

# MANNHEIM

2

**City of Mannheim**  
**UNESCO Creative Cities Network City of Music**  
**2018 Membership Monitoring Report**



# Executive Summary

Mannheim's approach to sustainable development through culture transcends genre, orchestrating parts from all sectors and fields. By having public and private work in harmony, music – culture – becomes the melody which enriches the lives of our residents. While industry may drive the tempo, it is creativity that sets the tone; a city, region, nation, or world with a strong engine yet no direction will not achieve the economic, social, cultural, or environmental aspects of sustainable development.

Mannheim is committed to not only working inside the UNESCO Creative Cities Network, but to sharing the Network with its partners, whether it be at the local, regional, national, or global level. The city has sent representatives to every UCCN Annual Meeting since its delegation, hosted cluster meetings, and convened conferences, forums, and symposiums on culture, creativity, and sustainable development.

Using a “communicating through action” mentality, the city of Mannheim has enabled a wide variety of initiatives, partnerships, measures, and policies that have been felt all around the world. But just because there is a large international component doesn't mean that the city itself has been left behind. On the contrary, in the age of rising nationalism and isolation, raising the international profile of Mannheim is in itself a strategy for local sustainable development.

Building on existing infrastructure such as the Musikpark, the only center for music industry startups in Germany, the eight startupMannheim centers, and local universities, in the last four years Mannheim has: turned the Oriental Music Academy, an informal social institution to teach non-Western music to young people into a degree-granting department at the Pop Music Academy; grown a startup culture providing the city a net income of over a million Euros a year; and has used music in everything from department stores to experimental chemotherapy.

Music is a journey, and great music is felt long after the echo has faded. Mannheim's work is focused on creating evolving masterpieces – improving the quality of cultural production in the city – and sharing it with the world rather than growth for growth's sake. It is the pursuit of arbitrary numbers that has sent us into the depths that cross planetary boundaries and caused extreme inequalities. While the world wants to talk about sustainable development, we strive to ensure that the lives we are sustaining are cultural, meaningful, and beautiful.

# General Information

Name of the city: Mannheim

Country: Germany

Creative field of designation: Music

Date of designation: December 14, 2014

Date of submission of the current report: November 30, 2018

Entity responsible for the report: Peter Abraham Fukuda Loewi, reporter.

Previous reports submitted and dates: n/a

Focal points of contact: Rainer Kern, Senior Advisor for Strategic Cultural Projects,  
rainer.kern@mannheim.de

## Contribution to the Network's Global Management

*Number of UCCN annual meetings attended in the last four years:*

Five, including the 2014 meeting before the official designation.

*Hosting of a UCCN annual meeting and dates:*

Mannheim has not yet hosted an annual meeting.

*Hosting of a working or coordination meeting addressed to one or more specific UCCN creative field representatives:*

On November 15-17 2018, Mannheim hosted the UCCN Cities of Music cluster meeting with 22 representatives.

*Hosting of an international conference or meeting on specific issues salient to the Creative Cities with a large participation of members of the Network:*

Following its designation in 2014, Mannheim hosted a symposium, "At the Boundaries of Sound," exploring the role of sound in cities. In addition to several start-up conferences looking to connect artists with local industry, the annual Enjoy Jazz: Festival for Jazz and Others brings artists from other member cities to perform.

*Financial and/or in-kind support provided to UNESCO's Secretariat in order to ensure the management, communication and visibility of the UCCN (type of contribution, estimated value, main objectives, and dates):*

100,000 Euros, one focal point and all expenses for travel, accommodation and materials for visiting representatives.

*Membership of the Steering Group and period:*

Mannheim has been a member of the Steering Group since 2016.

*Participation in the evaluation of applications:*

Mannheim has participated in the evaluation of applications since its own designation in 2014.

## **Major Initiatives Implemented at the Local Level to Achieve the Objectives of the UCCN:**

One of the most important local initiatives since the designation as a UCCN City of Music, is the expansion of Startup-Mannheim. Startup-Mannheim is the municipal subsidiary that runs eight startup centers around the city. It is about making room for ideas, growing an ecosystem to foster innovation. While the oldest center dates to the 1980s, and the Musikpark, the only startup center for the music industry in Germany, helped Mannheim in its application to be a City of Music, the projects are very much alive and evolving. Opened in 2015, C-Hub is home to over 50 companies working in the creative industries, while GIG7 is focused on women in tech, and Cubex is a partnership with the Mannheim University Clinic, at the center of med-tech research and development.



C-HUB © Stadtmarketing Mannheim GmbH, Daniel Lukac

But these startup centers are not in silos, and Mannheim's approach brings creativity across sectors. Cubex is researching the effects of music on medical treatments, looking to lower the doses required and to calm patients during brain surgery. Similarly, the entire Startup-Mannheim ecosystem is linking local artists with local companies to integrate creativity into the business process.

Startup-Mannheim's focus also includes international relations, bringing and sending creatives and companies around the world to like-minded initiatives. Currently, there are exchanges with China and Israel, and an exchange with France is in the works.

