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## SUSTAINABLE CITIES – HOW INTERACTIONS IN THE ARTS AND CULTURAL NETWORKS CONTRIBUTE

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### Abstract

Prior research has connected the arts and cultural activities with the growth of creative industries, innovation, and the economic competitiveness of cities and regions. Cultural value has also come to be recognized as important fourth dimension of sustainability. However, artistic and cultural activities also operate at a symbolic level to reflect, reinforce and reinterpret social goals and identity. At a time when city-level policy-makers are seeking to attract high-value creative industries and also to make cities more sustainable, arts and cultural activities come into focus as an interesting area for research. The specific ways in which the arts and cultural sector contributes to the sustainability of a city, and the processes and mechanisms through which they do so, have not been extensively researched to date. Further, the networked, interactive nature of arts and cultural activities suggests that an interaction approach offers a valuable lens through which to explore this phenomenon. This paper provides a conceptual overview of the role of the arts and cultural sector in policies for the development of sustainable cities. It explores the nature of the network interactions within the arts and cultural sector, and between that sector and the government and private sectors, in Canberra, an Australian city with explicit policies to promote sustainable city development.

### 1. Introduction

This paper examines how interactions in the arts and cultural networks contribute towards the development of sustainable cities and looks specifically at the case of Canberra, Australia's national capital, located in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), which governs local policy in the capital. We review the research on the concept of the 'creative city' and its relationship to debates over sustainability in urban growth and development. While there has been considerable research on the link between 'cultural' and 'creative' industries – so defined – and economic and urban growth, there is relatively little research to date on the specific role and function of the ultimate creative drivers of those 'industries' – the creative artists themselves. Their roles and practices in the overall complex of the 'creative city' and the 'sustainable city' have been gradually receiving more focus in recent years (Ratiu, 2013), but the specifics are still quite poorly understood, and in particular, the part played by interactions amongst creative artists – who are highly networked in their professional practices – and

between them, on the one hand, and other actor networks, on the other, that are involved in the development of sustainable creative cities (Kagan et al. 2018). It is therefore surprising that so little of the research literature on sustainable cities or creative cities references the relationships and network interactions approach (Oberg et al. 2017); we suggest that an interactions approach may help to resolve some of the contradictions that presently hamper attempts to develop policies towards urban development that are both creative and sustainable.

This paper reviews the dilemmas facing policy-makers who seek to pursue both sustainability and creativity goals in urban policy and outline the potential for analyzing these challenges using an interactions approach. We look specifically at the case of Canberra, Australia's capital city, a planned city in the Australian Capital Territory (ACT), where the government has explicit policies aimed at making the city more sustainable, and where arts and cultural policies are also aimed at leveraging the knowledge economy to develop an attractive 'creative city.' We highlight contradictions and inconsistencies in the ACT government's policy prescriptions and how they are being implemented, ones that have been noted in other 'creative city' cases in the research literature. By focusing explicitly on the processes and content of the interactions amongst specific actors – and in particular on the catalytic effects of the creative arts in these interactions – we suggest a greater degree of coherence and consistency may be brought to bear on the joint policy goals of sustainability and creativity in urban development. We conclude by suggesting that the theories and frameworks developed in the relationships and network interactions literature provide useful lenses for further understanding how both sustainability and creative city goals can be achieved.

The paper therefore considers the following research question:

RQ: What can the relationships, networks and interactions approach contribute towards policies aimed at achieving sustainable creative cities?

The paper is structured as follows: We first review the literature on sustainable cities and creative cities; next we examine the question of what is meant by 'creative industries' in the creative city debate. We then look at the concept of 'place' in the discussion of creative cities and how that plays a role in creativity and sustainability. We then review the nature of interactions amongst creative artists and the potential for this to perform a catalytic role in sustainability policy. We summarise the potential contribution that the business relationships and network interactions approach can potentially make to this research. Finally we look at sustainability and creativity policies in Canberra as a case of a local government attempting to pursue a creative sustainable city strategy. Research studies are categorized in Table 1.

## 2. The challenge of sustainable cities

Cities play an ambiguous role in the challenge of sustainability. Past patterns of urban growth have placed extraordinary pressure on the natural environment, on social structures and on local economies; they have also transformed cultures, often fracturing significant connections to place and identity. With more than half the world's population now living in urban areas, cities stand in the front line of the sustainability debate because large concentrated populations will be amongst those most affected by the consequences of climate change (Kagan et al., 2018). As a result, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) No. 11 aims to "make cities inclusive, safe, resilient, sustainable" (United Nations, Sustainable Development Goals) and to this end, Sustainable Urban Development (SUD) has become an important goal of public policy (Kagan et al., 2018).

