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Creating knowledge spillovers through knowledge based festivals: the case of Mantua, Italy

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Abstract

Can a temporary manifestation generate long-term knowledge effects in the host region? This paper attempts to answer this question by presenting evidence of knowledge spillover effects created by an Italian literary festival on the surrounding region. To date the role of knowledge creation and dissemination are still mainly investigated in relation to the diffusion of scientific or organisational knowledge by scholars, which is seen as promoting general economic growth. Little attention has been paid to other forms of knowledge or the role of other actors in event-related knowledge generation. This paper reflects on the evidence-based role of a festival as both a knowledge-based creative activity generating intangible products; and as a hybrid and cross-sectoral space linking producers, consumers and places to enhance destination attractiveness.

Through the integration of a cross-cutting theoretical approach and empirical analysis this study attempts to show how capitalising on these processes may add distinctiveness to the destination and generate long-term non-economic effects.

Introduction

Despite recent studies positioning knowledge as the fourth production factor (along with land, labour and capital), the role of knowledge creation and dissemination is still mainly investigated in relation to the diffusion of scientific or organisational knowledge by scholars, which is seen as promoting general economic growth. To date little attention has been paid to other forms of knowledge or the role of other actors in event-related

knowledge generation. Scholars stress the need to investigate knowledge management and transfer within activities related to tourism (Baggio & Cooper, 2010; Cohendet, Grandadam, Simon & Capdevila, 2014) to assess how innovation may be generated.

This paper aims to shed light on the potential of festivals to act as platforms for interaction and knowledge exchange, thus generating knowledge and network spillovers within networks and organisations linked to the event, increasing their embeddedness within the region.

The progressive integration of cultural production and consumption in cities in the last two decades, whether criticised as the degeneration of intellectual production (Clair, 2011) or hailed as an evolution of cultural consumption (Pine & Gilmore, 1999), undoubtedly supports the use of events not only as regeneration strategies but as experience creators (Getz, 2008; Richards, 2015). Within the knowledge economy, the interconnectedness of cultural events makes them important not only as occasions of physical encounters in the network society, but also as carriers of ideas and catalysts for knowledge creation. In fact processes of cross-fertilisation within cultural events may indeed stimulate the circulation of knowledge and ideas by creating new relationships and exchanges that impact on both individual and collective learning (de Geus, Richards & Toepoel, 2016; Pappalepore, 2014). Furthermore, the sedimentation of this knowledge may play a key role in creating distinctiveness and innovation in a region. Previous research on events has tended to ignore their wider network effects (Richards, De Brito & Wilks, 2013); and such knowledge is important for policy makers who need to know more about the outputs of the events in which they are going to invest, and the possibilities for creating new events business models.

The study aims to analyse how capitalising on knowledge-related processes may add distinctiveness to a destination and generate long-term non-economic effects.

The article is structured in three main parts. First we undertake a literature review bridging the understanding of network spillovers and knowledge management in the tourism and events field with new reflections on cultural production. Second we present the case study of Festivaletteratura (FL), a knowledge based festival revolving around local and international networks, and the methodology used in the study. In the third part our findings indicate the crucial role of the festival in establishing trusting relationships and supporting the network-building processes among local actors, which in turn help to embed the knowledge produced within the region. These processes generate different spillover effects that we characterise as connecting values, social capital development, creativity and innovation. The conclusions reflect on the importance and potential of these effects and the need to develop further research and guide line to stimulate new policy.

Literature review

The literature on knowledge management and transfer is very broad and has been a matter of extensive research across economics, geography and organisational studies.

The present research considers the knowledge-related process that both facilitate and result from events in a region. Specifically, the study addresses knowledge production and dissemination or spillover effects. Knowledge spillover can be defined as: “external benefit from the creation of knowledge that accrues to parties other than the creator” (Argawal, Audretsch & Sarkar, 2007, p. 271). Similarly, TFCC (Tom Fleming Creative Consultancy, 2015) defines spillover generally as the process by which an activity in one area has a subsequent broader impact on places, society or the economy through the overflow of concepts, ideas, skills, knowledge and different types of capital.