The next most important partnership achieved in the last four years was between the University of Popular Music and Music Business and the Oriental Music Academy. The Oriental Music Academy started in 2008 as a series of socio-cultural projects to give a place and a voice to the children of immigrant families. Through music, the OMA was able to provide educational opportunities and a home to young people in their new land. By facilitating cultural care, the Oriental Music Academy also facilitates cultural exchange, co-creating a new cultural wealth for the city of Mannheim and its residents.



Until recently, however, this had only been an informal project. By connecting to the University of Popular Music and creating a degree in World Music, the Oriental Music Academy provided further opportunities for education, employment, engagement with society. Now, in addition to working with the university, the OMA still hosts concerts,

workshops, and “music-meets,” socio-pedagogical jam sessions. We believe this to be a model example of an initiative that achieves the UCCN’s objective of improving access to cultural life and cultural markets for the marginalized.

Since becoming a UCCN City of Music, Mannheim has also hosted two Urban Thinkers Campuses with UN-Habitat’s World Urban Campaign. The first one, in 2016, focused on “Urban Citizenship in a Nomadic World” and the second one, in 2017, was called “Mannheim 2030: Reimagining the Future – Reimagining the City. The Globalization of the SDGs.” Because Mannheim’s inhabitants have their roots in over 175 different countries, it was imperative that we found a way to engage our communities in an inclusive and meaningful way. Through active participation by all parts of our heterogeneous society, we were able to find common values and ways to deal with urgent issues.

The event focused on creative responses to the pressing issues of diversity, inclusion, and intercultural understanding, and greater economic impacts. Mannheim has a long history of integration and sees itself as a city where anyone is welcome, offering something special to the wider world.

The Urban Thinkers Academies are excellent examples of how Mannheim’s approach to creativity for sustainable development links local and inter-city initiatives. They bring locals from all over the world together to talk about urbanism and innovation, and then the participants take it home with them, sharing the ideas they had. Mannheim is working locally to impact its international profile, and working internationally to positively impact the lives of people everywhere.

Several important themes emerged from them, pushing culture as driving force in sustainable urban development:

**The Participatory Imperative:** there is an increased demand, by people, for people to be shapers and co-creators of their evolving city. This new bottom-up, democratic approach can be seen in cases like the Oriental Music Academy and their formalization.

**Urban Citizenship Redefined:** people want to belong to a city, not just to live in one. Strengthening a sense of belonging will strengthen loyalty, commitment and engagement. The participatory nature of Startup-Mannheim and the co-working spaces allows for this. These spaces are also exactly the hubs of creativity and innovation that the UCCN objectives are looking for.

**The City as a Global Actor:**

To be fully effective as agents of change in our interdependent world, cities need to be able to co-operate across borders. The work that Mannheim has been doing in engaging its residents from around the world and the partnerships that Startup-Mannheim and others have with international cities are just two examples of what can come out of such actions.

The Listening City and Diversity as Reality:

Living with diversities requires that we negotiate conflict through words and not force. It turns out the skills needed to listen to music are the same as those needed to listen to people, and that enabling an interconnected plurality of musical cultures is in line with enabling an active and open democracy.

## **Major Initiatives Implemented through Inter-City Cooperation to Achieve the Objectives of the UCCN.**

But Mannheim is more than just Mannheim, and in addition to the work being doing at the local and regional level, there is also inter-city cooperation going on inside of Germany. Mannheim has been at the front of pushing a network of all of the Creative Cities in Germany (Heidelberg, Literature; Hannover, Music; and Berlin, Design,) as well as working closely with the German UNESCO Commission. The goal of these partnerships is “to contribute to increasing the significance of the UCCN in the cultural-political development of the Federal Republic of Germany” by “[committing] to additional structural cultural promotion in order to strengthen the sustainable cultural, social and creative economic work of UNESCO Creative Cities in the sense of holistic urban development in our country.” Going beyond creativity, there is incredible potential in linking all UNESCO sites in Germany, including: World Heritage, Natural Heritage, Intangible Cultural Heritage, Biosphere Reserves, Geoparks, project schools, Clubs, and the like.



This partnership would ensure that UNESCO is given a higher status in the German public. With repeated unjust behavior perpetuated by agencies, the UN system is under discussion in Germany at the moment. Lots of people are against the World Heritage system. The German UNESCO Commission, the German UCCN Cities, and similar networks are working together to raise awareness and promote the UN system even as it struggles. There is an agreed upon mission statement, which defines how we will work together, a unified communication plan and fundraising strategy, which shares our common ground to implement sustainable development.



In partnership with other UCCN Cities of Music, Mannheim is working on two projects driven by an underlying theme in all of our future projects: anti-racism and gender equality.

The Cities of Music want to improve the situation of gender equality in music – in art, industry, education and entertainment. The main project is to get all of the Cities of Music to work with young women musicians to produce music videos about their cities. By promoting women in the production of music, we can also improve the situation of women in the consumption of music. Even when women have the freedom to attend and enjoy live concerts and festivals, they are often at risk in the midst of the crowd. Music is about breaking free of restrictions, and we must work to make music that can be enjoyed without restrictions, as well.