Cities also hold the key to solving many of those challenges (Fusco Girard, 2011). They host substantial concentrations of scientific and creative knowledge. At the city-level, urban policy-makers have in their hands many of the policy-levers for bringing about sustainability-focused change. It is at the city level that town layouts are designed, planning decisions are made, public transport systems are designed and operated, garbage disposal and waste are managed and treated, car vehicle emissions are tested, road use, car parking and other local transportation infrastructure are decided. So many of the elements that go into creating a sustainable lived environment turn out to be ones that city governments are directly responsible for.

Culture plays a vital role in this context (Nurse, 2006). UNESCO explains the link as follows: “If achieving sustainability is first and foremost about making an appropriate use of the planet’s resources, then culture must be at the centre of our development strategies, since cultures frame people’s relationship to others in their society and the world around them, including the natural environment, and condition their behaviours” (UNESCO, Culture and Development). For sustainable cities are not only an issue of city planning; they also depend vitally on questions of ideology and of values (Ratiu, 2013).

Kirchberg and Kagan (2013) also emphasize the links between culture and other aspects of urban sustainability in their definition of sustainable cities: “cities where people can come to practice ecologically resilient, socially equitable and inter-culturally vibrant modes of life” (Kirchberg & Kagan, 2013; p.141). Such a city would aim to realise key principles such as a reduced emphasis on material values; production systems that are sensitized to the pre- and post- stages of consumption informed by ecological cycles; a moral system that values the unique, the non-commoditized; a striving for quality of life; cultural development; mental, spiritual well-being as well as physical well-being (Kirchberg & Kagan, 2013). Sustainable development at the city level must therefore include the cultural dimension: “Together with technical evaluations (economic, ecological) the definition of sustainability derives from the principle of an ethical nature, which depends on a more refined way of evaluating the environmental question... The principle of sustainability is therefore combined with the capacity of attributing values and collective meanings of institutional hierarchies which guide choice in relation to cultural and political values, and by pursuing the goals of equity, quality of life and extended social safety” (D’Auria, 2001; p.44).

Research on urban sustainability mainly appears in the urban planning and sociology literature. It applies stakeholder network theories to balance multiple stakeholder interests in urban development (Fusco Girard, 2011). But while this research considers the structure and membership of networks and their general impact on urban sustainability (D’Auria, 2001), it tends not to look at the dynamics of the interactions arising in those relationships. This is the great strength of the business relationships and networks literature, which analyses the specific content of the interactions themselves, treating them as processes through which particular actors engage in specific resource combinations, through activities located in local contexts of time and space (Ford et al. 2010). Knowledge, learning and mutual adaptation processes are embedded, entangled, in the interactions amongst specific and not simply a consequence of proximity or shared institutional context (Eklinder-Frick, 2016). Oberg et al.’s (2017) review of the literature on ‘smart cities’ shows how the interactions perspective can be applied to explore policies for urban sustainability in finer detail. Vildasen and Havensid (2018) show the way by applying an interaction model using the Actor bonds, Resource ties and Activity links (ARA) framework to examine changes in business relationships and networks motivated by the goal of corporate sustainability.

### 3. The lure of the ‘creative city’

Concepts of culture and creativity are also central to another city-level debate. Cities provide geographic concentrations of high-value knowledge-based industries that are seen to be vital to future economic competitiveness (Florida, 2002). The Silicon Valley phenomenon in the US triggered interest in the preconditions for industrial clustering (Porter, 1990) and the connection between knowledge-intensive technology industries and the networked human and physical geographies which seem to give rise to them (Saxenian, 1996). From the mid-1990s, the cultural industries came to be recognized as substantial contributors to modern economic growth as part of the booming services sector (DCMS, 2001) the vital role played by creativity in their patterns of innovation and led to a shift in thinking which saw the ‘cultural industries’ redefined as ‘creative industries’ (Throsby, 2008) with creativity and innovation placed at the core of the new economic competitiveness (Florida, 2002). Culture, in the sense of ‘high’ culture’ came to be viewed more as a host domain within which to explore the workings of a universal human capability for ‘creativity.’ This cluster of concepts has resulted in a huge literature on ‘creative cities’ as the powerhouses of 21<sup>st</sup> Century economic competitiveness (Howkins 2001), resulting in normative prescriptions about how urban policy-makers could achieve the modern ‘creative city’ utopia (Landry & Bianchini, 1995, Florida, 2002; 2005).

