



## CULTURE

for Cities and Regions

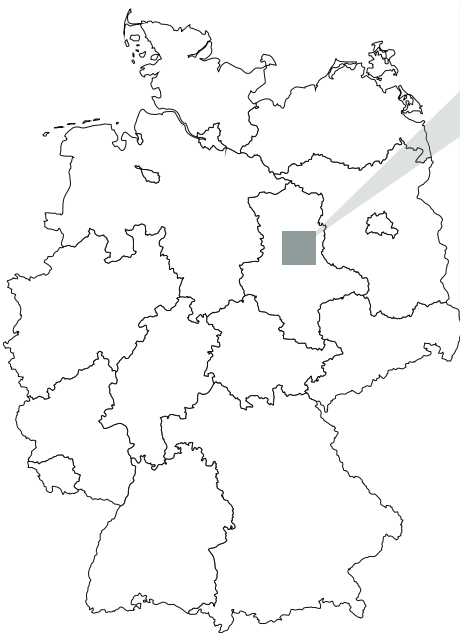


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- Creativity
- Employment
- Economic growth
- Attractiveness of the territory
- Internationalisation
- Entrepreneurship

### Context



**Magdeburg**, the state capital of Saxony-Anhalt, is an industrial and trading centre with an economy based on mechanical engineering, logistics, ecotechnology, information and communication technology, health management and cultural and creative industries. Magdeburg had to struggle with structural adjustment as the former German Democratic Republic industry went into decline. Now only 12,000 jobs remain across the region in the mechanical engineering sector (compared to 46,000 until 1990) and the diversification of the economic fabric of the region is instrumental to its competitiveness.

In 2012, a study was conducted to analyse the potential of the city's cultural and creative industries (CCIs) and found they account for 7.9% of the city's entire economy. With 40% of CCI turnover in the state of Saxony-Anhalt generated in Magdeburg, the city can be considered the region's creative centre. A recent update of the study also established that turnover from artistic and creative activities in Saxony-Anhalt had almost doubled between 2009 and 2013.

Based on this analysis, the city of Magdeburg has integrated culture within the "Integriertes Stadtentwicklungskonzept der Landeshauptstadt Magdeburg 2025 (ISEK)" plan (Integrated Development Concept of the City of Magdeburg). ISEK includes the promotion of culture and creative industries as one of the major local business development priorities. Magdeburg will also run for the title of European Capital of Culture for 2025 and works in close cooperation with the "Verein für Kultur- und Kreativwirtschaft Sachsen-Anhalt e. V." (KWSA: Saxony-Anhalt Association for Culture and Creative Industry) to strengthen creative industries across the region.

## KreativSalon

As part of these strategies, a series of events called "KreativSalon" was launched by the city of Magdeburg.

Twice a year, the mayor invites Magdeburg's business and CCI communities to showcase creative ideas and products around a specific theme.

The event seeks to gather various partners from the business, culture, political and higher education sectors. It is hosted in former industrial buildings or cultural spaces.

The event consists of six short presentations or project pitches where Magdeburg's creative talents have the opportunity to engage with participants on their project, and also find inspiration for new ideas and meet potential business partners.

Creative services closely connected to the city's business and cultural scenes (independent theatres, cabaret, musicians, dancers) participate. Live music by local musicians accompanies the forum while participants mingle and network.

The overarching idea of this biannual event is to improve opportunities for networking within CCIs but also with the wider business community, and to raise awareness about the CCI sector and its potential for economic development.

The event's attendance is rather high-level, including the mayor of Magdeburg and key stakeholders from the worlds of politics and business. The event is always evaluated and fine-tuned by a dedicated working group composed of a diverse panel representing businesses, the local administration and cultural milieu. It works as a "think tank", discussing possibilities and potential projects for the city to promote CCIs.

As a direct result of this work, a "Kultur und Kreativwirtschaftszentrum" (centre for CCIs) was launched in February 2015 in the city centre of Magdeburg. The centre is operated by the city of Magdeburg and proposes a total of 1,300 sqm of office space for around 40 creative companies at low cost.

## Challenges

KreativSalon has been designed to respond directly to a range of challenges:

- Low visibility of local CCIs despite the considerable size of the sector.
- Lack of awareness among the business community of the benefits of cooperating with CCIs.
- Weak network between the creative sector and stakeholders from other fields (public and private sector). Working together was initially perceived as very challenging.



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## Budget and financing

The overall budget for the KreativSalon is €36,000. This budget comes mainly from the city of Magdeburg and the "GWM - Gesellschaft für Wirtschaftsservice mbH" (the city's Business Development Agency).

Smaller contributions (around €1,500) are made by the Magdeburg Chamber of Industry and Commerce (IHK Magdeburg) and the Magdeburg Chamber of Crafts (HWK Magdeburg), and participating businesses often provide in-kind contributions.

A budget of €200,000 is earmarked annually for the overall promotion of CCI's by the city of Magdeburg, and for the next three years investments of €1 million are foreseen.



## Impact

Past KreativSalons have each attracted more than 200 visitors. A continually rising number of representatives from other sectors than CCIs attend the event.

KreativSalon has evolved into an important business event and discussions are taking place to apply the format to the cities of Halle, Dessau and Chemnitz.

Additional promotional projects have been triggered by this success. Local authors were represented for the first time at the renowned Leipzig Book Fair, in a joint delegation with the city of Magdeburg.



## Sustainability

The practice is relatively low cost and a broad range of partners are already supporting it through in-kind contributions and direct funding, so financial sustainability is almost ensured.

More important, the event is now taken up at a more comprehensive level and projects of similar initiatives are burgeoning across the region. The peer-review process set up through the KreativSalon working group also triggered the development of "Kultur und Kreativwirtschaftszentrum" (CCI centre) in Magdeburg, which provides a sustainable territorial anchor to the development of CCIs locally.

## Tips



Success factors:

- Innovative design and appealing presentation of the event: short speeches, concerts, unconventional business talks. This played an important role in the traditional industries' participation.
- Strong networking established from the first KreativSalons has facilitated the work of the following KreativSalons, attracting creative lateral thinkers, business representatives and city talents.



Lessons learnt:

- Additional actions are required as local CCIs mainly do business with non-local companies. There is still untapped potential for further development of local connections.



## Management level and partners

Partnerships for KreativSalon involve diverse stakeholders and public/private cooperation: Magdeburg State Capital, Magdeburg Society for Economic Service, Chamber of Industry and Commerce, Chamber of Crafts, Otto-von-Guericke University, Magdeburg Forum Gestaltung e.V., Saxony-Anhalt Association for Culture and Creative Industry, Kulturanker e.V. To guarantee proper realisation and implementation of the "Kreativ Salon" a steering group was set up, whose main tasks are preparation, monitoring and evaluation of the project.

Links :

[www.kreativsalon-magdeburg.de](http://www.kreativsalon-magdeburg.de)

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