

# Best practices of public export promotion in the Finnish music industry: case MOI! Sounds from Suomi

Organization and Management

Master's thesis

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2012

**BEST PRACTICES OF PUBLIC EXPORT PROMOTION IN THE FINNISH  
MUSIC INDUSTRY: case MOI! Sounds from Suomi**

The purpose of this study is to identify best practices of public promotion in the creative industries in order for policy makers to better match their promotional actions with the needs of the creative industries professionals. As an example of the creative industries this study focuses on the Finnish music industry, and as an example of cultural policy initiatives this study focuses on one export promotion tool, that is, Music Export Finland's Nordic MOI! Sounds from Suomi – flagship project.

Through face-to-face discussions of the Finnish music as a business, as an international industry, as a user of public promotion, and as a participant of an export promotion project the Finnish music industry professionals are let to describe their personal experiences of what works regarding public export promotion and what does not. The sample of Finnish music industry professionals of this study consists of two Music Export Finland employees and six representatives of six different Finnish music industry organizations having participated the Nordic flagship project.

The micro and small Finnish music industry businesses are eager to internationalize. Growth is sought especially through internationalization and export due to restricted home markets. In the process of internationalization networks play the most important role, but characteristics of born globals, traditional incremental internationalization and international entrepreneurship are visible as well setting requirements for public promotion, which is considered vital by the industry professionals. Music Export Finland is the most familiar provider of public promotion for the organizations interviewed. Otherwise, the variety of different available modes of public promotion is a little unclear and in order to keep up with what is available at a certain time the industry professionals need to be active themselves.

According to the Finnish music industry professionals public promotion including export promotion should not be cut, but rather increased or cultivated if anything. Regarding the Nordic flagship project the Finnish music industry professionals appreciate the possibility to learn, to gain new contacts, to get comprehensive and personal service and to have someone sharing the risk. Systems of self-financing, payment of the financial aid and strict bureaucracies like reporting requirements, on the other hand, are targeted with suggestions for improvements. The special characteristics of the creative industries and the great variety of differences in the needs of different Finnish music industry organizations challenge the level of commitment and the fit between supply and demand of export promotion calling for ever more tailored service.

**KEYWORDS:** Creative economy, creative industries, Finnish music industry, internationalization, export, cultural policy, public promotion (or support), public export promotion

## TOIMIVIA KÄYTÄNTÖJÄ JULKISESSA VIENNIN EDISTÄMISESSÄ SUOMEN MUSIIKKIALALLA: tapaus MOI! Sounds from Suomi

Tämän tutkimuksen tarkoitus on tunnistaa toimivia käytäntöjä julkisessa edistämisessä, jotta päättäjät osaisivat paremmin sovittaa edistämishankkeensa luovien alojen ammattilaisten tarpeisiin. Esimerkkinä luovista aloista tämä tutkielma keskittyy Suomen musiikkialaan ja esimerkkinä kulttuuripolitiikan hankkeista tämä tutkielma keskittyy yhteen viennin edistämisen työkaluun, nimittäin Music Export Finland:n pohjoismaiseen MOI! Sounds from Suomi – kärkihankkeeseen.

Keskustelemalla kasvotusten Suomen musiikkialasta liiketoimintana, kansainvälisenä alana, julkisen tuen käyttäjänä ja viennin edistämisprojektin osanottajana suomalaisten musiikkialan ammattilaisten annetaan kuvata henkilökohtaisia kokemuksiaan siitä, mikä julkisessa viennin edistämisessä toimii ja mikä ei. Tässä tutkimuksessa Suomen musiikkialaa edustaa kaksi Music Export Finland:n työntekijää sekä kuusi edustajaa kuudesta eri pohjoismaiseen kärkihankkeeseen osallistuneesta Suomen musiikkialan yrityksestä.

Suomen musiikkialan mikro ja pienet yritykset ovat innokkaita kansainvälistymään. Kasvua haetaan ennen kaikkea kansainvälistymisestä ja viennistä, sillä kotimarkkinat ovat rajoitetut. Kansainvälistymisessä erityisesti verkostot ovat tärkeitä, mutta myös born global – ominaisuuksia, perinteistä asteittaista kansainvälistymistä ja kansainvälistä yrittäjyyttä on nähtävissä asettaen vaatimuksia julkiselle tuelle, joka alan ammattilaisten mukaan on elintärkeää. Music Export Finland on haastatelluille organisaatioille tutuin julkisen tuen tarjoaja. Muutoin tarjonta saatavilla olevista eri julkisen tuen muodoista on hieman epäselvää ja pysyäkseen selvillä tarjonnasta tietyllä hetkellä alan ammattilaisten tulee itse olla aktiivisia.

Suomen musiikkialan ammattilaisten mielestä julkista tukea mukaan lukien viennin edistämisen ei tulisi leikata vaan ennemmin lisätä tai jalostaa jos jotain. Pohjoismaisen kärkihankkeen suhteen Suomen musiikkialan ammattilaiset arvostavat mahdollisuutta oppia, saada uusia kontakteja, saada kokonaisvaltaista ja henkilökohtaista palvelua sekä saada joku jakamaan riskiä. Omarahoitus- ja takaisinmaksu- ja tiukkojen byrokraattisuuksien kuten raportointivaatimusten systeemeille vuorostaan esitetään parannusehdotuksia. Luovien alojen erityispiirteet ja suuri määrä eroavaisuuksia Suomen musiikkialan organisaatioiden tarpeissa haastavat sitoutumisen asteen ja yhteensopivuuden viennin edistämisen tarjonnan ja kysynnän välillä vaatien entistä räätälöidymää palvelua.

AVAINSANAT: Luova talous, luovat alat, Suomen musiikkiala, kansainvälistyminen, vienti, kulttuuripolitiikka, julkinen tuki, julkinen viennin edistäminen

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

Interest in the creative industries has been growing during the last decade largely due to globalization. That is, along with globalized markets nations have had to find ways to derive wealth from immaterial capital leading to an interest in culture and creativity as sources of economic, social and cultural prosperity (Caves, 2000; Wilenius, 2006; Matheson, 2006; Hesmondhalgh, 2007). Adding to the growing economic and social importance of the creative industries is the fact that many creative industries professionals start and run diverse kinds of organizations, particularly micro and small businesses, which are strong in creating employment, revitalizing the economy and bringing growth (OECD, 2002; Jones, Comfort, Eastwood & Hiller, 2004).

For a small, open economy with restricted domestic markets like Finland, it is important that these micro and small creative industries organizations are encouraged to internationalize and export in order to gain growth (Luostarinen, 1979; Gabrielsson & Luostarinen, 2002; Chetty & Stangl, 2010) and in this encouragement cultural policies and public support like grants and export promotion programs have an important role to play (Jones et al., 2004; Venturelli, 2005; Bandarin, Hosagrahar & Albernaz, 2011).

