

About us - Short description about WCU:



MISSION

WCU promotes projects and activities at the intersection of arts, cultures, creative industries and human networks to increase awareness on the protection of cultural heritage and natural environments.

WCU assists individuals and NGOs working with education and infrastructure that focuses on sustainable development for local communities that seek support and guidance.

WCU is a cultural network that inspires people to connect to local communities from different countries, artists and craftsmen, social entrepreneurs and institutions for inspiration and knowledge. We believe in cultural diversity and partnership as one of the main factors for sustainable development.

Our [WCU platform](#) aims to present local communities, their resources, traditions and needs. We wish to support them and create together with them educational programs and cultural events. All our activities focus on sustainable development and a better livelihood while they safeguard local traditions. We offer our platform and resources to help and create Actions that can spread important messages and calls worldwide. For people in need, ideas and traditions worth sharing.



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CHALLENGE

After being invited to participate with a workshop at Arctic Art Forum in Arkhangelsk, Russia, **the challenge** we present is in developing a physical and online platform which could secure and support project development of Creative Industries Hub in Arkhangelsk. The peripheral status of the region keeps a number of challenges.

The task is to make research and to discuss collectively possible solutions for the Hub. There are several possible places for the Hub to be developed, and the discussion about the placement is just in the very start. The challenge is the need to unite, as now the creative businesses are spread around the town renting places in various spots. Another challenge is the lack of digitalization and digital promotion of the businesses, especially for those, which produce clothing, music and IT. Digital platforms for communication, interaction, online promotion and online shops could be helpful for local creative businesses to be more sustainable and stay in the region, rather than move to bigger cities.

The group of EiT will be directly connected to the team from Arctic Art Institute and online platforms will be used for communication and interaction. Possibilities for online workshops and activities are relevant for project development.

- What international experience can be relevant for developing this Hub?
- How could IT be helpful in these processes? What experience could be interesting and relevant?

- What are the possibilities for making the place most useful?
- Link to the historical references (in Russian): <https://nordklad.ru/viewtopic.php?t=193>



Arctic Art Forum team, images of Arkhangelsk and WCU workshop at Arctic Art Forum Nov 2017

ARCTIC ART INSTITUTE

Arctic Art Institute started in Murmansk as a grassroot artistic group in August 2014, when Ekaterina Sharova was working at Pikene på Broen (Kirkenes) and Ekaterina Golubina, originally from Kola (Murmansk suburb and a historical town) has just returned to Northern Russia after her studies in Goldsmiths University (London). Since then, the group has grown, and Kristina Dryagina, Anastasiya Parfenyeva and Evgeny Sidorov are other members of the group. Until today, the group has done a number of interdisciplinary projects in public space and has brought up several new artists. At the moment, the group is running the largest meeting place for contemporary artists, designers and architects in Northern Russia, Arctic Art Forum, in collaboration with many state, municipal and commercial organizations in Arkhangelsk region and abroad.

Link to the webpage 2017: www.arcticartforum.com (Theme: Slow Culture)

Webpage 2016: <http://2016.arcticartforum.org/> (Theme: Embodied Knowledge)

Today, administrative opportunities are there to develop a meeting place for creative industries in Arkhangelsk. The goal is to set up and develop the new space for creative industries using both international and Russian experience. The project is in its very beginning, so the help would be interesting and necessary. The changes are happening at this very moment, after Arctic Art Forum 2017, where Mayor of the town was present, as well as representatives of all Norwegian professional unions in design and architecture, representatives of national parks of the Northern Russia, Northern (Arctic) Federal University, festivals and private design businesses. It would be a very right moment to establish this collaboration between the professional scene in Trondheim and in Arkhangelsk, which can also probably result in further projects, as the future of the Arctic region seems promising.

THE REGION

Russian Arctic is one of the most exciting regions in these days, as from being a remote and depressive region it gets more international and national attention and gives many new possibilities to local people. The challenge is connected to climate, little communication between creative workers and administrations, lacking infrastructure for creative workers, such as up-to-date education, grant and financial support system (the existing support system does not

take into consideration creative industries or innovations), low rent and more digital channels for selling their goods.

WCU WORKSHOP FEEDBACK - WHY THIS CHALLENGE IS SO IMPORTANT?

The following messages were written by workshop participants:

“The workshop was facilitated with methods that are familiar to me too from my own work. It was, however, a pleasure to observe how well the Russian speaking group was facilitated by a person who does not speak Russian herself. Of course the co-facilitator spoke Russian but still, impressive how the group work was organized and held together. Working methods were efficient as the ideation phase soon evolved to action with people calling those who can make a difference in the city.

Hopefully, the facilitators got what they needed out of the workshop as the participants kind of grasped the ideas they felt important and started to advance those with more concentration after the resource mapping –phase.”

Salla-Mari.Koistinen / Junior researcher / project manager

High value products from industrial residues enabled by participatory design and geopolymer technology, GEODESIGN –project / Master’s Degree Program of Applied Visual Arts and Nature Photography Faculty of Art and Design, University of Lapland - p. +35840 484 4146 - salla-mari.koistinen@ulapland.fi

“Thanks for your amazing workshop at Arctic Art Forum. Energy and knowledge you shared with us have awoken the potential in the Arkhangelsk creative community.

1. The workshop provided a place for creative industries, city administration and international professionals to meet. As a result, we found some places that could be a new co-working place for Arkhangelsk.

2. We received suggestions about how to develop this place. Most important, it would contribute to sustainable development. I see this as a great place to start new creative industries and bring people together.”

Evgenii Sidorov / Arctic Art Forum - evgenii.sidorov4@gmail.com

“1. It is a chance for meeting potential partners.

2. I really hope it is a chance for beginning and start new creative projects. We need a new communicative place for realization and creating projects.”

Luda Shunkina / participant / luda.shunkina@gmail.com

“Amazed to see how solving problems from discussions, we can see not only problems anymore, also solutions. All together we designing our working and living sphere.

This workshop was productive and positive and gives not only feeling of it.

It makes positive and productive solutions for today and for what we can do now.”

Antonina Onishko / The National Gallery of Komi Republic, Syktyvkar / angelakamer@mail.ru / hikariakamero@gmail.com / <http://www.ngrkomi.ru>