In this context festivals and events can be seen as potential temporal hubs in a region that gather, process and disseminate knowledge from the region and from external networks in

order to accumulate local capital. By focussing on the wider impacts of an event this perspective shifts from the analysis of the temporal dimension of an event as a moment in time, to its more permanent role as a creative hub embedded in a regional context. Our reflections concern a specific type of festival: events centred on knowledge creation and transmission by means of an in-depth analysis of a specific cultural discipline. The core role played by knowledge creation has guided Guerzoni (2008) to define such events as knowledge based festivals (KBFs). Similarly Jordan (2014) defined KBFs as aesthetics and civic festivals, because of the important role of intellectual activities and regional milieu. KBFs create new knowledge and transmit this to their surrounding environment and networks (for an extensive description see Guerzoni 2008, 2012). In many ways such events can also be considered as part of the cultural or creative industries (see OECD, 2014). Therefore the following literature review incorporates reflections on the creative and cultural industries and on tourism and events, which arguably share the central role of interdisciplinary networks and exchanges as key conditions for knowledge generation and innovation.

Knowledge spillover analysis in cultural studies

The academic analysis of culture has arguably shifted from a concern with structure to consideration of process in recent decades (Bauman, 2000), and subsequently from cultural process to cultural ecology, according to Holden (2015). This is symptomatic of the increasingly key role played by cross-fertilisations and interplay of actors and networks in processes related to the production and consumption of culture. However within the realm of “cognitive cultural capitalism” (Scott, 2014), few researchers have attempted to explore the functioning and related outcome of these connections from a holistic perspective (see Belussi & Staber, 2011; Pilotti, 2009; Sacco & Crociata, 2013).

Amongst reflections on the field attempting to prioritize intellectual creation, value creation

and transmission over economic outcomes (Lazzeretti, 2008; Pratt, 2004; Throsby, 2008) a much more systematic approach is provided by Potts, Cunningham, Hartley, & Ormerod (2008). They conceive of the creative industries as centred on value creation and networks. Specifically, complex networks are seen as the key actors facilitating dynamic relationships between agents, “engaged in the mutual enterprise of creating values, both symbolic and economic” (p. 174). Therefore, Potts and his co-authors define the three main players of a creative industry as: agents (consumers), networks and enterprises. These elements no longer conceived of as part of a “causation value-chain from (active) producer via text-distribution to (passive) audience” (p. 172), but rather as dynamic and active actors of value creation by means of networks and circulation of ideas. That said, the resulting innovation and facilitation activities are conceived of as bottom up processes. In fact the Potts et al. model offers an interesting view of the generation of creative outputs as a possible means by which people and actors socially create and adopt novelty.

In a similar vein, Comunian (2016) attempts to analyse the role of festivals in local economic and cultural development. Stressing the role of place and shared spaces in generating knowledge exchanges and hence positive externalities, she highlights the key role of arts festivals in supporting and commissioning artistic works using a network perspective. Although contributing to a wider perspective on event impacts studies, Comunian’s analysis remains focussed on the interaction between audiences and other creative producers. On the other hand, many scholars agree that interactive processes among actors with different types of knowledge and competencies, coming together to exchange information, represent the best conditions for triggering innovation. For example Currid (2009) analyses the strategic role of ‘bohemian quarters’ for economic development, and concludes that agglomeration of pooled resources creates low barriers to entry for firms, shared positive externalities and the firm rivalry necessary for innovation.

In line with this perspective Holden (2015) suggests approaching cultural production as an ecology to achieve a richer and more complete understanding of its potential value to a region. He uses the term ecology to express the idea of culture as a social process formed by diverse elements coming together to produce a whole. Holden argues that by focussing on transactional assessment of a system we may overlook interactivity, and thereby the creation of wider financial and cultural values. Similarly, TFCC (2015) underlines the crucial role of interactivity in boosting knowledge spillover effects from cultural activities to the wider society and in generating local growth. Specifically he identifies three main broad overlapping types of spillovers:

- Knowledge spillovers: ideas, innovations and processes developed within CCIs which spill over into the wider economy and society without directly rewarding those who created them;
- Industry spillovers refer to the vertical value chain and horizontal cross-sector benefits to the economy and society;
- Network spillovers relate to the impacts and outcomes to the economy and society that spill over from the presence of a high density of arts and/or creative industries in a specific location creating wider benefits ranging to enhancing regional attractiveness.