The number of cultural policy efforts with often a special emphasis on export and internationalization (Hesmondhalgh & Pratt, 2005) has indeed increased along with the growing interest in the creative industries (Flew, 2005; Matheson, 2006; Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2012), also in Finland (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2011), but still the area is very much under researched (Roodhouse, 2006; Pla-Barber & Alegre, 2007; Higgs, Cunningham & Bakhshi, 2008). Especially evidence on what works and what does not regarding public promotion is needed (Oakley, 2004) in order for policy makers to better match their promotional actions with the needs of the creative industries professionals (Jones et al., 2004; Hesmondhalgh & Pratt, 2005; United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2012).

A few aims to fill these gaps in the understanding of how public promotion initiatives work in practice, although often gathered from varying industrial and geographic contexts, suggest that costly bureaucratic procedures and often too standardized instruments may constitute a constraint from the perspective of micro and small firms (Tambunan, 2005), that support, guidance and training in the creative industries should be as close to real-life experiences as possible especially during the incipient and growth stages of the organizations (Raffo, Lovatt, Banks & O'Connor, 2000; Rae, 2004), and that lack of finance could be the most common barrier to growth in the creative industries and that creative work force may require flexible and individualized working environment (Jones et al., 2004). Similarly Flew (2005) suggests that strict bureaucratic or rule-governed structure may not work with creative workers who need autonomy and nonconformity in their work environment. Further research indicates that monitoring is important in order to get evidence to direct future investments in the creative industries, but that too short-term and outcome-driven funding may hamper the creation of trust between relationships, which are important for the creative industries professionals (Oakley, 2004). In line with Oakley, Lily Kong (2005) has found that lack of relationships of trust in the creative industries might challenge the cooperation between cultural policy attempts and the creative industries professionals (citen in Hesmondhalgh & Pratt, 2005). In addition to these scarce and fragmented findings, more evidence on what works and what does not regarding public promotion in the creative industries is needed and in this thesis I aim to further address this need.

## **1.2 Research objective**

To address the need to identify best practices of public promotion in the creative industries I focus on one creative industry, that is, the Finnish music industry and on one dimension of public promotion, namely export promotion, through studying one of Music Export Finland's export promotion tools, the Nordic MOI! Sounds from Suomi – flagship project.

Music Export Finland is a Finnish music export promotion organization representing the entire Finnish music industry with an objective to help the Finnish music industry increase its export revenues. In January 2012 Music Export Finland merged with the Finnish Music Information Centre Fimic to extensively promote the awareness of Finnish music without overlaps and today they are called Music Finland (Music Export Finland, 2011c). However, as the merge had not taken place yet when conducting majority of this research, I refer to both Music Export Finland and the Finnish Music Information Centre Fimic as separate organizations. MOI! Sounds from Suomi, on the other hand, is Music Export Finland's Nordic flagship project for the years 2010-2011 with an objective to concentrate the Finnish music export efforts on the Nordic region. In this context a flagship project stands for the focus of operations meaning that the focus of Music Export Finland's operations during the years 2010-2011 has been on the Nordic region.

In order to identify best practices regarding public export promotion in the Finnish music industry I let the Finnish music industry professionals themselves tell how they feel about public export promotion, what in their opinion works and what does not, and what would they need more or less of. I aim to thus answer:

- What are the best practices of public export promotion in the Finnish music industry?

To help answer this main research question, I further aim to find answers to questions of:

- What is Finnish music industry as a business?
- What is internationalization in the Finnish music industry?
- What is the role of public promotion in the Finnish music industry?
- What is the Nordic MOI! Sounds from Suomi – flagship project as a tool of promoting the Finnish music export?



### **1.3 Scope of the study**

In this study I have made a series of decisions to limit the focus in order to address the research problem presented above. As a result I focus on one particular creative industry, music industry, in one particular country, Finland. Further, I approach the research problem from the perspective of the Finnish music industry professionals and I focus more closely on one dimension of public promotion, that is, export promotion. As an example of public export promotion I focus on one particular export promotion tool, namely, Music Export Finland's Nordic MOI! Sounds from Suomi – flagship project. Moreover, I focus on one of the three partnership programs of the Nordic flagship project, the Nordic Export Strategies partnership program.

### **1.4 Methodology**

In approaching the research problem I sat down with two music industry professionals employed by Music Export Finland who have been most active in organizing the Nordic flagship project and with six representatives of six different Finnish music industry organizations having participated the Nordic flagship project. With Music Export Finland's Nordic MOI! Sounds from Suomi – flagship project as my case and export promotion as my unit of analysis in the context of Finnish music industry I have chosen face-to-face semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions as my primary methodological tool. Analysis is conducted using thematic approach.

### **1.5 Definitions**

Some important concepts of this research include:

Creative economy: The concept of creative economy is based on the idea that culture and creativity are used as sources of economic, cultural and social prosperity (Florida, 2002; Jones et al., 2004; Wilenius, 2006; Matheson, 2006; Bandarin et al., 2011).

Creative industries: The term creative industries refers to industries in which ‘the product or service contains a substantial element of artistic or creative endeavor’ (Caves, 2000, p. vii) including the following 13 industries: advertising; architecture; the art and antiques market; crafts; design; designer fashion; film and video; interactive leisure software; music; the performing arts; software and computer services; television; and radio (Jones et al., 2004).

Finnish music industry: In this paper the Finnish music industry is defined by the different industry actors, which include the performers and composers, lyricists and arrangers, publishers, producers, record companies, distributors, management companies and agents, radio, tv and Internet, live music, instruments, games and merchandise, public sector, grants, education, the copyright societies Teosto and Gramex as well as all the fans and clients. (Argillander & Martikainen, 2009)

Internationalization: Internationalization is the process of increasing a firm’s involvement in international operations by increasing involvement in an individual foreign country or by establishing operations in new countries (Johanson & Vahlne, 1977).

Export: Export is one mode of internationalization and often described as the outward activity of internationalization or as the first stage of internationalization (Cavusgil, 1984; Luostarinen, 2002; Gabrielsson & Luostarinen, 2002).

Cultural policy: Cultural policy is public funding for the creative industries determined by creative producers and their peers and for the institutional framework through which culture is governed (Flew, 2005).

Public promotion (or support): Public promotion (or support) stands for different kinds of government initiatives like grants, training and other services to enhance the development and impact of the target industry on the national interest (Jones et al., 2004; Hesmondhalgh & Pratt, 2005; Bandarin et al., 2011). Regarding the Finnish creative industries, public promotion stands for the aid and services to for example diversify the structure of Finnish exports, increase the profitability of public investments in cultural infrastructure and increase the income of professionals

working within the fields of art and culture (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2011). For the rest of the paper the terms promotion and support are used interchangeably.

Public export promotion: Public export promotion is one aspect of public promotion emphasizing the development and enhancement of internationalization and export (Hesmondhalgh & Pratt, 2005).

