

DISCUSSIONS AFTER THE CREATIVE ECONOMY SEMINAR

The creative economy: Rural Canada policy implications

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Seminar Abstract

The Ontario government has recognized the importance of the creative economy in growing strong rural communities. Learn how individual ministries are linking policy and programming and working collaboratively across government to grow the creative economy.

Key Discussion Points

Broadband

- MRI is open to collaborating with communities on ICT issues so that the information such as the creative economy series can be distributed to other areas.
 - People in remote areas need to “catch up with current information .
 - The Monieson centre is providing a valuable resource by posting the seminar series on its web site.
- MRI is also looking at the use of broadband for business development.
 - MRI is trying to evaluate what is needed to grow and how the broadband element should grow.
- Will the province support rural Centre's of Excellence to act as business incubators? Answer - The government is supporting regional clusters.
- OMAFRA is examining whether businesses are using broadband beyond the use for email.
 - Also looking at how to encourage businesses to use broadband more.
 - Both OMAFRA and the federal government are funding broadband initiatives.

Creative Economy

- Ontario East Economic Development Commission is creating a sales kit for the Creative Economy.
 - Recruiting the 116 communities in Eastern Ontario.
 - Working with PELA CFDC and The Monieson Centre on a creative economy conference tentatively entitled “From Theory to Practice”.
 - 10-12 case studies have already been prepared by The Monieson Centre through the KIS project.

Innovation

- There should be a recognition that innovation is not just about science and technology.
 - It also includes innovative ways of thinking – “soft innovation”.
 - The province has aligned innovation with science and technology but it is trying to incorporate “soft innovation” as well.
 - Looking at different programs including tax credits, but there is a ways to go before those softer innovation programs are in place.

Municipal Cultural Planning

- Northern communities want to take advantage of the province’s Municipal Cultural Planning (MCP) program.
 - MCP already underway in Thunder Bay, Atikokan and Kenora.
 - Other municipalities are looking to develop the cultural uniqueness of northern areas to draw more people to the region.