However, prescriptions for urban policy to build the ‘Creative City’ (Landry & Bianchini, 1995; Florida, 2002; 2005) have been widely criticized in the sociology and urban planning literature. Pratt (2008) challenges these prescriptions, in particular the ‘creative city manual’ approach (Landry & Bianchini, 1995), noting how it contributes to social inequality, as cultural consumption displaces existing lower income urban residents (including creative producers) and a gentrification takes place as middle class consumers of culture move in. Sustainability is also social and cultural; values of equity, inclusiveness and belonging are vital to social wellbeing (Ratiu, 2013). The new-economy, creativity-driven, knowledge-based ‘creative city’ policies are primarily motivated by a competition to build cultural amenities as ‘bait’ for mobile, high-skills creative knowledge-workers and the investment in knowledge-based industries that will deliver urban economic growth and the renewal of decayed industrial districts (Pratt, 2008). The associated gentrification of inner urban areas then works against sustainability by widening the income inequality and fracturing social cohesion (Pratt, 2011; Storper & Scott, 2009). The ‘new-economy’ is associated with other unsustainable side-effects to which creative professionals are particularly exposed: a shift to short-term project engagements, the ‘gig-economy’ in which creative practitioners must become self-employed, self-exploiting entrepreneurs working unlimited hours as sole traders, with reduced employment security and minimal social protection (Throsby, 2010; Vivant, 2013). Meanwhile the phenomenon of creative talent crowd-sourcing replaces specific network relationships rich in local knowledge with a globally commodified approach to creative tasks (Ratiu, 2013, Scott, 2014).

### 4. What is meant by ‘creative industries’ in the ‘creative cities’ context?

The hype generated by the focus on ‘creative industries’ as a new urban panacea entailed a lot of unclear thinking about what is meant by ‘creativity’ (Ratiu, 2013). The UK government’s Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) placed ‘creativity’ at the service of economic goals of wealth- and job-creation, identifying 14 industry subsectors employing about 1 million people in “industries that have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have the potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property” (DCMS, 2001, p.5).

Hall (2000) notes Pratt's different definition, focusing not so much on creativity as an input, but rather on the products of 'cultural industries' – cultural products in four dimensions: performance (in the form of fine art and literature); their reproduction (as books, journal magazines, newspapers, film, radio, televisions, recordings on disc or tape); activities that link together art forms (such as advertising); and also the production, distribution and display processes of printing and broadcasting, as well as museums, libraries, theatres, night clubs, and galleries (Hall, 2000). Scott's (1999) definition focuses more on artistic/symbolic content and the purpose of creative works, defining 'creative industries' as those that produce "...artefacts imbued with imaginative aesthetic and semiotic content" produced by "sectors in modern capitalism that cater to consumer demands for amusement, ornamentation, self-affirmation, social display and so on... Such outputs have a high symbolic value relative to utilitarian purposes." (Scott 1999, p. 807 cited in Drake, 2003; p. 512). Throsby's (2008) concentric circles model shows the interrelations of a core of 'creative occupations' with successive rings of other cultural industries that draw on them radiating outwards. However, the new emphasis on creativity as the motive force for endogenous growth in the knowledge economy resulted in a useful shift from 'creative arts' as the exclusive preserve of an elite of exceptionally talented art professionals towards a view of 'creativity' as a universal human capability that manifests in a wide range of work domains (Ratiu, 2013). In this context, Evans' (2009) study provides a valuable and balanced analysis of creative cities and urban policy.

## 5. Cities as 'places' for creativity and sustainability

The normative, urban growth and regeneration prescriptions for 'creative cities' overlook the significance of locality and place, which are fundamental to the concepts of both 'sustainability' and 'creativity'. Cities are complex networks comprised of localized districts, with people moving between the domains of work, home, education, entertainment and so on. Particular facilities, cultural or otherwise – universities, museums, theatres, libraries and so on – exist in particular places (Comunian, 2011). Comunian (2011) notes how cultural activities and the organization of cities are dynamic, complex and largely unpredictable; interactions in cities are non-linear and place-specific. "It is not possible to understand the cultural development of a city in a vacuum; specificity of the context and its historical development contribute to the cultural profile" (Comunian, 2011; p. 1162). D'Auria (2001) describes the case of Naples, where the nearby presence of the Pompeii excavation exerts a global 'gravitational' force that has massive impacts on the economic, social and cultural fabric of the city, and this presents challenges to local infrastructure and sustainable development policies. Ratiu notes how a focus on cultural and social aspects of sustainability may give rise to sustainable creative cities that emphasize social interaction rather than solely focusing on questions of environment infrastructure (Ratiu, 2013)

Place is also fundamental to artists' creative practice (Evans, 2009). Drake's (2003) study of 31 artists working in digital design and craft metalwork in London, Sheffield and Newcastle found three aspects of place fundamental to their creative practice: (1) Locality as an important source of visual materials and stimuli; (2) The 'buzz' – a combination of unpredictability and excitement triggered by interactions both co-operative and competitive in a community of creative workers; and (3) Locality as a brand based on historical/cultural associations and traditions as a catalyst (this was particularly true for the Sheffield and Newcastle-based metalwork artists who saw themselves continuing in a 100-year tradition of craft design and manufacturing) (Drake, 2003).

