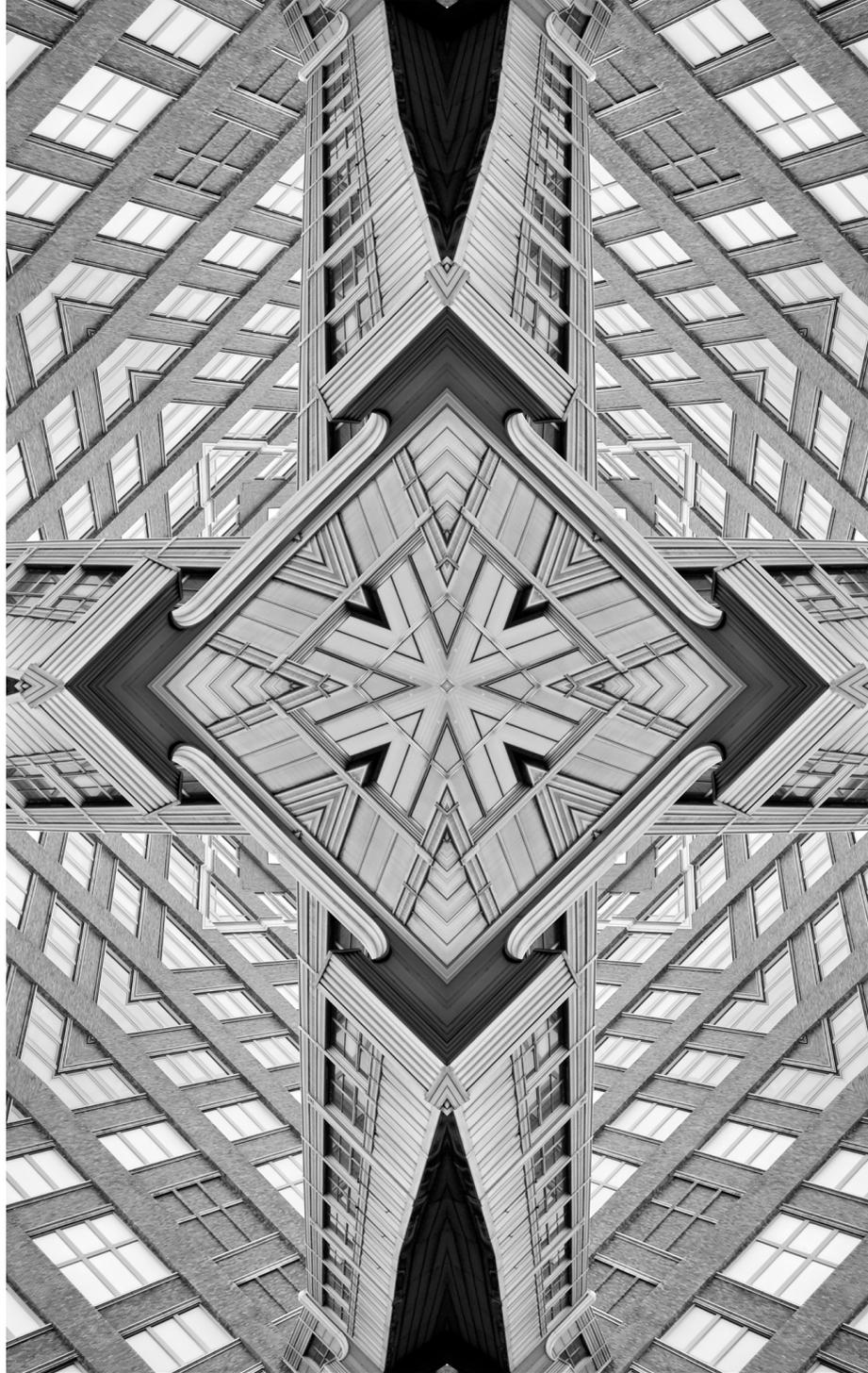


Issue

Brief

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Catalysing Cultural Entrepreneurship in India

Arunima Gupta and Sanjay Anandaram

Abstract

Cultural entrepreneurship promotes a country's heritage, resources and creative talents through products, services, and experiences. It shapes the country's cultural economy; enables economic growth, innovation, and sociocultural development; and, when exported, contributes towards building soft power. India, with a millennia-old heritage, indigenous knowledge systems, and practices, has the potential to become a leading cultural and creative economy in the world. This brief draws attention to the importance of developing India's cultural and creative economy. It offers a strategic roadmap for the growth of cultural enterprises through three focus areas: conducive policy environment and incentives; market-side interventions and infrastructural support; and greater access to capital.

The global cultural economy manifested through Cultural and Creative Industries (CCIs) has proven to be a great catalyst for innovation, economic growth, and sociocultural transformation. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) estimates that CCIs account for 3 percent of global GDP¹ and generate annual revenues of over USD 2.25 trillion,² employing approximately 30 million people.

What constitutes CCIs varies across countries depending on their cultural resources, know-how, and socio-economic contexts. A commonly accepted understanding of CCIs comes from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), which defines this sector as “activities whose principal purpose is production or reproduction, promotion, distribution or commercialisation of goods, services, and activities of a cultural, artistic, or heritage-related nature.”^{a,3} CCIs play an important role in a country’s economy: they offer recreation and well-being, while spurring innovation and economic development at the same time. First, a flourishing cultural economy is a driver of economic growth as attaching commercial value to cultural products, services, and experiences leads to revenue generation. These cultural goods and ideas are also contributors to international trade.