## **1.6 Structure of the study**

In the next chapter I discuss and link the theories of creative industries, internationalization and export, and public policies to conclude in the presentation of the research problem at hand. In chapter three I discuss the methodology, analysis and questions of validity. In the fourth chapter I describe the Finnish music industry, Music Export Finland and MOI! Sounds from Suomi and analyze the data provided by the Finnish music industry professionals interviewed. In the final chapter I answer the research question of this study, describe aspects that could be implemented in the future public promotion initiatives and give suggestions for further research.

## **2. Starting with theories**

In this chapter I discuss the literatures and link the perspectives of creative industries, internationalization and export, and public policies to conclude in the presentation of the research problem at hand.

### **2.1 Creative economy**

The idea of creative economy has become a burning topic both academically and politically (Hesmondhalgh & Pratt, 2005; Matheson, 2006; Bandarin et al., 2011). Academically the interest is apparent in the published literature and the wide range of disciplines and academic degrees focusing specifically on entertainment and arts.

Politically, the growing interest in cultural and creative industries dates back only to 1997 when the then incoming UK's Labour Government built its message around the potential inherent in the creative industries (Jones et al., 2004; Oakley, 2004). In consequence, the number of cultural and creative policy reports and initiatives have only increased during the last few years.

This growth in interest in culture and creativity as sources of economic prosperity (Wilenius, 2006; Matheson, 2006; Bandarin et al., 2011) has to do with globalization. Along with globalization nations have had to find ways to derive wealth from immaterial capital. Especially the emergence of digital technology and new channels of distribution have contributed to the making of art and culture into key factors of production. (Flew, 2005; Wilenius, 2006; Andersson & Andersson, 2006) Moreover, such factors as rising affluence of people, increasing leisure time, rising levels of literacy, and links between the new medium of television and new discourses of consumerism accelerated the growth of the creative industries in the second half of the 20th century (Caves, 2000; Hesmondhalgh, 2007)

### **2.1.1 What are creative industries?**

The definition of creative industries is still a bit ambiguous (Eisenberg, Gerlach & Handke, 2006). Firstly, the terms cultural and creative industries are often used interchangeably and treated as synonyms. Originally, they have been called cultural industries until in 1997 the term 'creative industries' was taken up in the UK, possibly for promotional reasons (Hesmondhalgh & Pratt, 2005). In this paper I will refer to them as creative industries according to the UK definition as UK is the sector leader in Europe. Moreover, it is individual creativity, not individual culture, which is regarded as one of the decisive elements of the sector (Higgs et al., 2008). Secondly, no globally unanimous statistics exist of the industries included in the umbrella term of creative industries. Consequently, I will use the most commonly cited list provided by the UK Government's Creative Industries Task Force according to which the creative industries are composed of the following 13 industries: advertising; architecture; the art and antiques market; crafts; design; designer fashion; film and

video; interactive leisure software; music; the performing arts; software and computer services; television; and radio (Jones et al., 2004).

Thirdly, creative industries products are called after many names including for example creative products and creative goods (Caves, 2000), texts (Hesmondhalgh, 2007), cultural experiences and products (Andersson & Andersson, 2006) and creative contents (Venturelli, 2005). The idea, however, is the same referring to industries in which ‘the product or service contains a substantial element of artistic or creative endeavor’ (Caves, 2000, p. vii). Among many academics Jones et al. (2004) use the definition of the UK Government’s Creative Task Force, which first created the term creative industries defining it as “those industries which have their origin in individual creativity, skill and talent and which have a potential for wealth and job creation through the generation and exploitation of intellectual property”. According to Jones et al. the idea is that with creative industries the primary drivers of the sector include individual creativity and intellectual capital, and the decisive elements of product differentiation and value are aesthetic attributes. In line, Wilenius (2006) define creative industries as the commodification and commercialization of cultural services.

Fourthly, products of creative industries have special characteristics to them. For example, while the value of an industrial product like automobile decreases with usage, the opposite applies to a creative industry product like music as its value only increases disproportionately the more it is used (Venturelli, 2005). One comprehensive list of these special qualities characteristic to creative industries products is provided by Caves (2000) and it includes the following seven qualities: one, demand is uncertain; two, creative workers care about their products making them want to invest more in their products than they perhaps could afford to; three, some creative products require diverse skills demanding settlement and collaboration between numerous artists; four, products are vertically and horizontally differentiated meaning that they are valued differently by different consumers creating an infinite variety of products; five, skills are differentiated vertically making consumers pay more for end-products with skills valued more highly; six, time is of essence meaning that a creative input might be available only at a certain moment; and seven, products

and rents are durable meaning that copyrights of products bring value to their owners for a long time after the product has been created.

### **2.1.2 What makes the creative industries worth paying attention to?**

Shortly, it is the creative industries professionals who according to cultural theorists are driving not only economic growth like income and employment, but social and cultural development like equity and well-being as well (Rae, 2004; Wilenius, 2006; Matheson, 2006; Bandarin et al., 2011). Indeed, according to United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (2012) and United Nations Industrial Development Organization (2012) creative industries account for higher than average growth and job creation fostering cultural identity, cultural diversity, social inclusion and environment at the same time. These creative industries professionals composing the creative industries are often called as ‘creatives’ and ‘culture makers’ (Matheson, 2006) or ‘the creative class’ (Florida, 2002; Florida, Mellander and Stolarick, 2008; Andersson & Andersson, 2006). They are people whose function is to produce new ideas, technologies and creative content, like for example musicians, entertainers, architects, designers and artists. In addition to the specialists or the core creative people, the creative segment includes the support and embedded employees working in such functions within the creative industries as sales, management, technical, funding, accounting, law, administrative, health care, and so on. Also, people working outside the defined creative industries but who are employed in creative occupations can be included in the creative segment. These creative occupations include for example advertising and public relations managers; marketing and associated professionals; architectural technologists; artists; actors and entertainers; dancers and choreographers; musicians; journalists, newspaper and periodical editors; IT strategy and planning professionals; and software professionals. (Higgs et al., 2008)

Richard Florida (2002) and Florida et al. (2008) have studied this group of the creative industries professionals calling them ‘the creative class’ and found out that places and cities with creative people are more open and tolerant towards diversity, which attracts more talent together, which in turn brings along growth and productivity as well as happiness and well-being. This phenomenon is called a

virtuous cycle and in the context of cultural theory it means that creativity and tolerance play an increasingly important role in the economy nourishing development, which in turn fosters culture, which again leads to development. Thus, under proper circumstances, the relationship between culture and development can be highly synergetic. (Matheson, 2006; Bandarin et al. 2011) This work to promote creativity as not only vital to the economy but dependent on diversity, that is, openness and tolerance, has made Richard Florida well known among both academics and policy makers around the world. In the UK, for example, Florida's work is used to a great deal for purposes of acknowledging the importance of the creative industries in regional economic development. (Oakley, 2004)

One example of the growing economic and social importance of the creative industries is that many creative industries professionals start and run diverse kinds of organizations, particularly micro and small businesses, which are strong in creating employment, revitalizing the economy and bringing growth (OECD, 2002; Jones et al., 2004). According to EU Commission's (2005) definition a micro organization is an organization, which employs fewer than ten people and whose annual turnover does not exceed two million euros while a small organization employs fewer than 50 people and has an annual turnover of maximum 10 million euros. Creative industries are said to often consist of a large number of micro and small businesses and a small number of large enterprises (Jones et al., 2004; Hesmondhalgh, 2007) and it apparently applies to the Finnish creative industries as well. That is, although there are no comprehensive statistics on the creative industry sector because of the lack of global consensus of definitions, the structure of the creative industries in Finland is estimated to be similar to that of the general structure in Europe where 80% of firms and organizations within the creative industries are small and micro firms, and more specifically 60% of these 80% are micro firms of one to three employees (The Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture, 2011).