A new place-centric understanding of creative cities provides clues as to how cities can be made more sustainable. The development of viable and sustainable creative cities depends

vitality on changes in ideology and mindset, and in this process, the creative arts have an important role to play. The sustainable creative city has to go beyond reproducing the dominant market-economic order and build sustainable communal identity, social belongingness, for which the sense of place is not mobile and contingent but rather deeply held and personally valued; “a viable and sustainable creative city... is about shaping viable urban places and communities, and not about entertainment profit and property development” (Ratiu, 2013; p. 134). Sustainable creative cities need to be viewed as complex living organisms, and policies need to embrace participatory, bottom-up, intergenerational approaches where trial and error (i.e. iterative) experiments are fostered to build resilience and create tangible and intangible values for the present and the future (Kirchberg & Kagan, 2013; p. 141). “The city is an evolving, in-flux and dynamic system. Sustainability strategy is characterized by the capacity to manage growing urban complexity and solve conflicts with new synthesis capacity, integrating multiple elements and components, generally considered in conflicts/contradiction, identifying new connections, synergies and networks” (Fusco Girard, 2011; p. 127).

Research on creative cities mainly appears in the regional economic growth, innovation and urban regeneration literature. The ‘creative city’ research divides between the normative/prescriptive, ‘new knowledge economy’ approach, which views knowledge and creativity as disembodied global commodities that ‘spill over’ from ‘creative sectors’ into other realms of economic activity (DCMS, 2001; Florida, 2002; Landry & Bianchini, 1995), and the localized place-centric approach, which values the unique heterogeneity of place and the specificity of actor interactions (D’Auria, 2001; Drake, 2003; Evans, 2009; Fusco Girard, 2011). The critique of contradictions in the sustainable creative city debate focuses mainly on the economic, social and cultural divides that are exacerbated by urban gentrification when the normative/prescriptive approach to urban growth is pursued to the exclusion of other stakeholders (Kagan & Hahn, 2011; Pratt, 2008; Scott, 2014; Vivant, 2013).

Sustainability-oriented urban policy change and ‘creative city’ development can both be thought of as areas of urban policy innovation. Eklinder-Frick and Age (2017) contrast the approaches of ‘New Economic Geography’ and IMP researchers towards regional innovation policies, highlighting how the former treats knowledge and innovation as phenomena that arise through geographic proximity and shared institutional context, whereas the relationships and networks interaction view treats innovation as a phenomenon that arises in interactions between socio-material resource combinations between specific organisations in specific environmental contexts. The localized place-centric approach to creative city analysis exactly coincides with the context-specific, actor-specific, ‘embedded knowledge’ approach of the relationships, networks and interactions tradition, which therefore offers substantial potential as an approach for analyzing place-centric creative city policies.

## 6. Interactions amongst the creative arts and artists as catalysts for the sustainable creative city?

Ratiu asks: What could be a true sustainable role for artists and the arts in creative city practices and sustainable development? Interactions between the arts and other worlds of production have led to “an internalization of... key values associated with creativity: autonomy, flexibility, non-hierarchical environment, inventiveness, risk-taking and so on” (Ratiu, 2013; p. 132). He notes how modern culture brings a new emphasis on self-expression and hedonism to capitalism’s protestant ethic, between the bohemian and the bourgeois. But these lifestyles emphasizing flexibility and hyper-mobility are unsustainable. There are costs such as material and psychological insecurity, and the work logic of network capitalism,

organized around short-lived projects: “increasing anxiety, insecurity, and precariousness” (Ratiu, 2013; p.132).

Culture, art and creativity in the urban context is informed by three conceptualizations of cultural policy: (1) Social instrumentalism, e.g. Social integration (immigrants, unemployed) (2) Economic instrumentalism, e.g. Promoting a globally attractive city; and (3) That culture is important for social existence. Different urban plans speak with different ‘voices’ when it comes to culture and art. (Boren & Young, 2017). Ratiu notes how a focus on cultural and social aspects of sustainability may result in creative cities that emphasize social interaction rather than solely on environment and infrastructural sustainability (Ratiu, 2013; p.127). Throsby (2010) notes a number differences between artistic work and other kinds: the financial rewards are lower and more variable, and “non-pecuniary motives” play a large part in the choice of how artists spend their time (Throsby, 2010, p. 49). He also notes crucial differences in the nature of artistic output: “Artistic works can be interpreted as stores of value, where value is interpreted as a multidimensional phenomenon including cultural value, including “aesthetic, spiritual, symbolic, and other types of value” (Throsby, 2010; p.50).

Interaction and collaboration are central to creative artistic processes in the creative city (Kagan et al. 2018). Audiences interact as participants along with cultural providers, but also with the built environment, the cultural content and with each other. Creative artists mobilize community creative initiatives that change the local environment, sometimes with the support of local authorities, sometimes in opposition to them (Kagan et al. 2018). Cultural planners also interact with national cultural agencies, funding schemes as well as with audiences. Artists’ resource scarcity and non-hierarchical mindsets lead them to interact in horizontally self-organized networks, competing for projects but also co-operating towards common goals. They self-organize into cooperatives to share urban workspaces, costs and other resources (Comunian, 2011; de Klerk, 2015). These interactions can also serve wider questions of urban sustainability, as, for instance when “common passions or interests can give rise to associations of pressure groups pushing towards saving a building or institution or requesting specific types of cultural provision” (Comunian, 2011; p. 1163).