Second, although a large workforce in this space is informally organised and often unaccounted for in official labour force statistics, cultural economies are some of the biggest employers of artists, craftspeople, and technicians. Moreover, the emphasis on innovation and creative intervention makes this sector entrepreneurial in nature, and constantly creates and provides new job opportunities. The rapidly evolving digital space, coming of new-age content, and means of sharing information further add to the growth of the cultural economy.

Third, a city, state, or country endowed with cultural resources that are well-maintained is more likely to attract investments in tourism and other related business opportunities. For instance, the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao, in Spain, has become a hub for researchers, entrepreneurs, chefs, tourists, and allied service professionals, turning the ordinary industrial town into a key

a CCIs primarily include arts and crafts, gastronomy, tourism, museums, design, fashion, performing arts, visual arts, festivals, literature, printing, and advertising; and in some cases, healing arts such as traditional medicinal sciences and arts-based therapies.

cultural centre in the country. This spillover effect of building a cultural site has been termed ‘The Bilbao Effect’ and serves as an international case study. Similarly, in India for example, building more cultural districts can drive greater tourist inflows as well as create avenues for interactions between artists, content creators, consumers, and institutions. It would enable the inflow of requisite investments that can sustain and provide resources for cultural activities.

Finally, cultural exports to foreign shores transfer the ideas, values, and knowledge traditions of a country. They shape perceptions of a country and enable people-to-people engagement. Successful cultural exports in the form of a product, service, or experience also influence consumer behaviour.

“Cultural and creative industries offer recreation and well-being, while spurring innovation and economic development, at the same time.”

The Global Cultural and Creative Economy: Case Studies

Recognising that CCIs hold both cultural and commercial value, governments across the world have sought to strengthen their cultural economy and soft power.^b These countries are harnessing their cultural assets to create a robust and lucrative cultural and creative economy through focused policy interventions and investments in sectors such as cuisine, fashion, music, technology, and broader subsets such as tourism and creative media.

In Asia, two of the most successful examples include South Korea—which has linked innovation, entertainment, and culture to form the bedrock of its cultural and creative economy—and Thailand, which has harnessed its culinary traditions to advance what is known as “gastrodiplomacy”. The following paragraphs describe the efforts taken by these two countries in promoting their cultural soft power.

South Korea

South Korea has made great strides to become a reckoning cultural and creative economy. From Dalgona Coffee to K-Pop and K-drama to K-beauty, South Korea’s CCIs have witnessed massive growth in recent years.

Yet, this spike in the popularity of K-culture is neither new nor merely an accident; rather, it is an outcome of a well-thought out policy built around the idea of “Cool Korea” that sought to bring the country out of the 1990s financial crisis. The government of then President Kim Dae-Jung, in 2001, laid out the Hallyu Industry Support Development Plan to harness Korean culture and transform it into a USD 290-billion industry in two years.⁴ Two steps taken in this direction were the expansion of the cultural industry budget, and the promotion of a strong public-private partnership model of cooperation.

^b Coined by American political scientist Joseph Nye, ‘soft power’ refers to the “ability of nations to get what they want through attraction rather than coercion.” Soft power rests on three major pillars – culture, political values, and foreign policy. See: *Soft Power: The Means to Success in World Politics* by Joseph S. Nye, Jr. (2004)

The Global Cultural and Creative Economy: Case Studies

In 2013, the Park Geun-Hye government laid down the “Creative Economy Action Plan” as a guiding strategy for the various ministries in the culture-related sectors^c to work with non-government organisations.^d The action plan laid down three overarching goals: creating new jobs; strengthening Korea’s leadership in the global cultural and creative economy; and fostering an environment for creative talents as well as cultural entrepreneurs.

In this direction, 24 key tasks were implemented such as creating an ecosystem for start-ups to attract angel investments and crowdfunding; protecting and patenting intellectual property (IP) through a “country patent strategy blueprint”; and encouraging greater cooperation between ventures, SME-related organisations, local governments, corporations, and training institutions to equip cultural and creative entrepreneurs with the relevant mentoring and technical know-how. The government also dedicated a fund of USD 3 billion to support cultural and creative start-ups.

Furthering these objectives, in 2017, the Ministry of Science and ICT (MSIT) introduced newer measures to strengthen the creative economy through a four-pronged approach:

1. Efforts were made towards deregulation, increasing innovation, and the involvement of private entities in the public sector.
2. A cycle of commercialising creative ideas was created by providing strong linkages with markets, technology financing, and creating a robust start-up ecosystem.
3. Emphasis was placed on schools to promote STEAM-based curriculums,^e and promote design thinking and creative problem-solving abilities in students from an early age. Creative Economy Innovation Centres were opened across the country for fostering local entrepreneurial talents and eliminating maximum barriers for a student to pursue entrepreneurship.
4. The MSIT supported cooperation and collaboration within the existing realms of science, culture, and art through various institutions.

^c These include the Ministry of Trade, Industry and Energy; Ministry of Strategy and Finance; Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism; the Small & Medium Business Administration, and the Intellectual Property Office.

^d For example, the Korean Chamber of Commerce, the Korea Federation of Small and Medium Businesses, and Korea Trade-Investment Promotion Agency.

^e STEAM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics. By integrating arts into the earlier concept of STEM i.e. science, technology and maths, STEAM-based curriculum till the K-12 level, seek to cultivate creativity, innovation and collaborative aptitude of children.