According to Wilenius (2006) there are two main challenges in the Finnish economy to which the creative industries could present a solution for. Firstly, as more and more jobs move abroad away from Finland to countries with cheaper production possibilities, Finland needs the new jobs created by the more efficient exploitation of cultural capital. Secondly, as the Finnish economy still rests heavily on the industrial

production, we need the cultural services created by the exploitation of cultural competence in order to renew the Finnish industrial structure and to stay competitive in today's world of immaterial businesses.

## **2.2 Creative economy through internationalization and export**

One way for an organization to seek growth is through internationalization and export (Buckley & Ghauri, 1999), and for a small, open economy with restricted domestic markets such as Finland it is especially important that its micro and small organizations are encouraged to internationalize and export (Luostarinen, 1979; Gabrielsson & Luostarinen, 2002; Chetty & Stangl, 2010). Moreover, when it comes to the creative industries, one of their main ingredients, culture, is created to communicate, develop and interact with other cultures making it into a valuable arena for international business (Bandarin et al., 2011).

According to Seristö (2002), international business could be thought of as the standard mode of doing business today. However, in international business there are often more challenges and risks involved than in purely domestic business and thus it can still be discussed as a special mode of doing business.

### **2.2.1 Internationalization and export**

Internationalization is the process of increasing a firm's involvement in international operations (Johanson & Vahlne, 1977) while export is one mode of internationalization and often described as the outward activity of internationalization or as the first stage of internationalization (Cavusgil, 1984; Luostarinen, 2002; Gabrielsson & Luostarinen, 2002). According to Johanson and Vahlne (1977) a firm can increase its international involvement either in an individual foreign country or through an establishment of operations in new countries. In addition to increasing involvement of international operations, Welch and Luostarinen (1999) remind that de-internationalization at any stage is a natural part of internationalization as well, most often, if at all, taking place at an early stage. The three main forces behind the explosive growth of internationalization include first, the low-cost technology, which



connects people and locations creating a greater awareness of international economic opportunities. Second, the dismantlement of trade barriers and financial deregulation has generated a more open market for innovative organizations, and third, the widespread economic restructuring and liberalization as well as geographical expansion of markets have opened up new opportunities for economic growth and investments. (Ruzzier, Hisrich & Antoncic, 2006)

Although internationalization has boomed for quite some time now, internationalization in SMEs presents a more recent area of academic research. It started in the 1970s (Bell, 1995) with the Nordic Uppsala School model based on learning theories indicating that SMEs internationalize incrementally as they learn more and their capabilities and resources grow (Johanson & Vahlne, 1977, 1990, 2009). The Uppsala model emphasizes the value of experiential knowledge assuming that the market knowledge and commitment affect an organization's decisions and current operations. That is, additional commitment decisions are made when an organization has enough resources or when the market conditions are favorable or the organization has prior experience from similar kinds of market conditions. Accordingly, internationalization activities are believed to start with physically or psychically close markets. However, the developers of the Uppsala model, Johanson and Vahlne (2009), have later revisited their model admitting that nowadays business environment consists of networks and relationships affecting organizational operations and that the order in which companies enter foreign markets does not necessarily correlate with psychic or geographic distance anymore. That is, Johanson and Vahlne (1990) have come to add that networks are used in the process of internationalization to purposes of extension, penetration and integration, which stand for investments in networks that are new to the firm, development of positions and increasing commitments in networks, and co-ordination of different networks.

These networks of relationships form the central idea of network approach to SME internationalization, which points out that SMEs do not necessarily internationalize linearly but rather via the existing relationship networks affecting their operations. According to Buckley and Ghauri (1999) a basic assumption of the network approach is that a firm is dependent on external resources controlled by other firms making it dependent on its network regarding internationalization. Chetty and Wilson (2003)

have studied network relationships in the internationalization of SMEs from New Zealand, a small and open economy like Finland and found that networks that are used to acquire external resources might be a decisive factor of the internationalization of a firm. According to Chetty and Stangl (2010) network relationships influence the internationalization of SMEs by providing them with information, finance and possibilities to expedite their internationalization. Pittaway, Robertson, Munir, Denyer and Neely (2004) add risk sharing, commercialization speed and access to new markets as benefits of the network approach. These networks consist of the long-term business relationships that a firm has with its customers, distributors, suppliers, competitors and government as well as the interconnected relationships of these partners like the customers' customers and the customers' suppliers and so on. (Ruzzier et al., 2006). Chetty and Wilson (2003) further define networks as both horizontal and vertical networks through which the firms get an access to physical, organizational, technical and reputation resources. According to the authors horizontal networks stand for competitors whereas vertical networks stand for the suppliers, customers and distributors.

Like the Uppsala model developers, Johanson and Vahlne, have become to stress the importance of business network relationships in the process of internationalization, Bell (1995) has studied the export behavior of small software firms in small, open economies with restricted domestic markets, Finland, Ireland and Norway, to conclude that the stage theories proposed by the Uppsala School authors do not adequately reflect the underlying factors which influence the internationalization of these small firms. Instead, they found especially network relationships to have a stronger impact on the process of internationalization than psychological or geographic proximity of export markets. Also, Pla-Barber and Alegre (2007) have studied the relationship between export intensity, innovation and size in a science-based industry concluding that size is not a decisive factor but networking capabilities might enhance the innovation processes and thus encourage export behavior of small businesses. Moreover, by studying SME internationalization in an emerging economy of Brazil, Amal and Filho (2010) have found that network relationships together with entrepreneurs have an important role in affecting market selection, entry mode and international performance. More specifically, the higher the SMEs involvement with

their networks the higher the probability is to achieve better international performance.

Networks are also seen to play an important role in two additional and most recent approaches to SME internationalization, the born globals and international entrepreneurship. As a challenge to incremental internationalization models born globals or international new ventures refer to firms that internationalize rapidly at or soon after their inception (Rennie, 1993; Knight, Madsen & Servais, 2004; Knight & Cavusgil, 2004). Home market support is not essential with born globals but the founders see the restricted home market as an opportunity to assume the entire world as potential market. Indeed, in studying the phenomenon of born globals by using data from case and survey studies in Denmark and the USA Knight et al. (2004) found out that management of born global firms is internationally focused. Similarly, when studying a group of small born global businesses that had emerged in Australia Cavusgil (1994) concluded that unlike traditional exporters these small players view the entire world as their potential marketplace engaging in accelerated internationalization. Accordingly, born globals often internationalize with no or small domestic market (Oviatt & McDougall, 1994; Chetty & Campbell-Hunt, 2004). This is why according to Knight and Cavusgil (2004) born globals play an important role especially in countries with small domestic markets.