Many creative artists are politically progressive; they are highly aware of the debates around the ‘creative city’ and often oppose culture-led forms of urban economic redevelopment that would lead to gentrification and the marginalization of lower-income groups, including themselves (Boren & Young, 2017; Kirchberg & Kagan, 2013). Boren and Young’s (2017) study of artists in Stockholm shows artists resisting urban gentrification, both individually and in networks, in projects that express concern over a neo-liberalisation of the city, the loss of the ‘social project’ of Stockholm’s long term commitment to social democratic principles, and lamenting that Stockholm has become a place for the wealthy only. However, they note that creative artists also engage with the creative city, and that there is huge untapped potential for this to advance policies of creative urban development. The perceived gap between policymakers’ and creative practitioners’ views of urban development may sometimes be less a case of ideological opposition and more a case of mutual incomprehension coming from fundamentally different world views (Boren & Young, 2017). They note that; “The fostering of interaction between planners on the one hand and creative producers on the other – as distinct from placing artists simply in an oppositional role – is a strategy which is lacking.” (Boren & Young, 2017; p. 24).

In their introduction to a special issue of *City, Culture and Society*, Kagan and Kirchberg note: “The role of artists and their urban arts initiatives, and also of cultural institutions in general would be to push issues of social and cultural sustainability that can be roughly subsumed under attributes of civic participation by bottom-up urban governance, equal

justice, multiple dimensions of diversity, freedom-with-responsibility of alternatives in values and lifestyles, diversity and the political support of indigenous and/or idiosyncratic cultural values in local communities.” (Kagan & Kirchberg, 2013; p. 122)

Ratiu (2013) summarizes the potential role for creative artists as follows:

“Individual and collective expressions of creativity – including artistic ones – could be channeled to address not only urban renewal but also environmentally sustainable economic regeneration, social justice and community building. Thus the arts and artistic creativity could play a significant role in both material and immaterial processes: (a) constructing social identity and contributing to social belonging; (b) creating city image and urban identity; (c) creating culturally meaningful places: place-based myths, narratives and collective memories; (d) contributing to participative processes from the ground; and (e) improving the quality of emotional life and promoting changes towards sustainable lifestyles” (Ratiu, 2013; p. 133).

Kagan et al. (2018) – in an urban development/innovation study – discuss the role of culture as supporting a long-term journey towards urban sustainability through processes that are open, “multi-level, holistic and fault-tolerant” (p. 33) rather than motivated by an idealized ‘sustainability’ based on pre-ordained end-point criteria. They present four cases of creative arts / cultural initiatives impacting on sustainable urban development based in specific locations within the two cities of Hanover and Hamburg. In these cases, cultural organizations perform a catalytic role through: (a) the open, experiment-oriented work-process of artists; (b) the engagement of ‘audiences’ as participants in creative processes; and (c) through transversal networking beyond purely cultural networks into the wider community including city administrators. They find broadly two patterns of interactions between cultural / creative arts initiatives and city administrations: (1) small-scale bottom-up projects initiated by creative artists/groups that catalyze institutional innovations by the city government and constitute experiments with the goal of longer-term, wider urban transformation; but these tend to remain small and underfunded experiments; and (2) larger-scale ‘cultural’ projects initiated top-down by city developers that use ‘creative’ imaging to promote specific urban redevelopments; these tend to be well-funded, but do not result in institutional innovations by city government, or aim at wider urban transformational impacts (Kagan et al. 2018). These cases suggest substantial potential for interrogating further the specifics of what has unfolded within particular interactions using a relationships/networks/interactions methodology. Further, by highlighting the inherently interactive/communicative/transformative nature of creative arts work-processes, Kagan et al., (2018) suggest that interactions that are led by creative artists may be performing a unique catalytic function within the interactions engaged in not only amongst the artists themselves, but also across their wider communities of participants, business interests, city administrations and urban policy-makers.

## 7. The case of Canberra: quasi-sustainable creative city policies

Canberra is situated in a natural fold in the mountains, watered by a river that flows into the mighty Murray-Darling river system – the biggest water system on the Australian continent – and the non-urban parts of the ACT surrounding the city retain many features of the high-altitude temperate vegetation – sparse bush cover and alpine grasses – that characterized the area prior to European settlement, justifying the city’s nickname of ‘the bush capital’. The prior occupants of the land have a proud heritage of custodianship over the landscape and its natural flora and fauna, with social and environmental traditions stretching back many thousands of years. The seasonal abundance of bogong moths provided an important food source for surrounding indigenous peoples, who jointly harvested these resources in the

autumn and winter months. The Ngambri people, sometimes described as a sub-group of the Wiradjuri people, whose land extends all the way to the coast, the Ngarigo, the Walgalu-speaking Ngambri-Guumaal, the Ngunnawal people, and the Nyamudy/Namadgi people are identified as having traditional custodial interests in the Canberra region. Since the development of modern Australia entailed the dispossession of indigenous Australians from their land, the cultural and environmental disconnect between indigenous and other Australians stands as major piece of unfinished business that must be addressed in the sustainability debate.