Similarly, the same mentality can be used to address racism. All over the world, racially motivated altercations, abuses, and organizational forms leading to the formation of political parties have increased significantly. These phenomena have had an increasingly segregating, and therefore destabilizing influence on the democratic traditions, as well as on the cosmopolitan and broad-minded foundations of society. Music is no different. The Cities of Music are launching a worldwide anti-racism campaign. All cities put out a call to artists in the region to compose and produce songs against racism, and citizens will vote on a city theme song. The songs from all the involved cities will be turned into an album and distributed through the UCCN. It is also possible to think of the project as a potential accompaniment to the UNESCO Cities of Literature (words against racism), Film (documentation of the project, videos of the new songs from the cities), Design (of the campaign), Media Arts and Gastronomy (support the live events) or Crafts & Folk Art (Merchandising).

These projects have all started, and will continue into the next four years.

## **Proposed Action Plan for the Forthcoming Mid-Term Period of Four Years.**

The next four years of music, creativity, and cooperation in Mannheim.

The main objective for the next four years in Mannheim is to talk about global agendas through music. By using culture as the fourth pillar of the SDGs, we propose to grow the local identity, build awareness for the UNESCO Creative Cities Network, and mainstream sustainable development.

Mannheim looks to strengthen democratic processes for urban development, but also to strengthen participation in processes that promote cultural activities. Going beyond the relatively simple reading of stakeholders in the arts being only institutions connected to music, Mannheim looks to engage local shops and companies that would benefit from increased tourism, as well as the people in the areas that will be most affected. The people of the city will guide the processes, and partnerships with the private sector will ensure that they are enacted.

On the 7th of December 2018, Mafinex, one of the startup hubs, will be hosting an Experts Roundtable on “Fair Trade for Culture.” While trade is undeniably an inter-city (or international) action, it has enormous local impacts on both sides, and cultural exchange is no different. Including participants from academic, international city networks, national governments, and of course local musicians, the discussion will be focused on how to achieve equitable trade and development for and through the creative industries.

From 2019 on, we will also be hosting Mannheim Music Week. In 2019, it will take place between the 13th and 19th of May. The idea is to combine artistic approaches from local and international artists from all UNESCO Music Cities, and to have them perform. Mannheim Music Week would be the first of several UCCN Music Cluster-wide events, a total global showcase of artists from each of the cities, promoting sustainable development, international cooperation, and local growth all through music. For this project, a budget of 150K Euros was calculated, which would be covered by public private partnerships, including the city of Mannheim, the state of Baden-Württemberg, local companies, and foundations.

Mannheim Music Week is the first of a series of works focusing on music in the public. The goal of these projects is to open the city to music, and open music to the city. By broadening opportunities for participation through unusual formats, Mannheim is seeking to democratize music in a time and society when concerts are seen either as a stuffy and outdated luxury for the rich or a dance party for young people. Possible formats include performing music in nature, projecting videos and holograms of musicians, live radio performances open rehearsals at theaters or interactive workshops for mixing the sounds of the city together.

In a similar vein of opening up new spaces and opportunities is the Unlocking the City project, the goal of which is to turn the city into the venue. Currently, the way that specific venues book specific artists locks the artist and their audience to the venue. In turn, this prevents the artist from working with the city as a whole, and prevents the city from benefiting from a visiting audience. Providing new spaces for performance and new ways for artists and audience to interact leads to increased tourism revenue for the city and its residents, and new artistic opportunities all around. Unlocking the City is a way to unblock creativity.

One part of the project lets people rent out spaces to artists at much lower prices than big venues, using otherwise wasted spaces, and lower the hurdle of performance for emerging artists. Opening spaces where people have never been through the arts brings another view to the city, changing perspectives for all involved.

Planned for the next Federal Garden Show in 2023, the next major future initiative to be held in Mannheim is the Symphonic Garden. As part of the urban development plan of the city, there is a huge public debate happening around what will happen with all of the land that was owned by the military of the USA. One such proposal is to turn it all into a green belt around the city, and one proposal is the Symphonic Garden. The project involves embedding sensors through the garden, which play music – beats, melodies, pauses – as people engage. Changing, evolving, learning with the seasons, human interactions, and growth inside the garden, this symphony would create an organic relationship between the proposed green belt and the people of Mannheim. Outside of the physical garden, however, this is a project to open an intercultural public discourse on what

cities should be.

On a longer time frame, is the Mannheim Agenda 2030 project, supported by the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development. This long-term project ties together all of the partnerships and initiatives that the city has been undertaking so that people, residents of Mannheim and of cities near and far, can understand the connections between the local and global levels.

To promote these strategies, whether it be for UNESCO or the SDGs, we cannot communicate them in a vacuum, as they are too abstract. Mannheim is committed to “mainstreaming through culture,” using art and music events to talk about sustainable development. All of these strategies are connected to the global agendas, and we are imbedding the international strategies in all of our local communication plans.

Finally, one of our biggest goals for the future, is to advocate for policy change. Artists and musicians create masterpieces in the face of adversity, but that shouldn’t justify the societal wrongs that initiated them. We are here to advocate for policy change that would remove the structural and bureaucratic barriers to meaningful participation, adequate funding, and a decent life for all.