Knowledge spillover analysis in tourism and events

The main channels of knowledge from the organisation to the region are related to stakeholder networks defined by Freeman as “any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organisation’s objectives” (1984, p.46). Crespi-Vallbona and Richards (2007) in their analysis of Catalan festivals define the main categories influencing the extent of involvement of the diverse stakeholders in a network as influence and expectations, power, legitimacy or urgency. The interplay between these factors will

generate diverse kinds of networks. Moscardo (2007) pinpoints the importance of both community involvement and the building of networks as two guiding factors in the positive contributions of festivals and events to regional development. This position is supported by Giorgi (2011) who observes how networking activity is pivotal in European literature festivals operating on different levels from value generation to local embeddedness. Specifically she recognises four main kinds of network affecting a festival organization and success: the literary community (authors, translators, agents and publishers); cultural institutions providing organizational support and/or financing; the media: as sponsors and for the supply of journalists as intermediaries, moderators or publicity/dissemination agents; other festivals for the exchange of ideas and 'circulation' of authors / themes.

Cooper (2006) stresses the crucial role of knowledge management within tourism organisations in stimulating innovation both at a micro-level by codifying the tacit knowledge produced at an organisational level and at the macro-level of inter-organisational networks exchanging explicit knowledge. Therefore he identifies the shift of the focus from the single organization to the multi-organization destination level as the essential step to exploit the role of tourism knowledge as a public good within the knowledge economy. Baggio and Cooper (2010) recognise the way destinations source, share and use knowledge as the key pre-requisite for innovation, and attempt to analyse the flows of knowledge between a tourist destination and a range of actors through network theory. They argue that the collection and sharing of knowledge transferred from knowledgeable individuals to the other members of a social group is an essential prerequisite to fostering innovation within a destination.

From a similar perspective, Richards (2015a) calls attention to the growing importance of events in social networks in facilitating a range of effects acting both upon locations and upon the field in which they operate. This is the case, for instance, of those established

festivals seen as catalysts for the development of cultural infrastructures operating year round, as notably Chichester, Edinburgh and Malvern (Jordan, 2014). In the same vein, Guerzoni (2012) posits the increasing number of spin-off activities planned year-round by festival organisers, aimed at creating a regional network of diverse subjects and institutions. A positive example of these dynamics may well be the Aarhus Festival of the Arts, running since 1965 in Denmark, which has nurtured local artistic expressions that have supported the rise of a plethora of art galleries, art institutions and public art places across the city in the last decade. Likewise, the festival represents a window for the cutting edge artistic production and exchanges at an international level. The profile given to the city by the festival as an artistic hub was arguably an important reason for the designation of the city as European Capital of Culture for 2017.

By integrating these two main fields the present paper is sympathetic with, embedded knowledge production and cross-sectorial networks emerge as two crucial elements, related one another, to favour the generation and transmission of know-how and ideas. Drawing from this theoretical framework we analyse the spillover effect from a knowledge based festival to the region.

Exploring the Mantua case

The exploratory nature of the research and our desire to frame it through an holistic perspective guided us to draw from a case study analysis to collect field evidence of what is, concretely, the knowledge legacy formed by a festival in a specific environment.

Festivaletteratura a literary festival held in the city of Mantua selected on the basis of its temporal continuity, its cyclical nature, and its level of involvement in the region. This literature festival activates local networks, consistent with Baggio and Cooper's definition (2010), directed towards knowledge exchanges and recognised as a connoting element of a destination.

Festivaletteratura (FL) has been growing constantly since its launch in 1997 and hence it may be considered a well-defined product, well-settled in the area. Moreover, it benefits from significant support from local firms (75% of the budget) and from the use of a wide range of urban venues (33 in total in the last edition). In addition the cultural programme of FL has included growing numbers and types of cross-sectorial initiatives, from 106 projects in the first edition to 322 in 2013, along with an increase in literary guests, who have doubled from 200 to 400 (Festivaletteratura, 2014).

[Table 1 here: Profile of Festivaletteratura]

These elements made the festival particularly interesting to investigate from the view point of the knowledge ecology generated at the intersection of a wide range of consumers and producers of culture and the networks they form part of and in turn support.

