

the idea can be too closed, difficult or impossible to share with others for whatever reason; keeping what you don't like, is not aligned with your values, or have no energy for, is not in sync and lacks or drains resources, people and possibilities. If it is the wrong timing for you in life or in time, come back to it at a later date when it is right. It's not a defeat to close/discontinue something; it's an opener for new things to enter.

**IF YOU KNOW WHAT YOU NEED, YOU CAN ASK FOR IT – IF I KNOW WHAT YOU NEED, I CAN GIVE IT!**

#### **FOR FURTHER INVESTIGATION**

The Creative Plot

<https://research.cbs.dk/en/publications/dont-sit-on-it-a-study-of-what-no-longer-can-be-called-incubation>

Cultural Entrepreneurship with social impact remote interactive experience Mexico – Sweden

<https://library.iated.org/view/CORTESVASQUEZ2018CUL>

<https://creativelenses.eu/> for references and tools arising from the Creative Lenses project.

<http://value.se/en/> for tools to identify, investigate and develop individual and group values.

<http://teh.net/projects/creative-business-models-for-creative-organisations/> Trans Europe Halls network for knowledge and tools.

Upcoming studies of entrepreneurial learning, Lund University, Sten K Johnson Center for Entrepreneurship will be published on [futurebylund.se](http://futurebylund.se)

# **NADÁCIA CVERNOVKA** (Bratislava)

*"The social enables the financial"*

**NADÁCIA CVERNOVKA IS A CENTRE PROVIDING SOCIAL, CULTURAL AND ECONOMIC SUPPORT TO ARTISTS AND THE PUBLIC IN A FORMER POST-INDUSTRIAL AREA OF BRATISLAVA. THE CVERNOVKA COMMUNITY WANTS TO IMPROVE THE PROSPECTS AND QUALITY OF LIFE FOR PEOPLE LIVING IN THE CITY AND THE AIM IS TO CONTINUE TO ENHANCE UNUSED URBAN AREAS, REVITALISING EMPTY SPACES THROUGH NEW CULTURAL USE.**

In 1998 a number of artists began to rent cheap studio space in a former thread factory. From this the idea for Nadácia Cvernovka grew and in 2016 the founders, having established a foundation, gained support from the regional government. A 25-year contract was secured on a new building – an old school of chemistry – in the same industrial area as their first space, which, after a fundraising campaign, was renovated and is now fully occupied. From its humble beginnings, Nadácia Cvernovka has become a significant cultural and social point on the map of Bratislava.

Nadácia Cvernovka has a public space on the ground floor, with a library, a venue (250 seats), bakery and a shop for artisans. There is also a co-working space (25 companies and 15 freelancers), equipped with a café, Wi-Fi and crèche enabling those with children to become an active part of the community. The co-working space is also used to run events and workshops. In addition, Cvernovka manages artist-in-residence programmes and the rest of the centre is given over to artist studios. The community involved in Cvernovka is broad and includes people focusing on music production, painting, history, urban architecture, graphic design, photography, film, craft, science, philosophy, and more. The public programme continues to expand and evolve, but already includes three festivals a year (focusing on history, sustainability, and art).

It is worth dwelling a little on how Nadácia Cvernovka succeeded in realizing its vision because no one believed they could achieve their ambition, especially as they started out with nothing. When the new location was found in the disused school, early estimations from finance experts indicated that it would take approximately €2.5 million to renovate the space. Following six months of extensive fundraising and business planning, the founders secured €350,000 from an EU Social Investment Fund (TISE.pl) and €200,000 from a Slovak private bank. Another €250,000 was invested by a private company in the reconstruction of a new heating plant. The rest was provided through the commitment of volunteer work, discounts on materials and tenant investments. The overall investment at this point was €957,000. The next step in the story is a measure of the commitment the founders of Nadácia Cvernovka possessed.

Securing a loan was the key to finalising the plan but the bank saw the project as high risk – how could such a collection of artists manage the renovation when it was estimated at €2.5 million?! While they had secured a 25-year lease for the building, the law in Slovakia meant that it was not possible to use the building as security on this loan but, fully aware of the risk, two of the founders put up their own apartments as security. A huge amount of hard work, shared skills, resources and time from across the community and the obvious commitment of the people involved generated trust with external partners and funders, all important factors in demonstrating potential and in the release of further funding.

