Creative Footprint

OVERVIEW & METHODOLOGY

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PART 1: INTRODUCTION

> “Global cities evolve out of creative cities. Creative cities organically develop. We caution against the ‘real-estate’ model of city development.”
>
> *- Creative City Index Report*

It is now a fact that the majority of the world’s population now lives in cities and developed urban centers, making humanity an urban species for the first time in its history. This urbanization is growing at a rapid pace, and now shaping civic policy in previously unforeseen ways. Over the last decade there has been a growing realization that affordable, central, well-connected creative spaces are essential to a city’s ongoing wellbeing and productivity. This realization has led to a gradual shift in policy focus; from traditional “top-down” approaches, where a city would adopt variations of “planner - provider - deliverer” models, to ones where civic policy reflects a more flexible role of “enabler - convener - catalyst - broker”. This latter approach also factors cultural imperatives alongside more traditional tenets; driven by social, economic and environmental concerns. Urban policy strategies often look to embrace the concept of “the whole city”, where communities are actively encouraged to be part of a decision making process. Further, there is the growing realization that attracting young, or newly-arrived talent with up-to-date skills and outlooks is key to the ongoing success of any urban center. Many policy makers adopt the Florida “3 T’s” directive

of what makes a city attractive to potential (creative) incomers (Talent, Technology and Tolerance). Much civic policy increasingly views a successful social contract as one that Provides Resources, Facilitates Partnerships and Enhances Communications.

Despite the many demonstrable, lasting benefits of having affordable and central creative space in a city, many policies pursuing Florida's ideas of the "attractiveness" of a creative city have ironically delivered negative socio-economic effects for the creative classes. Increasingly there is an enormous competition for central space; a rent-driven battle that creatives and artists often lose. The Creative Footprint is convinced that maintaining creative space in our city centers is the key element in shaping how cities can continue to successfully function for future generations. It is no truism to say that a creative and inspiring working environment drives productivity. And in the near future, younger, or newly-arrived populations will increasingly need to be persuaded to living and working in heavily populated urban centers. The Creative Footprint believes in using rich, comprehensive datasets to measure the cultural and socio-economic benefits of affordable city center space. This approach can ensure cities remain attractive and productive places for future generations. In short centers full of "complexity, friction and buzz".

WHY: creating + shaping future cities as attractive

HOW: providing affordable space

WHAT: use data to measure potential for affordable space.

PART 2: THE CREATIVE FOOTPRINT

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ABOUT

The Creative Footprint is an independent not-for-profit initiative that measures and indexes live music space. Berlin Clubcommission spokesperson Lutz Leichsenring set up the Creative Footprint in 2017. Lutz soon teamed up with Amsterdam Night Mayor Mirik Milan, whose pioneering work in government engagement for nightlife industries became a model for cities like London, New York and Paris. Working alongside local experts and teams of researchers, the Creative Footprint gathers data about a wide range of music venues in cities around the world and develops a rich cultural impact study of their live music scenes.

The Creative Footprint does not create an arbitrary ranking of music venues in a city. The evaluation is an objective analysis of each venue's programming, ability to be a host for different art forms (known as "design of space") and public-facing presentation.

THE CREATIVE FOOTPRINT IS NOT A:

_ Ranking of clubs and music venues
_ Map indicating the "hottest" districts in a city
_ Tool to empower opportunistic developers
_ Publicly-available index open to potentially nefarious actors
_ Device to "expose" underground promoters or DIY venues