The Global Cultural and Creative Economy: Case Studies

Since then, the Korean cultural and creative industry has seen a spectacular trajectory. *Hallyu*—the wave of Korean cultural exports, resting on the country’s creative economy, has created a market for itself across the globe. Hallyu-related organisations have recorded a year-on-year rise of seven percent in their number and a 36-percent increase in their memberships over the past five years.⁵ In 2014 alone, exports of Hallyu-centered content were over USD 5 billion.⁶

For instance, the Korean music industry has carved a niche for itself with K-pop established as a unique genre of music. BTS alone, the Korean boy band, is estimated to generate revenue worth USD 3.6 billion at home.^f

In the field of cinema and creative media, *Parasite* became the first South Korean and non-English movie to win the Academy Awards in the United States (US) in 2019. Similarly, the Netflix original series, *Squid Game* ranked first in the “most-watched” category in many countries, including India, for the longest duration in 2021—recording a first in Netflix’s history. Therefore, it came as no surprise that in February 2021, Netflix announced plans to invest USD 500 million in K-drama.⁷

The list of K-exports goes beyond popular culture. There is K-Beauty that has made sheet masks and *hanbang* (Korean traditional medicines)—which are popular amongst Gen-Z. The K-Beauty industry accounted for USD 10.2 billion⁸ in 2019 and is bound to grow further in the years to come.

Finally, Korean dishes like *kimchi* and *bibimbap* have made inroads into gourmet restaurants in countries such as the UK, US, and France. Popularly known as “kimchi diplomacy”, this policy brings together the government, industry players, and food entrepreneurs to promote Korean cuisine in foreign countries. The Korean Food Promotion Institute, a governmental body, and its allied Overseas Korean Restaurant Association oversee the conduct of Korea’s gastrodiplomacy. Some of the efforts in this direction include financially supporting students to attend international culinary schools and food festivals, as well as sponsoring culinary tours for Korean food entrepreneurs.

f According to the Hyundai Research Institute, BTS generates revenue worth USD 3.6 billion annually and USD 1 billion in exports. The band inspires fans to travel to South Korea and explore the country first-hand. In 2017, it was reported that about seven percent of the 800,000 tourists who visited the country did so because of BTS. See: “How boy band BTS went from South Korean idols to international superstars” (2019).

The Global Cultural and Creative Economy: Case Studies

Thailand

Another Asian country that has adopted gastrodiploacy as an instrument of soft power is Thailand. ‘Global Thai’ is an outstanding example of a government-driven campaign to popularise⁹ authentic local cuisine offshores. Multiple steps have been taken in the past few years to achieve this objective:

1. Local chefs were trained to open Thai restaurants abroad,^g offering a plethora of options from pocket-friendly to high-end diners.
2. Financial incentives by means of loans and investments from the government as well as the private sector were offered to culinary entrepreneurs seeking to open their own restaurants. A loan apparatus was established by the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Bank for offering loans of up to USD 3 million to Thai chefs seeking to start a venture abroad.
3. A dedicated budget was allocated for exports of Thai ingredients such as *galangal* root and fish sauce. This increased the sale of local agriproducts and also led to increased R&D^h and innovation in agriculture as well as culinary preparations.
4. A strong nation-branding strategy, coupled with robust advertising and marketing of Thai cuisine, was executed. Under the motto of “Kitchen of the World,” over 20,000 Thai restaurants have been opened across the world till date.¹⁰

Thailand’s gastrodiploacy has been an excellent demonstration of inter-ministerialⁱ and public-private cooperation. An in-depth understanding of the formulation, execution, and impact of these various initiatives and other international best practices could provide a framework for India as it seeks to develop its own creative economy.

g New Zealand announced the Thai Chefs Work Visa allowing Thai chefs to work and establish their presence in New Zealand with greater efficiency. See: <https://www.immigration.govt.nz/new-zealand-visas/apply-for-a-visa/visa-factsheet/thai-chefs-work-visa>

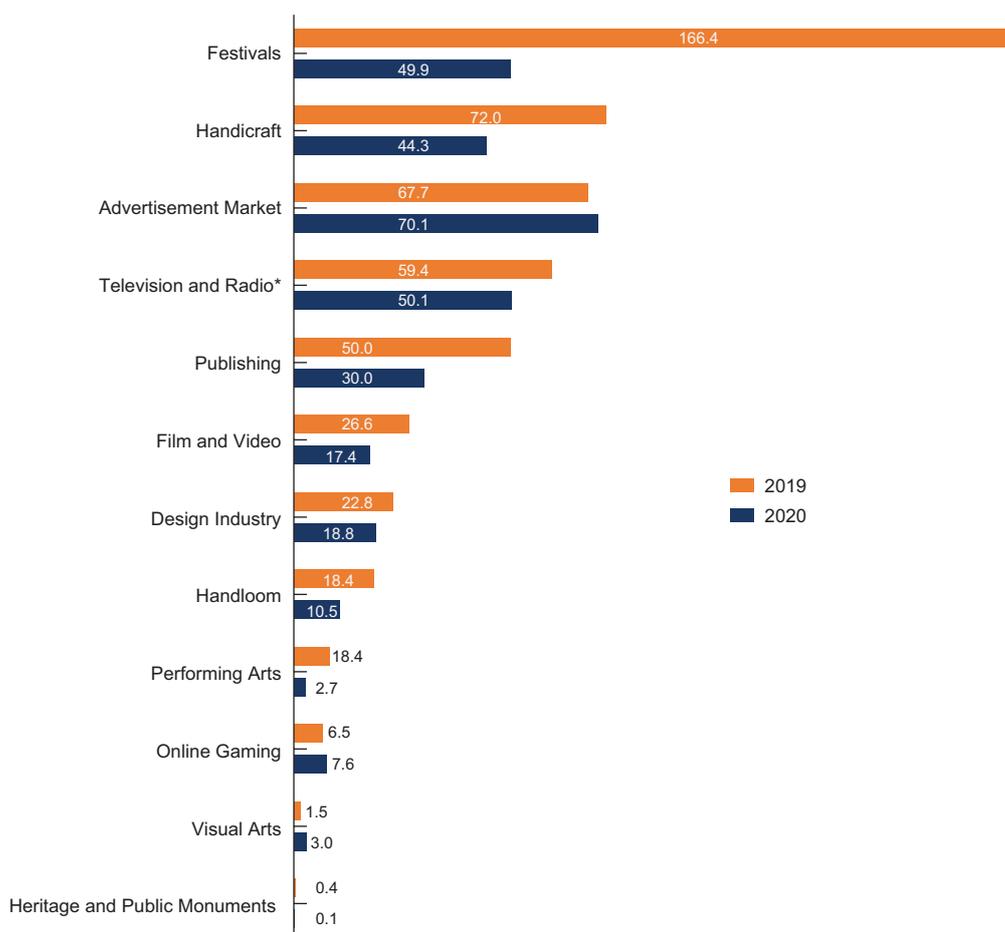
h The public Kasetsart University and the Ministry of Agriculture were a part of the process.

