



A Creative Economy Action Plan for Illinois - Project Overview

In March 2013, Governor Pat Quinn announced the launch of the Illinois Creative Economy Initiative to be led by Arts Alliance Illinois. To help guide this work, a Creative Economy Roundtable was formed and is charged with advising on how Illinois can leverage its creative assets to grow jobs, strengthen the workforce, and build more vibrant communities. The Center for Governmental Studies (CGS) at Northern Illinois University was retained to assist the Roundtable in developing recommendations and a proposed action plan.

Why Develop a Creative Economy Action Plan?

Developing, supporting, and nurturing the creative economy is a key economic development focus for a growing number of states, cities, and regions. As communities compete for talent and employers and strive to improve the quality of life for their citizens, there is a growing recognition that the arts are key to attracting and growing these assets.

Like any important economic sector, the creative economy needs industry-specific policies and incentives to thrive. Other states have recognized the value of their creative economy and many have programs in place to encourage its growth. If Illinois is to compete on a national level, it too must take additional steps to support the growth of its creative economy. This project will identify existing policies and programs that are effective in supporting Illinois' creative economy and will recommend successful new practices that may be adapted or adopted in Illinois.

Who Will Develop the Plan?

Co-chaired by David Hawkanson, Executive Director of Steppenwolf Theatre Company, and Jen Hoelzle, Director of the Illinois Office of Tourism, the Creative Economy Roundtable consists of 36 individuals from a variety of backgrounds who share a commitment to making Illinois a global center for talent, tourism, capital, and community vitality. Members represent the public, private, and non-profit sectors and have varied backgrounds including visual and performing arts, architecture, culinary arts, education, tourism, and museums. All geographic areas of the state are represented.

How Will the Plan be Developed?

CGS will guide the Roundtable through the process of identifying strategic opportunities, making recommendations, and developing an action plan. Roundtable members will create a vision for Illinois' creative economy and identify the resources needed to realize that vision. CGS will provide relevant research and information to inform the Roundtable discussions, including what is working well in Illinois as well as strategies and programs that other states are using to boost their creative economies. A final set of recommendations and action plan will be produced by the Roundtable in May 2014.

Additional Information

Further information about this project is available at www.IllinoisCreativeEconomy.org or by contacting Maria Capoccia at capoccia@artsalliance.org or 312.855.3105 x20 or Dr. Patricia Inman at pinman@niu.edu or 815.753.6925