The ACT Government seeks actively to retain the area's environmental character and has the goal of further transforming Canberra into a sustainable city by means of a range of policies aimed at achieving zero net emissions, promotion of renewable energy, recycling of usable products and materials, environmental investments in water and waste management, sustainable building and urban design, investments in urban light rail and bike paths, as well as through careful management of the surrounding natural landscape (ACT Government, 2014). Canberra ranks 35<sup>th</sup> overall out of the 100 cities surveyed in the Sustainable Cities Index (Arcadis, 2018), but as high as 15<sup>th</sup> on the 'People' sub-index that measures social sustainability factors such as education, health, and a range of other social indicators. However it drops to 44<sup>th</sup> on the 'Planet' sub-index and to 50<sup>th</sup> on indicators related to economic factors such as transport infrastructure, because of the city's high dependence on car transport (Arcadis, 2018; pp. 13, 15 & 17). Over the last few years the ACT government has been investing in light-rail infrastructure in an attempt to address specifically the transport emissions and other car-related environmental issues.

There are multiple layers to the arts and cultural landscape of Canberra and the ACT: The city houses many of the national cultural institutions: the National Library, the National Gallery, the National Museum, and the National Archives, the National Film and Sound Archive, who are charged with collecting, conserving, interpreting and making accessible the national heritage. In performing that role, they are influencers and creators of important aspects of the national identity, and these include powerful images and associations with landscape, history and social traditions. Canberra also accommodates four university campuses, including one of only two art schools in the country that teach in every medium, as well as public and private colleges that provide training in creative arts. The ACT government subsidizes a number of annual festivals of arts and design and supports community-level arts initiatives that take creative activity beyond the defined domain of the studio or gallery and connect it with the everyday lives of citizens. As the seat of National government, average incomes and educational attainment levels in Canberra are the highest of any city in Australia; this generates high levels of cultural consumption and contributes to a rich ecosystem of leisure and amateur creative producers. In 2014, Charles Landry noted Canberra's potential could be enhanced by building a 'culture of collaboration' to harness creativity more widely amongst citizens, the community, government, and other key stakeholders (Landry, 2014). The Appendix provides an ecosystem map of Canberra and its region, plotting environmental and cultural activities.

Both the Federal and ACT Governments provide grants to support the arts and cultural activities of all kinds in Canberra. The ACT Government's Arts Policy aims to make Canberra a culturally rich and vibrant place, contributing to the creation of a 'liveable city.' The current ACT Arts Policy is founded on four core principles: (1) Participation in and access to the arts; (2) Great art and great artists; (3) Vitality of the Canberra region arts ecology; and (4) Engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arts and cultures (Arts ACT, 2015a). This shows an attempt to blend three motivations: community and social engagement; traditional criteria of artistic 'excellence', and the drive for urban growth, regeneration and place marketing. As a region marked by a strong services economy, there are

few industrial sites requiring regeneration, but the Government has been locating community arts initiatives in decommissioned inner-suburban primary schools as the city grows and the younger families move to the newer outer suburbs. An economic overview of the arts, commissioned by the ACT government in 2015 is informed by a Floridæan ‘creative city’ economic philosophy, noting the positive links between ‘creative activity’, ‘innovation and growth’, ‘attractive cities’ and ‘tourism’ (Arts ACT, 2015b).

Achieving policy coherence between sustainability and creative city objectives is made harder in the ACT by the division of responsibilities amongst Ministerial portfolios. The Chief Minister has responsibility for Tourism and Special Events (some of which are cultural) as well as Trade and Investment; the Minister for Environment and Heritage looks after local planning and land management decisions; the Education Minister also looks after Housing and Suburban Development; a separate Minister looks after Climate Change and Sustainability policy; yet another Minister has responsibility for Urban Renewal; and responsibility for the Arts and Community Events rests with the Attorney-General (ACT Government website). If there is a high degree of coordination amongst them, this distribution of roles could potentially ensure sustainability and creative city mindsets become embedded across other areas of policy but in practice that does not seem to be happening.