i The country’s Ministry of Health, Ministry of Industry, Ministry of Agriculture, the Thailand National Food Institute, the public-funded Kasetsart University, and Thai diplomats all came together for this initiative.

India's Cultural and Creative Economy

Cultural economy plays a pivotal role in defining the ways in which individuals engage with a country's culture and derive value from it. It also influences a country's nation-brand value and, in turn, its soft power. For India, some of the most essential CCIs are centred around festivals, handicrafts, and the advertisement industry.

**Table 1:
Market Size of India's Creative Economy and Culture Sector**



Source: *Taking the Temperature*¹¹

India's Cultural and Creative Economy

Owing to its vast geography and ancient heritage, India's cultural endowments are unparalleled in the world. It has historically been a creative powerhouse, exporting the finest cultural goods including perfumes, textiles, indigo dyes, and spices. The intricately handwoven Dhaka Muslin,^j for example, that had adorned royalties across the world, including those of France, Greece, and Rome, was almost 20 times as expensive as silk and fetched¹² a generous revenue through international trade—until the coming of the British and the ushering of machine-made cheap fabric. The local weaving community then started losing their livelihoods and, gradually, even the knowledge to grow and weave this muslin.

India's knowledge systems—yoga and ayurveda—as well as performing arts have also influenced many cultures, which can be witnessed even today in their art forms, architecture, wellness, and other practices. For instance, Indian epics such as *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata* have been adapted by many Southeast Asian countries as part of their national literature, theatre, and performing art forms. Similarly, many cultural enterprises in the US offer products based on Indian ingredients such as *ghee* (clarified butter) and *haldi* (turmeric).

However, even though India continues to export cultural goods, the trade has yielded little in both economic dividends and diplomatic influence. According to the *Creative Economy Outlook* report by UNCTAD, the value of India's creative exports increased from USD 7.4 billion in 2005 to USD 20.2 billion in 2015.¹³ India is the fifth largest exporter in the global art crafts sector, which includes carpets, celebration items, yarn products, and wickerwork. However, while the international trade in the art crafts sector was worth USD 35 billion in 2015, India's share was only USD 1.5 billion.

In 2020–21, India's exports of gems and jewellery reached USD 25 billion¹⁴ and the textile exports exceeded USD 28 billion¹⁵ in 2019–20. Ninety percent of the world's handwoven textiles come from India, which is also the second-largest producer of silk and a major producer of jute and cotton. With over 700 crafts clusters across the country, many traditional textile crafts continue to be practiced by artisans and weavers, thus, giving aesthetic sensibilities that remain unparalleled in the world. Despite such high volumes of textile production,

^j The Dhaka Muslin is a cloth made from a particular kind of indigenous cotton cultivated only in the Ganga–Brahmaputra delta and produced in the erstwhile state of Bengal.

India's Cultural and Creative Economy

the country still lacks globally eminent fashion houses that can compete with western fashion brands. This sector largely remains an exporter of fabrics; even in the case of finished products, the Indian branding is absent.

The same story is repeated in the case of India's intellectual know-how and traditional wisdom. For example, despite being renowned across the world, turmeric latte's origin as *haldi doodh*—the humble household drink in India—is hardly acknowledged. Another example is yoga which has spurred the growth of ventures selling related commodities such as apparel, music, equipment, digital applications, and retreats and training schools. While marking 21 June as International Day of Yoga was a diplomatic feat for India, the country is yet to harness yoga and other indigenous wellness systems as a source of economic opportunity. Ayurveda is yet another distinct ancient science by itself involving many components ranging from food to fashion. Despite the global ayurvedic market being valued at USD 4.62 billion in 2017, India's share was a meagre USD 402 million.¹⁶

India's CCIs remain confined to the lower end of the value chain where it exports commodities or provides low-cost skilled labour for the making of products such as garments, jewellery, and accessories. To be a serious player, Indian CCIs need to develop a strong understanding of market trends and customer requirements; create innovative and contemporary designs, colours, and materials; be a part of digital supply chains; meet regulatory and quality standards; appreciate the value of creating intellectual property; and invest in creating branded products, services, and experiences.