Views on the age of the born globals at the start of their internationalization vary but most often their internationalization is said to take place within two or three years from inception (Rennie, 1993; Chetty and Campbell-Hunt, 2004; Knight et al., 2004). Further, born globals are often said to have 75-80% (Rennie, 1993; Chetty and Campbell-Hunt, 2004) or at least 25% (Knight et al., 2004) of their sales coming from abroad. However, research shows some flexibility concerning the percentages of international sales of born globals as for example according to Luostarinen and Gabrielsson (2004) the percentage of international sales of born globals can also be less than 25%. That is, the authors state that born globals may possess international sales of less than 25%, over 50% or even 75% depending on whether they are at starting or entry stage, growth stage or mature stage of their development. In their

studies of the strategies and processes of born globals even such firms were included as born globals that had not yet developed international sales at all but had pursued a global vision from the start.

The reasons behind the rise of these small born global businesses include first, the strength of these small businesses in meeting customers' specialized needs and demands of niche markets, second, advances in control devices allowing these small businesses to profitably maintain low-scale productions, third, technological advances allowing these smaller players to control operations globally, and fourth, the quickness and flexibility of these small businesses in meeting constantly changing needs and demands (Cavusgil, 1994). That is, their behavior is driven by environmental, organization-specific and management-specific factors following globalization like information technologies (Osarenkhoe, 2009). More specifically, three main forces behind the rapid development of internationalization include first, feasible technologies, knowledge, institutions and other tools, second, inward internationalization like involvement of outsourcing and transfers of technology, and third, international partnerships (Cavusgil, 1994).

Indeed, especially networks and relationships are often agreed to support the rapid internationalization of born globals (Oviatt & McDougall, 1994; McDougall, Shane & Oviatt, 1994; Chetty & Campbell-Hunt, 2004) combining the two SME internationalization approaches, that is, the born global approach and network approach. Coviello and Munro (1997), for example, found network relationships to be the accelerator, facilitator and driver of the internationalization process of SMEs in the software industry. McDougall et al. (1994) explain that this is because networks assist the founders of born globals in their identification of international opportunities and choices of countries in which invest. Osarenkhoe (2009) agrees that rapid internationalization is above all a result of development of relationships saying that networks can even be a question of survival for small businesses and that especially personal relationships are important as they bond the networks.

According to Oviatt & McDougall (1994) born globals have actually existed for a long time but the focus of research has just been on large multinational enterprises. With studies by for example Welch and Luostarinen (1999) discussing reports of

small English firms, Australian start-ups, and established Swedish firms having skipped important internationalization stages and McDougall et al. (1994) suggesting that none of the 24 international new ventures they had studied in order to understand their behavior followed the theories of stage models of internationalization, the incremental internationalization models have been challenged giving room for support of the theories of born globals (McDougall & Oviatt, 2003). After studying a group of born global businesses that had emerged in Australia, Cavusgil (1994) even argued that incremental internationalization was dead. According to Luostarinen and Gabrielsson (2004), however, the death of conventional stages approach is exaggerated as born globals as well are often forced to follow those natural development steps and adjust their operations according to risks and market uncertainties. Similarly, although not supportive of the Uppsala models adequately reflecting the factors behind the internationalization of a group of small software firms from Ireland, Finland and Norway, Bell (1995) found these firms to demonstrate an increasing commitment to exporting by expanding to new markets rather than by investing more in existing markets, which according to the author reflects a consistent behavior with stage models suggesting that the different approaches of SME internationalization go hand-in-hand.

International entrepreneurship, on the other hand, combines the research areas of entrepreneurship and international business. Path-dependent domestic business is avoided as the firm may not be able to internationalize as fluently later on if once dependent on domestic competencies (McDougall et al., 1994) but the internationalization approaches of networks (McDougall & Oviatt, 2003; Tambunan, 2009) and born globals (Oviatt & McDougall, 1994; Chetty & Campbell-Hunt, 2004) are considered important and closely related to international entrepreneurship. That is, the stage models of internationalization are argued to fail in explaining the behavior of entrepreneurial firms that go international early in their existence (McDougall et al., 1994) whereas according to McDougall and Oviatt (2003) network analysis represents a powerful framework for the international entrepreneurship researcher because networks help entrepreneurs identify international opportunities, establish credibility, provide access to critical resources including knowledge, and often lead to strategic alliances and other cooperative strategies. Tambunan (2009) adds to the list

that networks assist entrepreneurs to control costs, learn new skills, expand markets and cope with changes.

Similarly to the network approach, the born global approach is considered closely related to international entrepreneurship. When analyzing 16 in-depth case histories to learn about the differences in strategies of traditional and born global internationalization, Chetty and Campbell-Hunt (2004) found born globals to have much in common with internationalization of small entrepreneurial firms. The authors say for example that born global firms are entrepreneurial as they from inception perceive the world as one market. According to Oviatt and McDougall (1994) first reports on international new ventures, or born globals, emerged from scholars of entrepreneurship saying that born globals come to be because of alert entrepreneurs who are able to link resources from multiple countries to meet demands that are inherently international. McDougall et al. (1994) continue that the founders of born globals are entrepreneurs who see international opportunities thanks to their competencies of networks, knowledge and previous experiences that are unique to them. Moreover, when studying born globals and the role of international entrepreneurial orientation Knight and Cavusgil (2004) found international entrepreneurial orientation to be especially important to born globals reflecting proactivity in the pursuit of international markets.

International entrepreneurship thus stresses the individual entrepreneurs and their characteristics, desires and network relationships in sensing business opportunities across international markets and taking risks in the face of uncertainty to develop new goods and services (OECD, 2002; Ruzzier et al., 2006). More specifically, McDougall and Oviatt (2000, p. 293) define international entrepreneurship as ‘new and innovative activities that have the goal of value creation and growth in business organizations across national borders’. Specifically in the creative industries Rae (2004) defines entrepreneurship as the creation or identification of opportunities to provide a cultural product, service or experience, and bringing together the resources which enable this to be exploited as an enterprise. Further, in the context of the creative industries Laaksonen, Ainamo and Karjalainen (2011) have studied entrepreneurial passion, the motivating force in entrepreneurship, by following four new Finnish metal music ventures. As a result they found a globally successful

creative venture to require the passion of at least one inventor entrepreneur, one founder entrepreneur who takes the venture to the next stage and one developer entrepreneur who further builds up the business. Especially for artists in the popular music industry these entrepreneurial identity-related behaviors were identified as essential.