While there are many positives in the ACT Government’s expressed commitments towards sustainability and the creative city, the city’s light-rail project, approved in 2016, with phase one completed in 2019, illustrates the dominance of the urban economic growth and renewal philosophy in policy thinking. Urban amenity featured in the considerations but the political issue had to be fought at the ballot-box on cost-benefit grounds and the economic case depended on ‘value-uplift’ in the form of assumed increases in land values along the route (Nailer et al., 2019). A substantial proportion of that land was occupied by government-owned public housing, which was demolished and sold to private developers to help fund the project, resulting in the displacement of large numbers of public housing tenants. This case highlights the degree to which the potential for urban policy that focusses holistically on all dimensions of the SDGs / SUD’s - environmental, economic, social, and cultural - still eludes government planners.

## 8. Conclusion

In this paper we have explored the intersection between urban sustainability and the creative city concept and found ‘culture’ and ‘creativity’ standing in an ambiguous place within the two policy domains, contributing to a lack of clarity and confusion in policy. However, we have shown the vibrancy of the research being done in this important area and found promising signs of the potential for the patterns of interaction and engagement by creative artists to contribute to the policy and community discussions of sustainable urban development.

We have reviewed the literature on urban sustainability and creative cities, showing how both areas of research note the importance of relationships and network interactions, and early signs of this emerging as an area of interest for IMP researchers. The rich case studies of creative arts and cultural organisations initiating urban sustainability and renewal projects also demonstrates the possibility that something unique may be at work in the way creative/artistic work catalyzes the interactions unfolding place amongst the actors in urban communities, and that more in-depth research into the specific urban actors, their resource combinations and activity links, their interactions and mutual adaptations within specific contexts of time and space, may help to advance urban policies that are both ‘creative’ and sustainable.

In order to help move the debate forward, we suggest that building truly sustainable creative cities will require repositioning the role and function of 'creativity' in the public discourse. The Canberra case demonstrates that, despite the development of progressive policies that promote sustainability and culture, urban policy-makers are still enamored of the linear new-economy logic, where 'creativity' is supposed to drive 'innovation in knowledge-industries' which drives 'high-income employment' which drives 'wealth-creation.' The case evidence suggests this model leads to unsustainable patterns of urban development. To achieve sustainable creative cities, urban policy-makers will need an alternative complex systems logic along the lines suggested by D'Auria, 2001, and a discovery-driven long-term journey approach along the lines suggested by Kagan et al. (2018) where cultural/creative arts initiatives become embedded in the urban development process to catalyse network interactions towards sustainable policy innovation. The arts and cultural activities exist in an ecosystem. They do not exist as individual entities; if they are to function effectively as a vital part of the social, economic and environmental infrastructure of a city, they must do so through webs of interaction, constantly refreshing each other, constantly reinvigorating with interconnecting flows of ideas, talent, funds, and resources. To perform their vital social/sustainability function they must remain open to the interplay of ideas and energies across all levels of the community, questioning, challenging, critiquing, imagining and experimenting. The quest for sustainable creative cities must unfold as a continuing discovery.

Table 1. Research sources on sustainable cities, creative cities and the creative arts

Theme	Research sources
Sustainable cities (incl. 'smart cities')	D'Auria, 2001; Fusco Girard, 2011; Kagan et al., 2018; Kirchberg & Kagan, 2013; Oberg et al., 2017; Ratiu, 2013; UN/UNESCO (Sustainable Urban Development (SUD))
Role of culture in sustainability	D'Auria, 2001; Kagan et al., 2018; Koefoed, 2013; UNESCO; Nurse, 2006; O'Conner, 2010
Creative cities, creative / cultural industries, economic development, urban planning & regeneration	Comunian, 2011; DCMS, 2001; de Klerk, 2015; Drake, 2003; Evans, 2009; Florida, 2002; 2005; Grodrach, 2017; Hall, 2000; Landry & Bianchini, 1995; O'Connor, 2010; Ratiu, 2013; Scott, 1999; Throsby, 2008
Sustainable <i>and</i> creative cities (incl. contradictions and challenges)	Fusco Girard, 2011; Kagan & Hahn, 2011; Kagan & Kirchberg, 2013; Kirchberg & Kagan, 2013; Oberg et al., 2017; Pratt, 2008; 2011; Ratiu, 2013; Scott, 2014; Storper & Scott, 2009; Throsby, 2010; Vivant, 2013
Creative arts (role in creative and/or sustainable cities)	Boren & Young, 2017; DCMS, 2001; de Klerk, 2015; Drake, 2003; Florida, 2002; Froidevaux, 2013; Kagan & Kirchberg, 2013; Kirchberg & Kagan, 2013; O'Connor, 2010; Ratiu, 2013; Throsby, 2008; 2010; Vivant, 2013
Interaction in regional innovation, knowledge creation, and sustainability	Comunian, 2011; D'Auria, 2001; Ford et al., 2010; Fusco Girard, 2011; Eklinder-Frick, 2016; Eklinder-Frick & Age, 2017; Vildasen & Havenvid, 2018
Cases (Creative cities)	ACT Government, 2015 a, b; Landry, 2014; (Canberra); Boren & Young, 2017 (Stockholm); Comunian, 2011 (Newcastle/Gateshead); Drake, 2003 (London, Birmingham & Sheffield); Froidevaux, 2013 (Geneva); Goldberg-Miller, 2018 (New York); Grigoleit et al., 2013 (Duisberg-Hochfeld, Dortmund-Nordstadt & Mulheim an der Ruhr); Kagan & Hahn, 2011 (Hamburg & Toronto)
Cases (Sustainable cities)	ACT Government, 2014 (Canberra); D'Auria, 2001 (Naples); Dieleman, 2013 (Mexico City); Grigoleit et al., 2013 (Duisberg-Hochfeld, Dortmund-Nordstadt & Mulheim an der Ruhr); Kagan & Hahn, 2011 (Hamburg & Toronto); Kagan et al. (2018) (Hanover & Hamburg); Koefoed, 2013; (Guimaraes, Portugal)