Another sector that is yet to be harnessed to its full potential is tourism. In 2019, the total number of international tourist arrivals in India was 17.42 million¹⁷ whereas, France, for example—a country six times smaller than India—had 90 million visitors in the same year. A key reason for France's success is its creation of a robust infrastructure that supports tourism. For instance, though a small segment of the tourism industry, museums alone can be a lucrative source of revenue generation and job creation and serve as hubs of cultural activities. The Louvre Museum in Paris reported a footfall of 9.6 million visitors in 2019.¹⁸ In the case of India, museums can serve as repositories of the country's history, its many scientific and military innovations, and massive cultural wealth. Revamping the museum infrastructure and enhancing the visitor experience can become a significant contributor to inbound tourism.

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Similarly, India is home to some of the most spectacular architectural and natural heritage sites in the world and can offer a plethora of experiences—from luxury health retreats to adventure sports, to spiritual immersions and wildlife tourism.^k In 2021, UNESCO designated India's ancient and long-standing heritage, the Ramappa Temple as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Even after this recognition, the connectivity to the temple and lodging facilities remain limited, discouraging the inflow of more visitors. Developing such sites into travel hubs will not only strengthen the 'Destination India' label but also reinvigorate the local economies of the host cities.

Increasing demographics that prefers curated experiences, crafted products, and conscious consumption habits, create multiple avenues for India's CCIs to contribute to the economic and socio-cultural milieu.¹⁹ This change in consumer preference is boosting the rise of an entrepreneurial class that is proudly adapting and projecting Indian heritage, traditions, and wisdom in a fashionable and relevant manner. Thus, the expanding market, changing consumer preferences, growing buying capacities as well as the inclination towards making *desi* "cool", further support the growth of cultural brands.

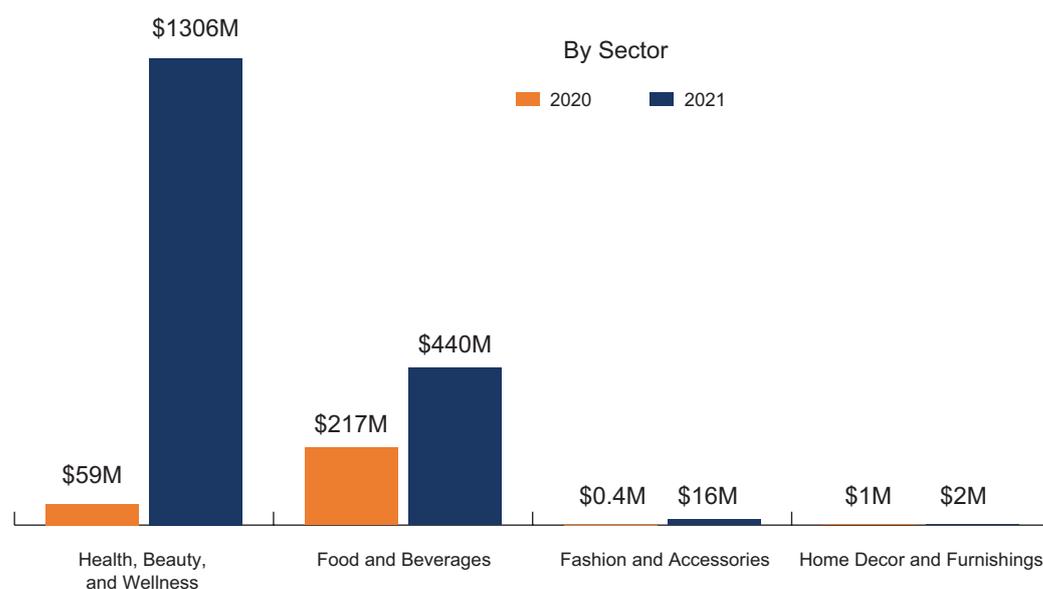
This is further corroborated by substantial investments into branded consumer-facing Indian cultural enterprises. In 2021, cultural enterprises in four sectors—health, wellness, and beauty; food and beverages; fashion and accessories, and home decor and furnishings—attracted investments worth USD 1,764 million (INR 13,037 crore).²⁰ Two sectors that saw the highest investments in 2021 were health, wellness and beauty, and food and beverages. (See Figure 1) This surge in the investment value demonstrates a growing number of successful cultural brands, their rapidly expanding consumer demand, as well as an increasing appetite for funds and investors to invest and financially support such cultural enterprises. Large and established corporations are also creating business lines based on Indian cultural assets.¹

^k The country has some 40 UNESCO world heritage sites.

^l For instance, Marico has investments in ayurveda-based beauty brand, Just Herbs; ITC invested in Mother Sparsh, Reliance acquired the fashion label, Ritu Kumar, and Aditya Birla group acquired Jaypore and entered into strategic partnerships with Indian fashion houses Sabyasachi and Tarun Tahiliani.