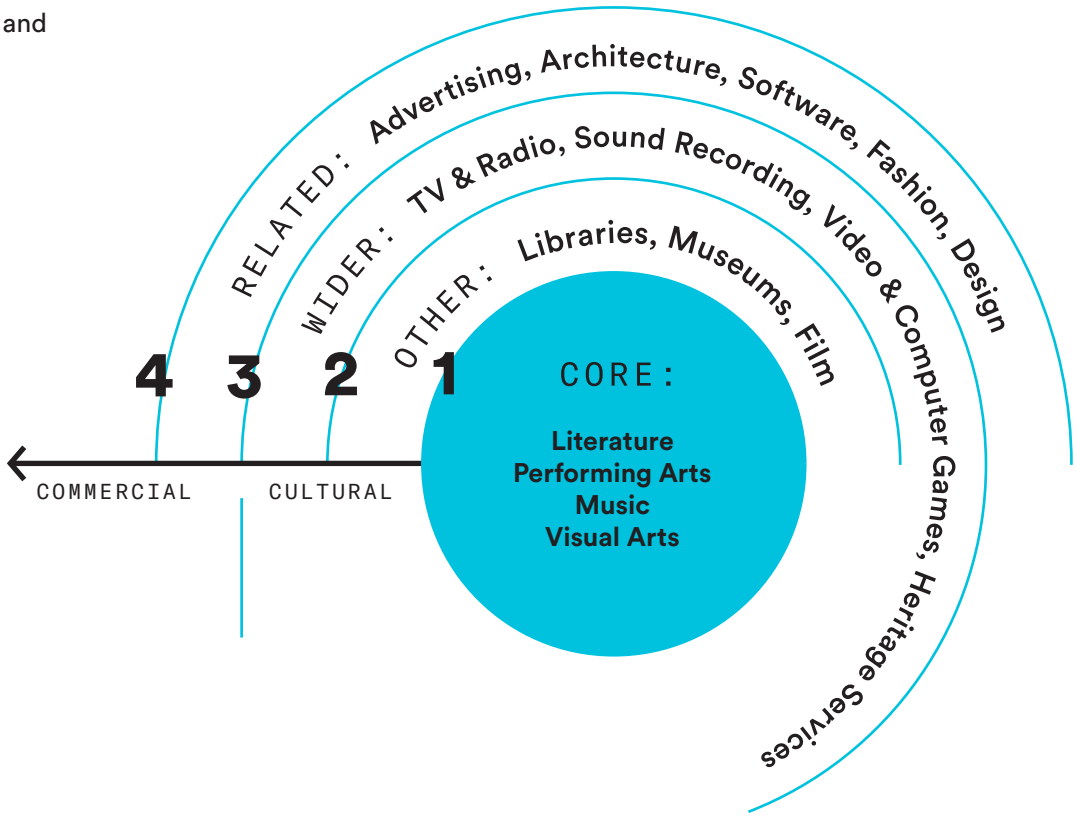
METHODOLOGY

The Creative Footprint's methodology was originally developed by Lutz Leichsenring in partnership with Prof. Daniel Polley and his team from Harvard University and in-depth exchange with leading minds in creative civic planning; including Prof. Charles Landry, Dr. Shain Shapiro and Prof. Alexander Lange.

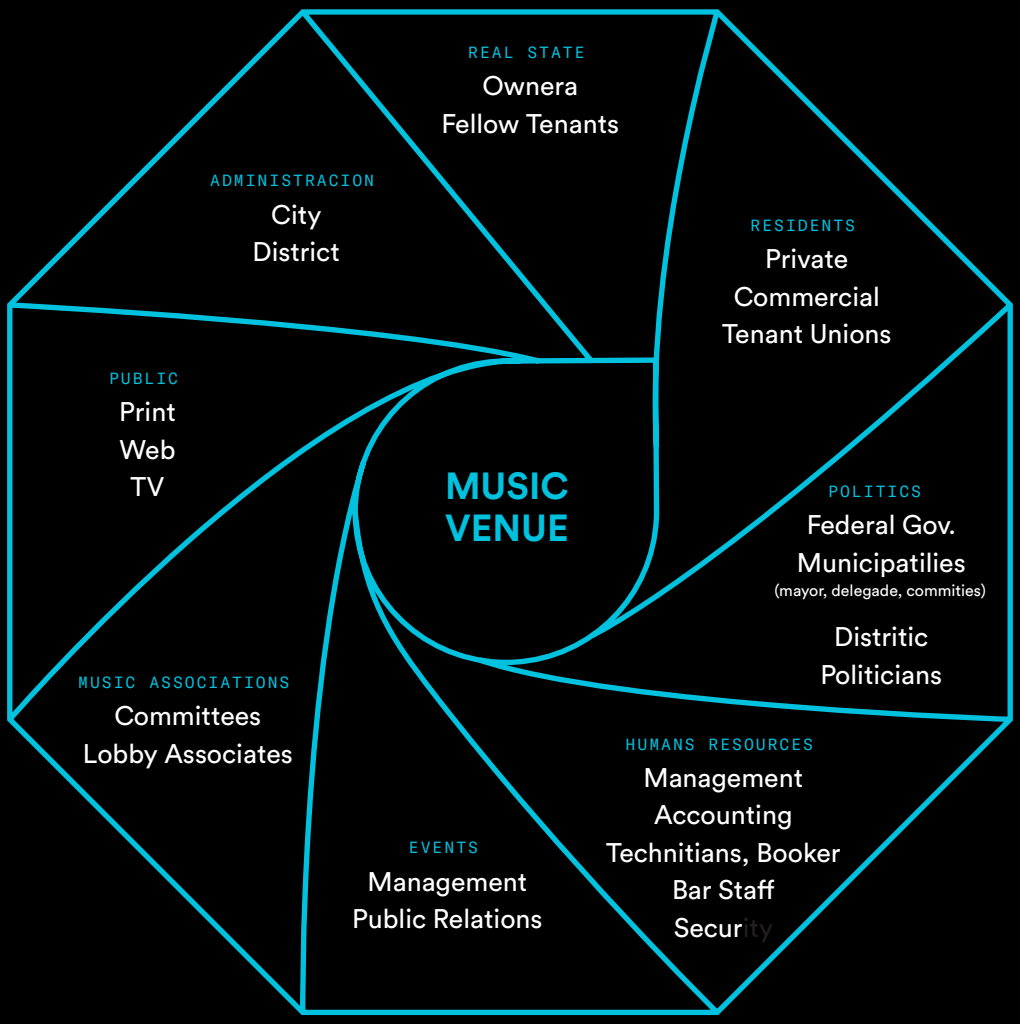
The methodology places emphasis upon content-rich evaluations of a music venue's original programming, and street-level insights about its cultural impact. The methodology does not rely solely economic impact assessments. Each music venue is analyzed by extracting 15 key data components in three distinct parameters: Space, Content, and Framework Conditions. A city's Creative Footprint - a score out of ten - is then calculated.