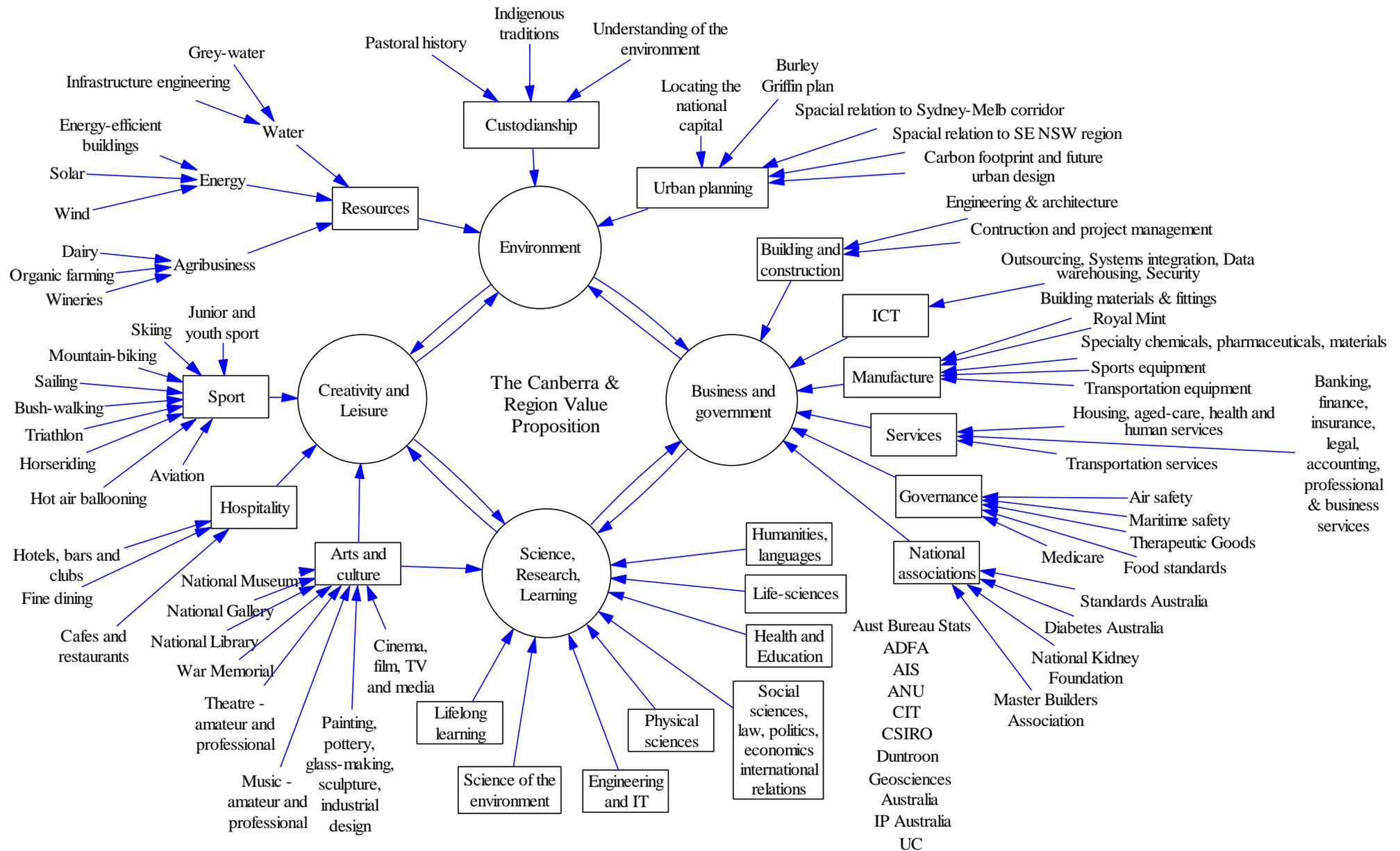
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**APPENDIX: 'BETTER CITY, BETTER LIFE'.... CANBERRA AND ITS REGIONAL ECOSYSTEM**



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