India's Cultural and Creative Economy

**Figure 1:
Investments in Cultural Start-ups**

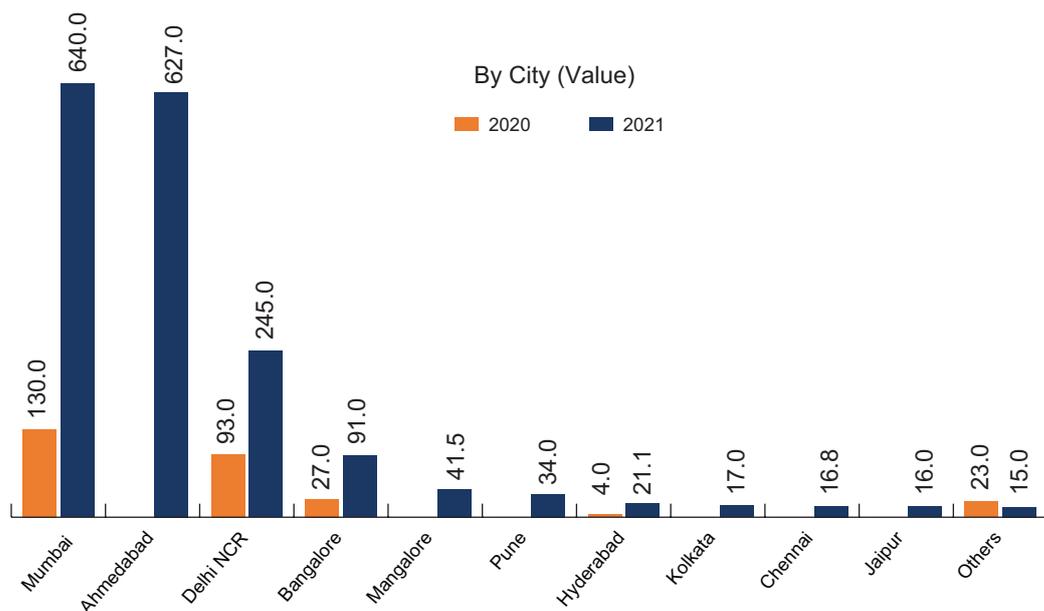


Source: NICEorg-Venture Intelligence Data²¹

Moreover, these investments were not just restricted to tier-I cities such as Bengaluru, Mumbai, and New Delhi or Delhi NCR, but also percolated to tier-II cities, many of which have been traditional centres of cultural activities, such as Ahmedabad and Jaipur.

India's Cultural and Creative Economy

Figure 2:
Investments in Cultural Start-ups,
by City



Source: NICEorg-Venture Intelligence Data²²

A Proposed Roadmap for India's CCIs

There is a need to adopt a multi-stakeholder approach to build an ecosystem that enables the continued growth and prosperity of India's CCIs. Three critical pillars for this would be providing training and incubatory support to entrepreneurs; a conducive policy environment and incentives; and access to capital. The following paragraphs outline proposals for supporting India's cultural enterprises.

Medium-Term Measures

Over a period of three years, the following are some of the most preliminary yet adequate measures that India could take:

1. Officially Recognising 'Cultural Entrepreneurship'

A harmonised definition of '*cultural enterprises*' must enter the lexicon and officially be adopted by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT). A fitting explanation comes from NICEorg, which identifies cultural enterprises as "successful and profitable businesses rooted in India's cultural heritage, wisdom, and practices while having a strong market and customer focus."²³

This induction would be similar to 2016 when the Government of India officially accepted and defined the term 'start-up' and launched multiple programmes aimed at supporting and growing them. Similar institutional support is needed for the recognition and mainstreaming of cultural start-ups and cultural entrepreneurship.

After having been listed and recognised by DPIIT, the incentives offered by the 'Start-up India' scheme should be extended to cultural start-ups as well—these could include tax exemptions, fast-tracking of patent applications, faster exit mechanism, and equity funding.

2. Inter-ministerial Cooperation for Strategic Planning

Cultural entrepreneurship combines multiple sectors and involves many stakeholders. A nodal agency should be set up under DPIIT for promoting the interests of cultural enterprises.

A Proposed Roadmap for India's CCIs

The membership of this committee would include ministers and senior-level bureaucrats from the ministries of Culture and Tourism, Textiles, Small-scale and agro-based industries, Small and Medium Enterprises, AYUSH, Commerce and Industries, and External Affairs. Representatives from institutions such as NITI Aayog, Invest India, Start-up India, Indian Council for Cultural Relations, Crafts Council of India, academic institutions, corporations as well as non-governmental entities like NICEorg and FICCI should also be included. It is equally important to include industry leaders and specialists who would represent the perspective and acting capacity of the private sector.

The primary task of such a Committee on Cultural and Creative Economy (CCCE) would be to outline a vision document and an action plan for the growth of CCIs. This would entail tasks such as creating a budget proposal and pushing for dedicated funds for developing CCIs. The Committee will also design time-based action plans, programmes, and policies both at the state and central levels. Subsequently, the Committee would monitor the performances of states on designated parameters such as the number of cultural start-ups successfully incubated and mentored in a year; revenue generated from local CCIs; human resource development; international investments acquired; and the number of branded and non-branded cultural products exported in a year.

Lastly, CCCE would also oversee the formation of a similar executive task force at the state level, which would be entrusted with the implementation of the given parameters and closely work with the Central Committee. This monitoring would enable the evaluation and ranking of states as well. Based on the states' respective performances, the CCCE could offer infrastructural or financial incentives for states to further develop their local cultural economy.

Additionally, cultural entrepreneurship summits and expos should be organised inviting cultural entrepreneurs, investors, business leaders, government officials, and diplomats. These events having a twofold focus—generating business for cultural enterprises and driving conversations around India's cultural economy—could be a flagship initiative at the national level involving all the stakeholders in CCIs.

A Proposed Roadmap for India's CCIs

3. Market Research and Strategic Consulting on Cultural and Creative Economy

A dedicated wing should be set up with governmental agencies and autonomous think tanks such as the India Brand Equity Foundation (IBEF) and Invest India, focusing entirely on the CCIs. While these institutions do carry out studies on sectors pertaining to CCIs, there is a need for a more comprehensive and market-facing approach. Consolidated market research and strategic insights into the market size, trends, and growth opportunities for various CCIs, investment patterns, and forecasting should be produced occasionally. In doing so, these autonomous institutions become a trusted source of information for both the start-ups and the investors.

