

The background of the slide is a close-up, slightly blurred photograph of a book's spine. The spine is bound in a light-colored material, possibly leather or cloth, and features several raised bands. Gold lettering is visible on the spine, though it is not clearly legible. The overall tone is warm and scholarly.

Cultural Infrastructure: Investments in the collective identity of communities

By

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What is cultural infrastructure and how important is it to government?

- Built structures, cultural venues, monuments, public art or cultural spaces, and arts and cultural production or training facilities that are essential to economy and society

Making space for culture: Planning Cultural Infrastructure

Centre of Expertise on Culture and Communities, October 18, 2006

In 2005, cultural infrastructure was:

- Was the asset type that had increased fastest in percentage terms since 1961 (faster than roads, environment, water systems, office buildings and recreational infrastructure)

Why are these investments being made?

Investments being justified in terms of:

- Social cohesion
- Social inclusion
- Social well-being and quality of life
- Cultural citizenship
- Cultural sustainability
- The creative economy

Why is this happening now?

Economic sphere:

- Increased emphasis on cities as conduits for global financial and information flows

Cultural sphere:

- Increased cultural diversity, decreased barriers between local and global ecosystems

Social sphere:

- Increased concern about social capital, civic engagement, inequality, exclusion

Conceptual approaches

Two main conceptual approaches to measuring impact on identity of investments in cultural infrastructure:

- Creative city/community approach
- Cultural planning approach

Creative city/community approach

- Identity = “branding” and creative clusters
- Goals = attraction of creative capital (financial and human resources) and tourists
- Role of cultural infrastructure = to contribute to urban regeneration



Cultural planning approach

- Identity = “sense of place” and local meaning
- Goals = strengthening community pride and participation and fostering social and economic sustainability
- Role of cultural infrastructure = to contribute to positive community relations

Unanswered questions

- What is a cultural asset?
- Is the role of cultural infrastructure to act as an attractor of external flows?
- Is the role of cultural infrastructure to reinforce internal flows and sense of place?
- Which form of identity will be the strongest asset in the next phase of globalization?