- WHY IS MUSIC CHOSEN AS THE SUBJECT OF CFP'S METHODOLOGY?

The Creative Footprint sees music as a core creative activity that drives, and / or generates other related economic and social activities.



STAKEHOLDER MAP



- WHY DOES CFP CENTER ITS STUDY ON MUSIC VENUES?

City center music venues often sit at the center of a web of interconnected civic and cultural stakeholders. Places that host or create music in city centers are increasingly under threat.
Without government support and grassroots organization, successful venues often become the authors of their demise, kickstarting neighborhood regeneration, and then being swept aside when the rent inevitably rises.

- HOW DOES CFP'S METHODOLOGY DEFINE A "MUSIC VENUE"?

The Creative Footprint defines a music space as any kind of indoor or outdoor venue with a regular music program which is advertised publicly. A venue should offer at least one music event per month. A shopping mall or a theater can be part of the Creative Footprint if they host a regular music program which is open to the public. The Creative Footprint does not factor in private or invite-only parties, such as weddings or birthday parties.

- HOW IS THE DATA GATHERED AND WHO DOES THE METHODOLOGY PROCESS INVOLVE?

A team of data researchers and local music experts gather data for the three parameters through a process of online research and focus groups meetings with other local music workers.

1 Quantitative data about the Space is gathered from different databases, such as Facebook, local event guides and reputable international guides like Resident Advisor.

2 Qualitative data to determine the Content of a venue is obtained from experts of a city's scene.

3 Data pertaining to city laws and regulations is used to determine the Framework Conditions.

WHAT ARE THE DATA CRITERIA?

As stated earlier, there are five data components to each of the three parameters:

1 SPACE

SIZE: (displayed in sqm)
REPUTATION: (a venue's presence or visibility, and engagement, measured on Social Media)
TIME OF OPERATION: (how long has the space been in use as a venue?)
LOCATION: (are the venues in areas with high population density?)
INTERDISCIPLINARITY: (a term CFP gives to evaluate the diversity of programming)

2 CONTENT

EVENTS PER MONTH: (how many musical events does the venue host each month?)
METHODS OF PROMOTION: (the kind, and the "quality" of PR visibility the venue has, digitally and at street level)
ARTIST POPULARITY: (are the artists well known / commercial, or cutting edge / as yet unknown?)
STRENGTH OF CREATIVE OUTPUT: (is the programming forward-thinking, original and / or culturally diverse and experimental?)
"GRADE OF INNOVATION": (does a venue have a reputation for taking creative risks?)

3 FRAMEWORK CONDITIONS

FUNDING AND INFRASTRUCTURE: (is government funding and civic infrastructure available for a venue and musicians?)
VENUES PER INHABITANT: (is a venue in an area where other venues are located?)
OVERALL LAWS AND REGULATIONS: (e.g. does the city have a 24 hour license?)
ACCESS TO DECISION MAKERS: Access to decision makers: (is there a good relationship with civic authorities? Is there a Night Mayor or Club Commission?)
Access to decision makers:
CULTURAL ACTIVITIES IN A PUBLIC SPACE: (can local music promoters easily obtain permission to use public space in a city?)

HOW IS THE DATA GROUPED AND EVALUATED?