Furthermore, detailing the various schemes and programmes that have been implemented at both the centre and state levels, will create greater awareness of India's cultural and creative economy and the potential of various sectors. For example, The Global Ayush Investment and Innovation Summit,^m organised in April 2022 by the Gujarat government and supported by Invest India as well as CII sought to bring together start-ups, entrepreneurs, investors, policymakers, and other stakeholders on a common platform to steer investments, discuss key policies and schemes and in turn boost India as a destination for AYUSH.

4. Increasing Investment Avenues

Setting up funds and funding mechanisms in partnership with the private sector, philanthropic institutions, and high net-worth individuals is important. Access to capital remains a prime challenge for MSMEs to scale. However, it is also one of the three most critical pillars for the success of cultural start-ups. To bridge the gap between investors, funders, and cultural entrepreneurs, this brief proposes the following:

a. For Investors

Investors need to be incentivised to provide capital for cultural enterprises. These could include tax breaks with a sunset clause and other regulations as well as financial benefits. Listing of cultural enterprises on stock exchanges and encouraging funding in cultural enterprises through preferential tax treatments could also serve as an incentive for funders.

^m This summit was organised after the inauguration of the Global Center for Traditional Medicine in Jamnagar, Gujarat, a first-of-its-kind centre established in the world by WHO and the Ministry of AYUSH.

A Proposed Roadmap for India's CCIs

b. For Cultural Start-ups

Increasing awareness and accessibility to various sources of credits, investment, and funding should be provided to cultural entrepreneurs. Recognising innovative business structures that make fundraising, mergers and acquisitions, and hiring more efficient is also critical. An example of this would be the Low-Profit Limited Liability Company model practiced in the US, which allows companies to reap the benefits of both a for-profit and a not-for-profit company.

Simultaneously, cumbersome legal frameworks, regulatory bottlenecks, and tax structures need to be eliminated for both cultural entrepreneurs setting up a venture as well as investors seeking to invest in cultural start-ups. An apparatus for public and private joint investments must be established as well.

5. CCIs as Instruments of Public Diplomacy and People-to-People Relations

Cultural industries can be an instrument of soft power and enhance people-to-people engagement. For India to effectively harness the economic prowess of its cultural assets on the global stage, the government and the private actors must step up their efforts in setting up Indian cultural enterprise offshores. Towards this, the MEA and its cultural wing—ICCR, as well as the Ministry of Commerce—could take certain targeted steps:

- i. Seek visa relaxations for Indian cultural entrepreneurs wanting to make a global presence. A welcome move in this direction is the²⁴ Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement signed between India and Australia in April 2022, which allows Indian traditional chefs and yoga teachers to stay in Australia for a period of four years as professionals and practitioners.
- ii. Establish partnerships with international market research organisations to help Indian entrepreneurs understand global markets and consumer behaviours. During the visit of UK's Prime Minister Boris Johnson's to India in April 2022, London and New Delhi also looked²⁵ at the progress of the *India-UK Roadmap to 2030*ⁿ which entails policy dialogues and research collaboration in the cultural and creative economy as well as promotion of ayurveda and yoga in the UK.

ⁿ The India-UK Roadmap to 2030 was adopted in 2021 by India and the UK as a guiding framework for cooperation between the two countries in areas such as trade, culture, education, defence and security, and health.

A Proposed Roadmap for India's CCIs

- iii. Extend commercial and legal support to Indian cultural entrepreneurs to understand and comply with international business norms and policy frameworks.
- iv. Aid in advertising, building awareness, and cultivating likeness towards Indian-origin cultural products and services amongst international audiences.
- v. Enable greater participation of Indian cultural entrepreneurs in exchange programmes as well as global investment summits and business events. In doing so, cultural entrepreneurs will act as cultural and business ambassadors of India, representing the country's heritage and soft power and promising business opportunities.

Long-Term Measures

Over the past few years, there have been growing discussions around sustainability, livelihoods, and social impact. Looking from an entrepreneurial lens, this has led businesses as well as policymakers to focus on the supply side of cultural businesses that include working with artisans through crafts and agro clusters and providing vocational training and design inputs. Though all this has augured well for India's cultural products to be exported as raw materials or even finished but unbranded goods, it is equally important to bring in demand-side interventions that emphasise understanding the markets and customers. The implementation and results of such measures are more long-drawn and also necessitate regular changes to processes, structures, and scope of work. This brief makes the following recommendations:

1. Critical Interventions for Growth of Indian Cultural Enterprises

Market interventions that help small enterprises develop a brand identity for their products through state-of-art packaging, strong brand positioning and communication strategies, quality standardisation, and greater connectivity to the markets are critical. Transforming the local products from across the country to branded products and making them available countrywide would not only encourage grassroots entrepreneurship but also provide a boost to local economies.

A Proposed Roadmap for India's CCIs

The One District One Product (ODOP) initiative lists as many as 106 products, native to each district of India—a majority of which are textiles, handicrafts, and agriculture and agro-based products. Aimed at developing each district as a manufacturing hub; attracting investments; and increasing exports, ODOP-enlisted districts are entitled to credit-linked grants, seed capital for local businesses as well as capital investments, mentoring, marketing, and branding support. Equipping local cultural businesses with such services would provide an impetus to develop cultural brands at the local level. Furthermore, these products should have a greater digital presence through e-commerce platforms such as Flipkart and Amazon India as well as the GEM portal, and be enabled to take advantage of India's upcoming e-commerce Open Network Digital Commerce (ONDC) platform. The same is applicable to other schemes such as the National Handloom Development Programme.

