The QUT Creative Industries Experience

Connecting business enterprise, education, research and development, cultural production and exhibition in a creative precinct
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We established Australia’s first Creative industries Faculty and just a few years on, we are proud that it has proved itself to be a leader nationally and internationally, and a catalyst for other changes across QUT. In addition to enjoying undergraduate demand that is remarkably strong and sustained, we also host the ARC Centre of Excellence for Creative Industries and Innovation, the only such humanities-based Centre nationally. Meanwhile, we have developed QUT Creative Enterprise Australia, the very first business development agency actively supporting commercially driven creative industries nation-wide, and the Creative Industries Faculty is also the lead agency in the Institute for Creative Industries and Innovation (iCi), a multi-faculty research institute at QUT.

The Creative Industries story continues to grow in an exciting environment at Kelvin Grove. The Faculty is based within the Kelvin Grove Urban Village, a master-planned community developed in conjunction with the Queensland state government which brings together residential, educational, retail, health, recreational and business opportunities into a vibrant new precinct. Also in the Village is QUT’s Institute of Health and Biomedical Innovation (IHBI), our first and foremost collaborative research institute which has broken new ground in drawing together disciplines from around the University to improve health through research innovation. Further planned developments at Kelvin Grove include the construction of a new library at the heart of the campus, and the next phase of construction of the Creative Industries Precinct.

The essays in this publication document and explore the development of this innovative and highly successful academic and professional initiative. There were many conceptual and practical challenges facing us as we sought to establish a new model for advancing academic work in conjunction with industry, professional and community development. The success of Creative Industries at QUT and its bright prospects for the future are testament to the dedication and capability of the many people who have been, and are, part of this exciting journey.

Peter Coledrake
Vice-Chancellor
Queensland University of Technology (QUT)
April 2010
Introduction

This publication assembles essays by people who are leading voices and practitioners in the creative industries, writing from the perspectives of education, research and business development. The idea for the publication arose from a request in 2007 from key Chinese policy academics for information on what they called ‘The Queensland model’. Apart from a co-authored article published in Chinese in that year by three of the contributors to this publication, there was little assembled evidence of the model.

The interest from China culminated in requests to visit and see the Queensland model first hand. Since 2007, there have been many visitors to the Creative Industries Precinct and the Kelvin Grove Urban Village. The tours have generally taken people to different organisational units within the larger complex. This publication follows this approach but also shows how the various organisational units are integrated.

In the process of discussing with participants the Queensland model became the QUT Creative Industries Experience. And this is a key point. The essays do not contain recipes or formulas for success. They detail experiences and provide knowledge which may be of use to government, urban planners, creative business operators and particularly to those concerned with educational reform. Some of the contributors express a sense of achievement in producing a new template or ‘model’; other essays address the challenges of working in an adaptive and creative environment.

There are four sections: The Creative Industries, Creative Enterprise, Research, and Community.

In the first section the focus is on the definition of the creative industries concept, the genesis of the Creative Industries Faculty, the QUT Creative Industries Precinct and the Kelvin Grove Urban Village, and how the environment is a learning benchmark globally for the creative industries.

The section Creative Enterprise looks closely at business development and at how accommodations have been made to fine-tune an atmosphere in which both creativity and enterprise can flourish. This section also includes a perspective from the Queensland government, which has been a champion of the concept from the very beginning.

Research addresses the core business of the University. Education renewal has been a driving concern within the Creative Industries Faculty. The experiences will be of great value to educators and researchers, both in Australia and internationally.

The final section captures the experiences of the broader community, the Kelvin Grove Urban Village, QUT Precincts, and QUT’s international outreach programs. A concluding essay examines how the lessons encountered might assist similar developments internationally.

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Michael Keane
April 2010
Alumni

Aware of the mobility of international students upon graduation, QUT focuses on maintaining linkages between the University and international alumni. QUT alumni in Australia and internationally have formed chapters and groups that aim to foster opportunities to connect and remain in touch with the University. QUT international alumni chapters are present in a number of cities including Taipei, Singapore, and Hong Kong. The QUT Alumni China group was established in 2008. It provides networking for alumni in mainland China with activities in Shanghai and Beijing. QUT Alumni groups are also located in Sweden, Malaysia, Norway and Thailand.

The future

With increasing global mobility in the provision of higher education, the scope of QUT international linkages, both at a person-to-person and institutional level, touches many parts of the University. Internationalisation at QUT will remain central to the University’s mission, given that forecasting for global mobility in higher education has estimated that international higher education student numbers will increase to 3.72 million by 2025. The mobility of higher education students from North Asia, South Asia and South-East Asia is expected to be a dominant influence on Australian higher education in the coming 20 years. QUT and the Creative Industries Faculty will continue its extensive range of international programs and activities to further engage in the historic high levels of global mobility of higher education.

I spent four of the best years of my life with QUT’s Creative Industries. Three as a BA and research Masters student and one as academic staff. These qualifications and experience, in the new media field, became a passport for me to work anywhere in the world. Since then, I have worked in four out of five continents as an educator, consultant, journalist and web specialist.

QUT provided me with an all-round education—learning basic industry skills, practices and theoretical perspectives are one thing. But what was more valuable was the ability to trial and test out new ideas, and watch them progress or fail, and learn from mistakes. I picked up very useful thinking strategies which I was able to apply with every job I encountered.

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