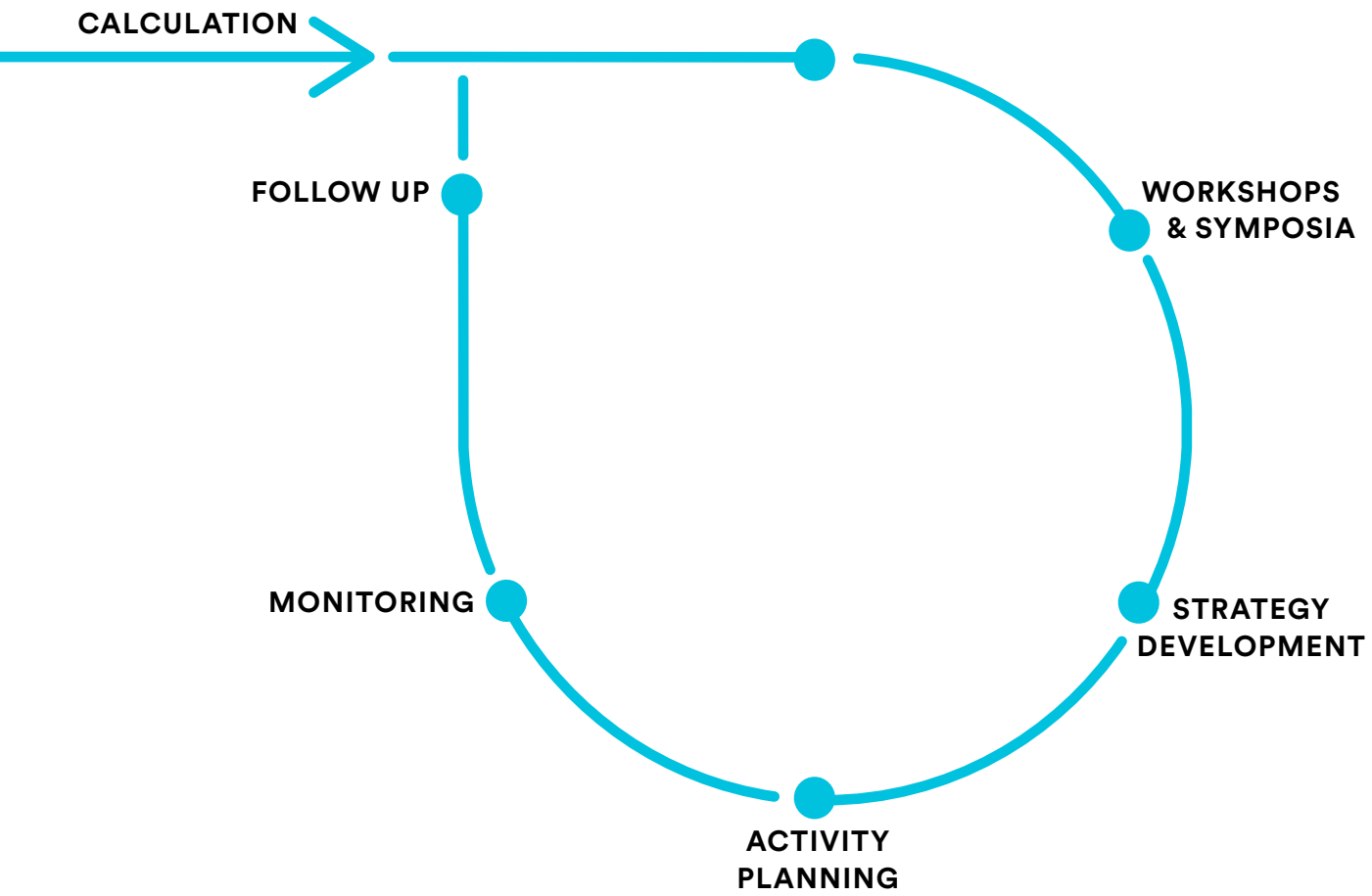
The data components for two parameters, Framework Conditions and Content, are evaluated using a variation of a Likert Response Scale, where answers are scored along a range. These answers, known as categories, are grouped round four "evaluative responses" for two of the parameters. These are: "Very", "Somewhat", "Not Too.." and "Not At All". For the parameter, Space, a more quantitative judgement can be applied.

The answers - known as evaluations - captures information that is objective, or impersonal in nature (e.g. "size", "events per month"), or subjective responses (e.g. "strength of creative output", "reputation"). The responses - due to the framing of the questions - often form clear and fruitful patterns for analysis.

From analysis of these evaluations the Creative Footprint - the score out of ten - is calculated.

THE DATA EVALUATION PROCESS

The data is gathered following the three step process outlined above. It is then calculated and presented to a city and a set of further actions are advised, such as workshops, strategy development, activity planning, monitoring and consultation sessions with the CFP team.



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