Nadácia Cvernovka takes care of its financial sustainability by ensuring that it has a varied mix of income sources: renting studio and co-working space (80%); fundraising – from trusts and foundations, individuals, businesses, EU funding, etc. (20%). Additional earned income is raised through the public programme, e.g., via ‘pay-what-you-can’ entry to events, from a small shop, a bar and a café.

The management and governance of the centre has developed from the early days but it also ensures that the ecosystem of artists is maintained and continues to grow, seeking to provide a sustainable creative, cultural and social centre. This includes an advisory board meeting twice a year to provide a strategic focus for the future of the organisation.

When asked what is the core of Nadácia Cvernovka’s success so far, they will say it has been the co-working culture, that the spirit of collaboration, openness and freedom is driving everything and has impacted on five primary areas:

1. Establishing external support: the founders sought to work with key influencers, such as politicians and local government, to understand how they might mutually support one another. This was essential to securing vital backing.
2. Providing resources, skills and time to firstly enable the renovation and secondly provide innovation for future growth. For example:
  - The founders had to look for alternative labour to make the renovation work. Amongst others, they appointed several refugees and homeless people, discovering a breadth of talent and skill. For instance, they found a man who was living on the streets who had previously studied as a carpenter. This person now runs some of their workshops. Cvernovka wants to continue this work and is pursuing social investment funding from the EU to develop a social company with a view to paying people properly and to help with personal financial management.
  - Members of the community have brought skill and knowledge to the renovation, enabling it to happen on a fraction of the predicted cost. For example, architects and inventors from within the community formed an eco-board to develop ecological ideas, e.g., inventing a new approach to enable air conditioning within the building. These innovations are now helping unlock new sources of funding.
  - There is a community garden that people are contributing voluntary time to, enhancing the area that they live in, trying to save old trees, bringing in bees and supporting local wildlife. This

has led to ideas to try to establish links with local schools to train children in ecology.

3. Fundraising via the network and connected community: sharing resources and contacts to ensure cash flow stayed just high enough each week to meet short-term liabilities, crowdfunding, e.g., for sound equipment, and seeking donations – the school of chemistry used to be prominent in the area and many politicians, academics and scientists are alumni of the school. These graduates have mostly moved away but are enthusiastic about the work of the foundation and fundraising taps into this extended network, a valuable source of support.
4. Public engagement: the collaborative culture has also influenced the way the foundation relates to the public. Part of the ambition of the new space and of formalising the group as a foundation, was to open the space to the public. This is happening in a collaborative, participatory way. For example:
  - inviting people in for BBQs, and for monthly community breakfasts, where they present plans, discuss challenges, and hear people’s thoughts about the future of the centre. This generates new ideas and helps overcome any concerns people might have about the impact of the conversion.

The ambition of the foundation continues to grow. The founders want to continue to make an impact on the city and the lives of people living in Bratislava and beyond. Further development of the centre and surrounding park will include:

- a summer terrace to enable artists and the public to hang out, with DJs, concerts etc.
- a community garden with a swimming pool
- a gallery space for artists (currently they create pop-up galleries on an ad hoc basis)
- a performing arts space for theatre etc.

The centre has many social, cultural, environmental and economic impacts for the city, such as:

- employing many people, providing opportunities that they would never have previously had to develop and use their skills, talents and creativity.
- attracting people from across the country to visit, e.g., for festivals and events, giving it life and sparking a new future for the area.
- the area is becoming a more desirable place to live and work.

*“The social enables the financial. People bring skills and enhance lives, leading to entrepreneurial ideas for new business models and income streams. And then you have to work with the city. Gaining support from local government was a crucial step in establishing the foundation and securing the new venue. Understanding how you can support the values of the city, or of major partners or stakeholders, provides mutual return and can enable vital support.”*

Šymon Kliman, Co-Founder of Nadácia Cvernovka