Export, on the other hand, is the most frequent dimension of internationalization (Amal & Filho, 2010) playing an increasingly vital role in globalized economies (Pla-Barber & Alegre, 2007). From the 1990s onward Finnish businesses have had to internationalize in order to stay competitive in the globalized world markets and export has been their main source of growth (Luostarinen, 2002; Gabrielsson & Luostarinen, 2002). Cavusgil (1984) divides an organization's export activities to three stages. First, an organization behaves according to experimental involvement meaning that export operations are passive typically prompted by unsolicited inquiries and export sales accounting not more than for 10% of total business. Moreover, often a few foreign markets or customers are involved. Active involvement, on the other hand, takes place when management starts making long-term commitments and products are designed to meet specific foreign customer needs. Final stage is committed involvement meaning that an organization actively searches business opportunities worldwide and distinction between foreign and domestic sales may appear artificial. Whichever the stage, internationalization and export activities of an organization are often affected by global factors including integration of markets and advancements in telecommunications and technology, domestic market factors such as smallness and openness of market or limited production possibilities, target market factors like the potential of bigger foreign markets, industry factors such as globalization and digitalization of music in the music industry as an example, organizational factors like niche market product as well as personal factors relating to decision-making including founder's personal characteristics and previous experiences or desires and willingness to take risks (Luostarinen, 2002).

### **2.3 International creative economy through public policy**

Worldwide the creative industries together with their micro and small firms are seen as becoming the pillars of economic growth, which in the middle of the global integration of economic markets and different forces driving globalization sets heavy demands and expectations for investments in their internationalization (OECD, 2002). Wilenius (2006) compares this need to release the potential inherent in the creative industries to the situation Finland was in after the severe recession in the early 1990s. At that time Finland found its way out of the recession thanks to heavy investments in the development of technology. Similarly, Wilenius suggests that this knowledge base should now be expanded to the development of the creative industries. Venturelli (2005) agrees by saying that each nation needs to regard creative inputs, firms and work force with at least the same value as they have once shown for metals, agriculture or for example manufacturing. In these investments governments play an important role. Jones et al. (2004) for example state that culture and creativity should be positioned in the center of public policy due to the globalization of information economy in which culture and creativity can be seen as the key to success because the ability to create new ideas forms a valuable resource base of society. In line United Nations Industrial Development Organization (2012) say that the creative industries require a strategic policy framework to support the development potential and to implement these promising ideas suggested by the creative industries professionals.

During the last decade a number of governments around the world have indeed recognized this need and started to develop specific policies to promote the creative industries (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2012). That is, as the growth of the creative industries accelerated towards the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the creative industries began to emerge as a topic in policy-making circles in the hope of fiscal and democratizing rewards (Hesmondhalgh & Pratt, 2005). Today, having started in the UK where the creative industries has been almost a hallmark theme of the political campaigns bringing Blair and Clark Labour Governments to power (Jones et al., 2004), countries worldwide invest in cultural policies (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2012). For example, when studying the influence of the creative industries on design education in New Zealand



by analyzing cultural policy initiatives from Britain, Canada and New Zealand, Matheson (2006) paid attention to the high visibility of cultural policy initiatives in those three countries. Also, in developing countries the potential of the creative industries has been noted in the public policy circles as demonstrated by Huang et al. (2009) who have studied a group of selection criteria of different creative industries to be chosen for a new cultural creativity center in Taiwan encouraged by the government in order to achieve both economic growth and support for regional culture and environment.

In these increased investments in cultural policies special emphasis in the form of government initiatives like grants and export promotion programs is often put on export and internationalization of the creative industries (Hesmondhalgh & Pratt, 2005). Especially in a small and open country like Finland internationalization and export need to be encouraged to achieve growth (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2011). In addition to governmental bodies practicing cultural policies, which can be understood in terms of public funding for the creative industries determined by creative producers and their peers and for the institutional framework through which culture is governed (Flew, 2005), even a growing number of specialist agencies and organizations nowadays work to promote the creative industries (Jones et al., 2004). According to Bandarin et al. (2011) this is valuable as it is important to seek partnerships with different stakeholders like donors, agencies, regional ministries and private sector in order to support the development of the creative industries.

In Finland the conditions for making the creative industries into the cornerstone of national competitiveness are considered favorable, but reliant on public support (Wilenius, 2006). Fortunately, cultural policy support in Finland has increased recently enabling the development of the creative industries to a degree where its economic impact has been among the highest in the EU (Statistics Finland, 2009). These recent creative industries initiatives to promote the idea of creative economy in Finland started in 2004 with a description of a proposal for the national creativity strategy for the next government, the second term of office of then-active prime minister Matti Vanhanen, written out by the Ministry of Education and Culture (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2004). The final report of the national creativity strategy was published in 2006 (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2006) giving way

to a series of development programs on the Ministry level emphasizing especially the promotion of cultural exports (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2010) including the Cultural Export Promotion Program for the years 2007-2011 (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2011). According to Luukka (2007) cultural exports like music exports was not a new thing to Finland, but these were among the first strategic objectives set by the government concerning cultural exports encouraging the discussion of the importance of internationalization and export among the Finnish creative industries.

As a result so far cultural exports have grown into a recognized part of the Finnish exports, 9200 new jobs in the creative industries were created during the years 2004-2008, and in 2008 the added value of the creative industries exceeded 5 billion euros for the first time which is more than the added value of paper industries, traditionally one of the biggest industries in Finland (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2011). Most recently in its vision for the year 2020 the Ministry of Education and Culture emphasizes the need to further develop export capacity in the creative industries (Compendium Cultural Policies and Trends in Europe, 2011) due to reasons discussed earlier on in this paper, that is, the global integration of markets and the growth potential seen in the supply and demand of cultural production in Finland (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2011). More specifically, the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture (2011) states that in the future the work to promote the Finnish creative industries is continued in the aim of cultural exports diversifying the structure of Finnish exports, increasing the profitability of public investments in cultural infrastructure and increasing the income of professionals working within the fields of art and culture.

Despite the growing focus on the creative industries in academic, political and business circles, the area is still very much under researched (Pla-Barber & Alegre, 2007; Higgs et al. 2008; United Nations Industrial Development Organization, 2012). For example, a consistent definitional framework is needed in order to inform policy decision and measure investments (Roodhouse, 2006). In addition to definitional and statistical gaps, an important missing dimension in academic work is the analysis of the practice of the creative industries (Hesmonghalgh & Pratt, 2005). More specifically, there is a lack of evidence on what kind of public support works and what does not (Oakley, 2004). Knowledge on these practices, however, would be

essential for policy makers to better match their promotional actions with the needs of the creative industries professionals (Hesmonghalgh & Pratt, 2005; United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2012). The need for empirical studies of the efficacy of the growing number of public promotion and support initiatives in the creative industries is apparent (Jones et al., 2004) and as public support may face challenges in following the needs and development of different industries, it is the responsibility of organizations and industry professionals to point the best ways to support their business (Luostarinen, 2002).