Methods and data collection tools

FL was investigated by a mixed methods approach over a six month period combining in-depth interviews and participant surveys to map the festival network and trace the knowledge flows. In order to avoid the framing of a macro field drawing from micro situations the present research ascribes a great importance to in-depth interviewing and a plurality of personal narratives to understand the relationships occurring within the region and to extract possible beneficial cultural legacies. Discourse and text analysis were undertaken of the festival programmes and related documentation, and official and unofficial reports on the festivals, festival-specific publicity produced by the festival organizations and media reports. We conducted 36 in-depth Interviews with a purposive sample of stakeholders: festival directors and sponsors as well as artists, journalists and other relevant stakeholders. A complete transcript was made of each interview for further analysis. Our initial interviews also revealed the key role of volunteers, who were subsequently included in the research via interviews and a survey. The total number of

volunteer survey respondents was 82 people. These mainly represented the 'first generation' of volunteers who were recruited in the early editions of the event. They were able to give information on the cultural legacy of the festival over the long term. As the number of people volunteering in the festival's first edition were roughly 150 (Festivaletteratura, 2014), the sample represents a large proportion of the total volunteer population.

These data sources helped us to depict the main nodes forming the networks of knowledge flows within the festival and the relationships between these network and related event outcomes.

Description of findings

The main themes extracted from the data analysis related to the festival organisation, its relationship with stakeholders (local and non-local partners, volunteers), the relationship with local heritage and knowledge spillover effects.

Festival organisation rooted in local culture

The interviews identified the festival organization as the main node conditioning the overall network structure.

The festival organisation has represented for the whole region a virtuous, innovative and successful model of management of a cultural project. It has created the premises within the region for further initiatives to develop and be accepted' (local stakeholder)

The FL network is a branching and radiating structure whose main centre is constituted by the festival's creators (a collective artistic direction of eight individuals), various intellectuals and local creative actors. The organisers describe their decision-making structure with keywords such as 'flexibility', 'liquidity', 'mutual trust', 'reciprocity', and a great readiness to accept inputs from others. They share the opinion that a flexible structure and informal way of interacting allows everyone, from writers to volunteers, to

play an important role in the event and to feel part of the community

'There is no artistic direction, we listen to everything and everyone and we trust each other and every person has a place in their specific competence field' (person from the artistic direction)

Local stakeholders

Although the festival is seen as an independent actor, the empirical investigation reveals important links between the festival organisation and the main regional players.

The first node of this network is that of private firms, who also provide the most financial support for the festival with their long-established mutually beneficial relationships with the event.

'Thanks to the sponsorship and co-operation with the festival they have transmitted to me a way of behaving with a project, very functional, clear and professional that helps me a lot with future relationships'(local firm)

Generally sponsors see the high quality, creativity and the constant search for innovation as the primary added value of their sponsorship activity. Some of them have taken advantage of that to create interactions between the firm activity and the festival to stimulate new creative inputs and knowledge transfer within the production chain.

Other important nodes in the network are local projects and year-round activities boosted by the presence of the festival. In fact interviews brought to light a pivotal role played by FL in injecting stimuli and new ideas describing a plethora of relationships and projects within the surroundings, though not always easily visible, as for instance:

- Partnership with local schools and families in order to host volunteers coming from abroad and to cover welcoming services as training activities for students.

- Partnership with local booksellers for the realisation of the official bookshop of the event.
- Connections with a number of retailers or associations promoting their activities or creating ad hoc events for the occasion.
- Local firms as service providers.

Non local stakeholders

Our analysis also confirms Giorgi's (2011) observation that the link with other festivals and 'circulation' of authors emerge as key conditions for the exchange of ideas. FL is part of an international network of festivals sharing the same aims, such as the Hay Festival in Hay on Wye (UK) and of the Internationales Literaturfestival in Berlin (Germany). In the last decade, these three events have developed diverse projects aimed to promote and trigger the flow of knowledge and cross-pollination amongst diverse languages and countries by means of itinerant activities, a young writers tournée, books and seminars. Members of the FL committee are inclined to interpret these local and international connections as the most important sources of new knowledge creation and as a sign of the vitality of the event.

Volunteers

Young volunteers (called *Magliette blu*) were revealed to be key actors of FL as both festival makers and as knowledge sources. These young people come from all over Italy to cover a plethora of roles ranging from box office, information, costumers service, to editorial staff. Current and former volunteers who were interviewed or surveyed revealed the influence FL had on their growth from both a private and professional perspective and to their staying in the city. Even those who now have no direct connection with the festival stressed the importance of their volunteering experience in developing new skills,

strengthening relationships with work colleagues, and also to remaining linked with the region:

'The festival atmosphere has been a pivotal element for our future profession to connect to each other, arouse our enthusiasm and moreover, to teach us the editorial profession; but at the same time it also helps us to avoid shying around, to be fast in problem solving and furthermore, to improvise and invent'(former volunteer)

In fact many interviewees declared they found a job in the city within local cultural institutions they met during the festival experience and thanks to skills it has enabled them to develop.