2. Improving Market Linkages

Supporting small cultural businesses with their supply chain strategy; building critical infrastructure for transportation of products; connecting producers to a larger set of consumers; and increasing market accessibility are some essential elements for the growth of cultural start-ups. For instance, although Arunachal Pradesh is the largest producer of kiwis in India, their presence in markets is far lesser than the imported kiwis from New Zealand and Chile.²⁶ The lack of infrastructure to transport kiwis from Arunachal Pradesh to other parts of the country and inadequate packaging are the primary reasons for this, which can be addressed through market interventions that were discussed above.

3. Protecting Intellectual Property

CCIs are increasingly coming to stand at an intersection of technology, art, and innovation. While digital platforms aid the process of creation and dissemination, this could also lead to intellectual theft. It is, therefore, essential for cultural entrepreneurs, designers, and creators to protect their creative outputs or intellectual property. For instance, only a few performing artists may be aware that the Indian Copyright Act of 1957 protects gestures and moves unique to Indian traditional dance forms, and even fewer would actually use this to their advantage. Advocating and harnessing IP requires awareness and assistance in resorting to legal measures such as trademarks, copyrights, and certifications to confirm production standards and also Geographical

A Proposed Roadmap for India's CCIs

Indications (GIs) that trace and protect the origin of a product, its authenticity, and quality. Creating the Traditional Knowledge Digital Library; successfully challenging the US patent on turmeric; and winning the legal battle were some early steps to establishing India's cultural legacy and resources.

Similar to the efforts to promote AYUSH, archives and repositories must be created for other cultural know-how and knowledge traditions. Institutions such as INTACH, the Indian Institute of Handloom Technology, and Creative Dignity must take the lead in documenting and recording knowledge from the past and spearheading innovations for the present as well as posterity. Laying down standards and processes become equally important to ensure authenticity and due recognition of diverse cultural practices—be it diverse cooking styles, wellness traditions, or crafts. This will also limit erroneous duplication of resources and in turn, protect their IP.

4. Enabling Environment for Cultural Entrepreneurship at the State Level

An executive body, structured on the lines of the CCCE, should be formed at the state level working in tandem with the goals and objectives laid out by the central committee. While the overarching goal and action plan would be laid down by the CCCE, state-level committees must draft an execution strategy for achieving their targets. Think tanks and researchers can provide material on the state of various cultural sectors and what needs to be done to create successful businesses in these sectors. The incentive structures laid down can also harbour the spirit of cooperative and competitive federalism for states to perform better.

This executive body, comprising policymakers and executive heads, should also be trained and equipped to understand the market demand of cultural and creative products. Through awareness-building measures and education as well as policy implementation, attention needs to be given to branded products and commodities. As India pushes for an export-driven growth strategy, establishing market linkages and global supply chains for the sale of branded and finished 'Made in India' products become essential.

A Proposed Roadmap for India's CCIs

Beyond the ODOP scheme, states should also foster an ecosystem for the growth of cultural and creative enterprises through other methods. Academic institutions offering specialised training in the field of culinary arts, visual arts, tourism, and management, should have curriculums to inculcate courses on entrepreneurship, parallel to the subject specialisations. The Indian Institute of Management (IIMs), National Institute of Fashion Technology (NIFTs), and the Institute of Hotel Management (IHMs), have campuses across the country, and can introduce standard courses on cultural and creative entrepreneurship.

Furthermore, through the Atal Incubation Centres or incubators such as T-Hub and WEhub, which run on a private-public partnership model, dedicated programmes should be designed for cultural enterprises. More cultural enterprises across the country would not only lead to transforming indigenous cultural assets into brands but also enable the creation of a thriving entrepreneurial ecosystem, benefitting the local communities as well.

Conclusion

There is a proven appetite for India's cultural offerings across the globe—be it health, cuisine, organic beauty, or handicrafts. A robust network of cultural entrepreneurs, industry leaders, interest groups, and consumers is integral for augmenting India's cultural footprint. Increased networking and a market-focused approach to developing cultural and creative enterprises will enable the formalisation of this largely unorganised yet high-value sector. Integrated market linkages, a growing consumer base, and the financial success of enterprises will also create opportunities for cross-selling and upselling. Finally, a comprehensive policy design and implementation at the central and state level will ensure that the vision of developing India's CCIs is achieved through resource mobilisation, infrastructure support, access to capital, and an enabling ecosystem for cultural start-ups.

Leveraging India's cultural assets economically to their maximum potential can pave the way for India to emerge as a leader in the cultural economy. It is about time India begins thinking and acting on the holistic growth of the country's cultural and creative industries and, in turn, shape them as instruments of soft power. 

Arunima Gupta is a scholar of soft power and cultural economy. Her commentaries on India's soft power and foreign policy have been published on various domestic and international media platforms. She is currently working as the Principal at Network of Indian Cultural Enterprises (NICEorg) She tweets @ArunimaGupta03.

Sanjay Anandaram is the Co-founder of Network of Indian Cultural Enterprises (NICEorg). He brings over 3 decades of experience as an entrepreneur, investor, corporate executive, teacher, board member and mentor. He is a passionate advocate of entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial thinking and technology as the means for societal transformation.

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20, Rouse Avenue Institutional Area,
New Delhi - 110 002, INDIA
Ph. : +91-11-35332000. Fax : +91-11-35332005
E-mail: contactus@orfonline.org
Website: www.orfonline.org