There are some aims to fill these gaps in the understanding of the practice of public promotion and support initiatives although the evidence is often gathered from varying industrial and geographic contexts. Tambunan (2005), for example, has studied government policies and support for SME clusters in Indonesia and found out that support by government and other institutions is an important resource for micro and small firm development, but the often too standardized instruments and costly bureaucratic procedures constitute a constraint from the perspective of micro and small firms. For example, local officials were found to be prepared to flexibly extend their support whenever possible but lack of budget autonomy was found to severely restrict their abilities for appropriate and hands-on support. Raffo et al. (2000) have studied the learning tendencies of 50 micro and small enterprises in the creative industries and found out that the best way for them to learn is to be able to experiment ideas, to do, to network with others and to work with mentors in the creative industries. The closer the education or training is to real-life experiences the more effective it is considered suggesting as context-specific support, guidance and training in the creative industries especially during the incipient and growth stages of the organizations. Similarly, in his studies of entrepreneurial learning of the small creative industries businesses Rae (2004) has concluded that in the creative industries the industry professionals learn best by participating the industry and community practices and networks meaning that any education or training provided in the creative industries would best fit the needs of the creative industries professionals if it was as context-specific as possible allowing learning by doing and participating actual industry networks.

Further, Jones et al. (2004) have studied barriers to growth in the creative industries from the perspective of micro and small firms and found out that while a number of factors were cited the lack of finance was the most common factor with others including for example inadequate business support. The authors have also looked at management challenges and promotion initiatives within the creative industries concluding that creative work force may require flexible and individualized working environment which might present a challenge for management or policy makers considering the need to provide equitable and comparable working terms for all workers. To continue in the theme of flexibility and context-specific approaches Flew (2005) suggests that strict bureaucratic or rule-governed structure may not work with creative workers who need autonomy and nonconformity in their work environment. Consequently, the author recommends the use of contracts in the management instead of control to allow the needed autonomy for the creative workers to realize their work. Oakley (2004), on the other hand, highlights the importance of support for networking and presents some concern relating to it. That is, Oakley thinks that the nature of public funding in the creative industries is unfit with the needs of creative industry professional, because the funding is short-term and concerned with measurable outcomes whereas in practice networks and trust between partners take a long time to develop. However, if decision-making is short-term this trust can easily be harmed. Another problem according to Oakley is that public funding is outcome-driven in nature but in practice these outcomes of successful networks in the creative industry are hard to measure in terms of someone for example introducing one person to another. In general, however, Oakley recommends monitoring of different practices within the creative industries in order to get evidence to direct future investments in the creative industries. Lily Kong (2005) has concentrated on networks and trust in the creative industries as well by studying social networks and relationships in the Hong Kong film industry. As a result she found out that risk is offset by relationships of trust and this may challenge the cooperation between cultural policy attempts and the creative industries professionals if this kind of trust is missing (cited in Hesmondhalgh & Pratt, 2005).

## 2.4 Gap to be filled

The research findings presented above are still scarce and fragmented, that is, they are often gathered from varying geographic or industrial contexts. At the same time, the need to know the practices of what kind of public promotion works and what does not is evident in order for policy makers to better match their promotional actions with the needs of the creative industries professionals as stated by several academics including for example Oakley (2004), Jones et al. (2004) and Hesmonghalgh and Pratt (2005).

In this thesis I aim to help fill this gap by studying the export dimension of public promotion in the context of Finnish music industry. Further, to address the need to know the efficacy of the public promotion and support initiatives in the creative industries in order for the public promotional actions to be better matched with the needs of the creative industries professionals, I focus on letting the Finnish music industry professionals themselves describe their personal experiences about public export promotion, what in their opinion works and what does not, and what would they need more or less of. To find out these viewpoints I focus on one specific export promotion tool, namely Music Export Finland's Nordic MOI! Sounds from Suomi – flagship project. I hereby aim to find an answer to the question of:

- What are the best practices of public export promotion in the Finnish music industry?

To help answer this main research question, I further aim to find answers to questions of:

- What is Finnish music industry as a business?
- What is internationalization in the Finnish music industry?
- What is the role of public promotion in the Finnish music industry?
- What is the Nordic MOI! Sounds from Suomi – flagship project as a tool of promoting the Finnish music export?

### **3. Approaching the research problem**

In this chapter I first describe the background of this study and then present my approach to the research problem described above through discussing the methodology and data, analysis and finally, validity and reliability.

#### **3.1 First steps**

In this qualitative research I aim to identify best practices public export promotion in the Finnish music industry from the perspective of the industry professionals. I approach this question through studying the Nordic MOI! Sounds from Suomi – flagship project of the Finnish music export promotion organization, Music Export Finland. With semi-structured face-to-face interviews I sit down with two music industry professionals employed by Music Export Finland who have been most active in organizing the Nordic flagship project and with six representatives of six different Finnish music industry organizations having participated the Nordic flagship project.

Music industry as an example of the creative industries was a natural choice for me as music has been a lifelong interest of mine. Music Export Finland, on the other hand, came along as I was studying in Sweden and found out that an office for the Nordic flagship project had been opened in Stockholm. There I was as a Finn studying in Sweden with a lifelong interest in music industry staring this link between Finland, Sweden and promotion of music export. I knew right there at that moment that Music Export Finland with their first of its kind Nordic flagship project financed mainly by the Finnish public sector would be my focus in studying the efficacy of public export promotion in the Finnish music industry from the perspective of the industry professionals.

I contacted the Stockholm office of Music Export Finland to learn their willingness to cooperation. In order to get a picture of what the Nordic MOI! Sounds from Suomi – flagship project was about I set a meeting with the project leader and travelled to Stockholm to meet her. With an inspiring two hours' preliminary discussion of the operations of Music Export Finland and the Nordic flagship project I became even

more interested in the flagship project and in the chance of studying it as a tool of public export promotion in the Finnish music industry in order to learn about what works in the practice and what does not regarding public export promotion in the Finnish music industry.

I next discussed with the then-active director of Music Export Finland to conclude in a mutual agreement on studying the Nordic MOI! Sounds from Suomi as a tool of public export promotion in the Finnish music industry. Consequently, I signed a confidentiality agreement, received an access to useful organizational material and continued personal communications with the personnel of Music Export Finland to get a thorough understanding of what I was about to start studying. Little by little I started to picture the way I would approach the research problem with the help of Music Export Finland and its Nordic MOI! Sounds from Suomi – flagship project.

### **3.2 Methodology and data**

According to Stake (2005) and Yin (2009) a case study is not a methodological choice but a choice of a unit of analysis to be studied and it is recommendable when a research consists of an empirical inquiry investigating a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life context. Accordingly I aim to study the contemporary phenomenon of public export promotion in the real-life context of Finnish music industry. In order to study this I have chosen Music Export Finland's Nordic MOI! Sounds from Suomi – flagship project as my case.