This idea is confirmed by the survey responses. FL is viewed as having strongly positive outcomes on one's own education and knowledge by 59% of respondents and as a moderately positive outcome by 33%.

Local heritage

Interviews and surveys reveal a strong connection with the local cultural heritage and that FL has helped to enhance the city that has hosted it. The unique configuration of the historical centre provides an inspirational setting for the event. The festival organisers cited their attempts to recreate the atmosphere of the Gonzaga court¹ to enliven the city for a short period. In this vein many respondents also think festival nurtures the enhancement of the tangible cultural and environmental heritage. Specifically, in regards to the high involvement of cultural venues in the city, as shown in Table 2, the survey revealed that over 89% of respondents thought that the use of heritage locations as festival venues nurtures the enhancement of the cultural heritage, whilst only 2.4% believe that it valorises the heritage only to a small extent. Similarly, 80.5% agree that alternative locations can stimulate a lot of new interplays of actors.

[Table 2 here: The use of heritage locations of FL]

'I find it really stimulating when unconventional venues that usually are closed to public are used for the occasion. Over the years this use has allowed me to feel more and more part of my city and to be proud of it with friends and contacts not from here' local stakeholder

These connections with the environment are material, concerning the natural landscape and the physical spaces of the city; as well as semiotic and conceptual (Richards, 2015b). In fact other informants see FL as a catalyst for local pride and (inter)national attention for the city.

The knowledge spillover effects on the region

'FL has created the basis within the region for further initiatives to develop and be accepted' (Opinion maker)

Our findings reveal a perception of Festivaletteratura as a manifestation embedded within its local context and perceived by the majority of stakeholders as an occasion to grow and to enhance local capital through networking. Drawing from the opinions of the great majority of local actors involved with FL, the key node of this network is the presence of a well-embedded organisation that is able to orchestrate diverse kinds of relationships and the consequent cross-overs between cultural fields.

'The organisation of FL was able to gather together, mediate and emphasise the excellences of the region. From schools to entrepreneurs, they have been brought to the forefront at a national and international level' (local actor)

FL triggers the establishment of trusting relationships and network-building processes amongst the different nodes related to the festival. This is a delicate, complex and time-consuming phenomenon, which is perhaps facilitated by the apparent provisional nature of the event, which makes relationships appear less demanding and more profitable than

other, more institutionalised connections. Specifically we characterised these spontaneous and unforeseen interactions as bridging connections based on shared values, similar intellectual commitment and loose, non- institutionalised agreements that potentially mutate year after year.

'FL has generated in the region what I defined as human infrastructures, allowing the milieu to receive new projects and know how to manage them' (Opinion Maker)

The knowledge impact of this process is twofold. In the first place, the intellectual consumption relating to literature becomes a connecting value that enables the festival organisation to mediate between various groups of actors, who are often key players within the local networks. This in turn enables the festival networks to act as knowledge transfer channels conveying stimuli and expertise from one node to another whilst creating the premises and conditions to allow for intellectual consumption to be more accessible to and desirable for actors operating in different sectors.

The combination of intellectual consumption and knowledge dissemination together seem to have favoured a philanthropic approach from private firms; more attention towards cultural production from policy makers; and the development of favourable conditions for retaining young creatives in the area. Overall, these factors facilitate the development of social capital and community capacity, which both contribute to community well-being. These elements correspond to Moscardo's reflection (2007) on the main drivers for cultural festivals, which she defines as: building social capital, enhancing community capacity and triggering other activities. The latter represent the generation of creativity and innovation in the form of stimulating an overall creative fabric, triggering innovation of processes and products; creating distinctiveness within a destination.

'Our project was launched 10 years ago and it has truly started from the example that Festivalteatura gave to the city. With the idea that certain kinds of initiatives were possible here, [...] I think FL has been very productive in generating a legacy from this

perspective and it has stimulated a lot. Furthermore the majority of our staff were festival volunteers' (local opinion maker)

The tendency for more creatives to stay or settle in Mantua has had a positive effect not just on the city itself, but also the surrounding region. Data from the Chamber of Commerce show a general growth in the book retailing sector, not just in the city of Mantua, but in the surrounding Province as well. This indicates that Mantua has acted as a hub for spreading knowledge and innovation to the surrounding region.

