. Festival involves catwalk shows, exhibitions, show rooms and fashion seminars. Since 2008 Sick Service organizes upcoming designers award INJECTION that is dedicated to find new fashion designers from Lithuania and neighbour countries.

OLGA TUSZEWSKA

KAYAX (PL)

Olga is a manager of an alternative pop artist BRODKA whose all three records turned platinum and is about to release an album worldwide. She represents KAYAX - a Polish independent entertainment company, which operates record label, music publisher, management and concert agency.

MICHAŁ WŁODARCZYK

Local Heroes (PL)

Michał is one of the founders of Local Heroes. Local Heroes started with a budget of 150\$, and what began as a small tee collection has evolved into an innovative exciting and youthful street wear brand with a complete product range. It all started with Justin Bieber wearing the iconic 'Doing real stuff sucks' T-shirt. Now the Local Heroes team consists of Rihanna, Rita Ora, Cara Delevingne, Selena Gomez and many more helping locals to drive international press coverage and become available on five continents and within major retailers.

EYGLÓ AMRGRÉT LÁRUSDÓTTIR

Eygló (IS)

Eygló started her own label in 2006 after graduating from the Iceland Academy of Arts. She is a part of 9 designers that co-owns the shop Kiosk in Reykjavik. Eygló continuously tries to rediscover the wheel in pattern cutting as well as in detailing which gives her collections a bit of a futuristic view. Eygló, who has been working with prints lately, either being inspired by dinosaurs, the surface of mars, or making Icelandic camouflage, also likes to work with different textures in her garments.

DOROTA GAWRON

DOROTHÉ (PL)

Dorota is a founder of DOROTHÉ. Previously she was a model, beauty contestant and a one-time chief editor of a wedding fashion magazine. The clothes are created for women who appreciate unique and individual styles. DOROTHÉ's designs combine the comfort of sportswear with casual elegance – they radiate sensuality and class. A company trademark is their item's colourful lining – which look amazing in their contrast with the outer designs.

NATALIE METS

The Baltic Scene (EE)

Natalie started off as a founder of a successful event-series. From that moment she has been involved with numerous events, concerts and festivals as a co-promoter. She has been working as a manager, booking-agent and PR-consultant for several Estonian young musician. She is the founder of The Baltic Scene - a marketing platform for up-and-coming music talent from Baltics.

MONIKA KLONOWSKA

Good Music Productions (PL)

Monika is a head promoter and co-founder of Good Music Productions, leading concert promoter from Warsaw, Poland. Good Music runs two festivals in Warsaw: Free Form Festival, which originated in 2005, and Warsaw Music Week, which originated in 2010. Free Form Festival is one of the biggest and most important music and cultural events in Poland. The festival focuses on electronic music and visual arts, but also serves as a platform for exhibition of young polish designers and video art artists. Warsaw Music Week is the biggest indoor music festival in Warsaw.

KRISZTA CSALA

Design Terminal (HU)

Kriszta is a creative project manager and producer with professional experience in the fields of art, design and fashion. Educated in Budapest, Vienna and Barcelona, she holds diplomas in the fields of art history, media studies and art and design management. She currently works as a project manager and head of the fashion division at Design Terminal, a Budapest-based national agency for the Hungarian creative industries. The goal of Design Terminal is to encourage young designers to build up their businesses in Hungary and then expand to foreign markets, draw the attention of national and international investors to the inherent business potential of their talent.

HELEN PIIR

Diana Arno (EE)

Arno Fashion is a small fashion company, which is focused on designing and producing women's clothing under the brand Diana Arno. Creation of Diana Arno is influenced by her roots and can be shortly described as Northern severity mixed with Russian playfulness. The brand represents women in their thirties and forties, who value quality and amenities in everything. Previously Helen has worked as an office manager in Tallinn Business Incubators Foundation, where she also managed a European project Baltic Fashion.

JOSE CUNYAT

Feelthebeat (DE)

Jose Cunyat is in charge of the Product Design at feelthebeat. Feelthebeat is a wearable metronome that vibrates in sync to the beat. It can be connected via Bluetooth to any smartphone or tablet. Jose holds a degree in product design and graphic design. He is specialized in consumer electronics, packaging design, CAD development, injection molds and 3D photorealistic visualizations.

DACE OZOLA

Best of Baltic Entertainment (LV)

Dace is a CEO of Best of Baltic Entertainment (web platform www.bobe.me). It is a web page and social media platform that delivers latest news about upcoming Baltic entertainment events and news from local and international artists. They offer unique combination of marketing, PR and social media services with the aim to promote events and artists.



SPECIAL GUESTS, HOSTS AND ORGANIZERS:

1. Eduardas Borisovas, *Deputy Director General of CBSS*
2. Pia Erson, *Director of Ars Division, Ministry of Culture of Sweden*
3. Arkadiusz Bernaś, *Director of Polish Insitute in Stockholm*
4. Anna Tomaszewska, *Deputy Director of Polish Institute in Stockholm,*
5. Anthoiny Jay, *Head of PR, CBSS*
6. Mirjam Kulm, *project manager, CBSS*
7. Anna Ceynowa, *Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, Poland, PA Culture co-coordinator*
8. Stefan Musiolik, *Ministry of Jusitce, Culture and European Affaires, Schleswig-Holstein, PA Culture co-coordinator*
8. Małgorzata Moch, *Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, Poland*
9. Marcus Hagemann, *Head of the Secretariat ARS BALTICA*
10. Anna Stelmaszczyk, *Adam Mickiewicz Institute*
11. Agnieszka Kondracka, *Adam Mickiewicz Institute*

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