[Table 3 here: Book retailers and related businesses in the Province of Mantua 1966-2013]

Source: Data elaborated from Servizio Informazione e Promozione Economica, Chamber of Commerce of Mantua.

Moreover interviewees drew attention to the presence of activities and projects within the region connected with the presence and action of FL, which did not emerge in the first analysis. As declared by the organisers, some originated directly from the festival experience while others were stimulated indirectly. Several of them are still running as a permanent cultural hub with activities throughout the year

'During the first decade of the new Millennium the municipality tried to launch the city as "the city of festivals" by means of supporting many cultural initiatives and initiating new ones following the example and success of FL. Some of them are still running and have created interesting communities and audiences' (policy maker)

Conclusion

The paper has attempted to contribute to the awareness of the potential of a cultural festival in nurturing smart processes and developing new non-economic resources, a

frequently neglected perspective. The outcomes of these processes have been important factors within their region and are also symptomatic of the wider potential of the production of knowledge and knowledge transmission in generating long-term positive externalities.

Our findings reveal a diverse and rich knowledge resource linked to the festival whose interactions appear to be based on mutual trust, independency and participation. The resulting effect is the presence of a diverse festival community shaped by the special atmosphere of the city, which is in turn supported by the festival. Overall, FL displays itself as a recognised and institutionalised actor in the city, notwithstanding the independent nature of its organisation and the desire of the festival organisers for autonomy from the city. This is reflected in the relatively low level of public funding for the event. Instead the festival organisers can act as switchers able to orchestrate and mediate diverse knowledge sources and resources. The resulting bridging network is characterised by weak ties and informal relations between actors, facilitating structured and unstructured knowledge transfer consistent with the processes described by TFCC (2015). This in turn provokes knowledge and network spillover effects from the festival to other fields, generating greater creative productivity, triggering innovation of processes and products and therefore growth in the local region. Specifically, field data reveal a spillover effect in the form of enhancing community capacity, triggering other activities and building social capital. For the sake of clarity it must also be said that these positive externalities seem to be relatively isolated rather than forming a complete ecology of value as described by Holden (2015). This is due in part to a lack of awareness by both festival organisers and public actors in regards to this potential, which is confirmed by the paucity of research as well as public sector actions to stimulate and enlarge the event's effects on the region. In part it may also reflect the temporal nature of the event, which means that the network of actors is not fully activated year-round. This may be a specific disadvantage of event-

generated knowledge spillovers, and it may point to a need to encourage event organisers and policy makers to develop year-round activities.

This paper contributes to a better understanding of the processes of knowledge spillover from festivals to their wider context by shedding light on the role of knowledge distribution through networks. This was made possible by a holistic approach to festivals as both a creative and industrial activity generating knowledge and conveying knowledge through networks, and causing spillovers due to the double effect of linking network nodes and creating embeddedness for the knowledge produced. We therefore argue that it is important to widen the theoretical perspective on knowledge creation by events and adopt a new holistic approach to conceiving of a festival not just as part of a conventional value chain that creates economic value, but as part of a value network that generates different and interrelated kinds of value stimulating social capital development.

The Mantua case also underlines that a clear policy approach towards embedding the capital produced by the festival in the region emerges as a crucial factor in achieving a positive knowledge spillover effects. As emerged from the literature review and as was supported by the empirical investigation, the spillover effect of intellectual production is too often taken for granted and hence it is frequently difficult to obtain even basic data on these processes. Hence, festivals should be seen as 'opportunity spaces' (Pendlebury, Townshend & Gilroy, 2004, p.12) in which spillover may occur, if properly orchestrated. This approach has to be flanked by a clear idea of how to monitor and assess the knowledge development process.

This paper represents an exploratory study limited to the empirical analysis of one field (literature) mainly aimed at improving our understanding and scientific theories on the knowledge spillover of a festival. There is a need to explore this long-term impact of such festivals further through more extensive and longitudinal research in order to expand our

understanding of processes of knowledge production and spillover in non-market oriented environments.

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ⁱ The Gonzaga family who ruled the city from XII-XVII century, generated and nurtured for a number of centuries, one of the most flourishing hub of intellectual production all over Europe. Connoted by an open and multifaceted philanthropic approach, they had the ability to convey power within their court and rapidly became an important buffer state between the expansionist ambitions of Milan and Venice, by leading the way in architecture, fine art and sciences creating a city centre declared a World Heritage Site in 2008