When practicing case study research Eisenhardt (1989) argues for the use of multiple cases over a single case. More specifically, she argues for the use of 4 to 10 cases as otherwise according to the author generating theory with much complexity can often be difficult. At the same time, Dyer and Wilkins (1991) argue against Eisenhardt's views favoring the more classic views of case study research according to which a more careful study of a single case within one context can lead the researcher to see new theoretical relationships. Mainly, the difference between these two competing views is that while Eisenhardt suggests comparisons across contexts, Dyer and Wilkins highlight the comparisons within one context arguing that with a single case

the researcher might be better able to understand and describe the context, which leads to a more coherent and credible story. However, both views agree on the usefulness of many mini-cases. Yin (2009) calls this approach an embedded single-case design.

In this thesis I approach the subject of public export promotion in the Finnish music industry through an embedded single case study. Firstly, Yin (2009) gives five rationales for choosing a single case: critical case, unique case, typical case, revelatory case and longitudinal case. I have chosen to study a single case, because the case, the Nordic MOI! Sounds from Suomi, represents a unique case. That is, the Nordic MOI! Sounds from Suomi – flagship project is first of its kind among all the different export promotion tools and services in the Finnish music industry. Secondly, as the Nordic MOI! Sounds from Suomi – flagship project consists of many sub-level projects of different Finnish music industry organizations participating the flagship project, each of these sub-level participant projects represents an embedded mini-case. Thus, according to Eisenhardt's (1989) and Dyer and Wilkin's (1991) recommendations I apply a single case study approach with many mini-cases within it to enable a more complex design, or as Yin (2009) says, to add opportunities for extensive analysis and to enhance insights into the single case.

The sample of the participant organizations and their projects within the Nordic flagship project, the embedded mini-cases, was chosen with consideration (Eskola & Suoranta, 2000). First of all, the Nordic flagship project consists of three partnership programs, namely, Live, Networks&Promotion and Export Strategies. Out of these three programs, the Export Strategies – partnership program was chosen, because compared to the other two partnership programs, Live and Networks&Promotion, it was believed to best represent the export – focus of this study. Further, I wanted a fair way to choose the organizations from the Export Strategies – partnership program meaning that I wanted to avoid selecting only organizations considered by some criteria to have had successful projects within the flagship project or similarly only organizations considered by some criteria to have had only unsuccessful projects. More specifically, I wanted to include embedded cases representing possibly as different experiences and viewpoints concerning the Nordic flagship project as possible. The amounts of financing applied and received for a participant project in



the Export Strategies partnership program was considered to possibly have some effect on the quality and success of the participant projects and on the motivation of the participants to commit or implement these projects. Consequently, I decided to choose the sample of organizations based on the information concerning the amounts of financing applied in relation to the amounts of financing received by each participant organization. The financial information was divided into three categories to cover organizations which received less than 33,3%, more than 33,3% but less than 66,6% and more than 66,6% of the amount of financing applied. Two organizations were randomly chosen from each three category in order to include as comprehensively different kinds of projects as possible to the sample based on the criteria of financial information.

After the sampling process described above the embedded cases of participant projects ended up including organizations with different kinds of specializations. That is, of the six organizations first focuses mainly on distribution and recordings of digital music, second on selling and distributing sheet music, third on live music, record label operations, distribution of both digital and physical (recorded music) music, publishing, merchandise and supply of rehearsing rooms, fourth mainly on digital music distribution, online and mobile services and music contract services, fifth on live music, recordings, production and publishing, and sixth on digital publishing and management of songwriting. In addition to these six participant organizations, the organizers of the Nordic MOI! Sounds from Suomi – flagship project were included as a seventh embedded case in order to include the viewpoints of the organizers in the study and thus further enhance the understanding of the case as a whole.

As my aim in this thesis is to identify best practices of public export promotion in the Finnish music industry from the perspective of the Finnish music industry professionals, I have consistently with Eskola and Suoranta's (2000) suggestion chosen to let the professionals describe their experiences and viewpoints in order to address the research question rather than constructing hypotheses based on previous literature. To hear the industry professionals' viewpoints one representative out of each of the six embedded Finnish music industry organizations was selected to be interviewed. The selected representative from each participant organization was the

one having been responsible for the organization's participation in the Nordic flagship project. In addition, two Finnish music industry professionals were chosen from Music Export Finland, the organization organizing the flagship project, namely, the project leader of the Nordic flagship project and the then-active executive director of Music Export Finland as they were considered to have most experience concerning the flagship project.

With case studies the researcher may combine different data collection methods from for example archives to interviews (Eisenhardt, 1989). Accordingly, I studied both Music Export Finland's and the Finnish public bodies' organizational documents, annual reports, websites, industry papers, press releases, policy documents and other leaflets, visited MOI! Sweden, the four days' culmination event of MOI! Sounds from Suomi – flagship project in Stockholm and discussed with the personnel of Music Export Finland after which I started planning an appropriate interview guide. Face-to-face semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions were chosen as the primary methodological tool because of the industry context, the types of questions to be asked and the research problem at hand. That is, music industry is strongly considered a people's business where trust and relationships play a key role and I believe a face-to-face approach suits this purpose better than for example a survey or an interview on the phone. Secondly, my objective is to study attitudes, opinions and experiences and according to Anttila (2005) they are best approached with interviews. Furthermore, with semi-structured interview guide I want to ask the same questions from each interviewee and with open-ended questions I wish to provide the interviewees with flexibility in answering and describing their experiences as they perceive them. Although face-to-face interviews might lead the interviewee with for example body language, I still consider them the most appropriate method due to reasons explained above. Moreover, face-to-face with the interviewees I am able to ask follow-up questions and take cues from the responses of the interviewees making sure possible misunderstandings are minimized. At the time of conducting the interviews one of the interviewees was living in France. Thus, due to the geographic distance this one interview was conducted via Skype but still face-to-face as we used video connection.

Before conducting any of the interviews I tested the interview guide as recommended by Eskola and Suoranta (2000) with two people not having anything to do with music industry to see first, how long of a time the interview would approximately take, whether the questions were understandable, and whether the questions measured some aspect of one of the research questions. Based on the feedback from these test interviews any questions that may not have been understandable or functional enough were redesigned. Also, to enhance the validity of the interview guide and the entire study I paid attention to whether the questions would ask aspects that the interviewees would have knowledge of and willingness to answer to. After redesigning the interview guide I contacted the interviewees first by phone to explain the purpose and background of the study. At that time I also made sure I could record the interviews as recommended by Eskola and Suoranta (2000).

The first interview was conducted with the then-active executive manager of Music Export Finland, who as a music industry professional was able to clarify and take me deeper into the ways people talk and communicate in the music industry. As a grateful apprentice, I took on the chance to redefine the interview guide once again to better suit the needs of the context of this research. The first interview followed by the other seven interviews was then conducted with these freshly added questions. Each interview was digitally recorded and lasted a little more than an hour. The interview questions were organized under the four sub – research questions and the interviews were conducted in Finnish to enhance the chance to build a trusting relationship and to enable a smooth flow of conversation as I and each of the interviewees are Finnish.

### **3.3 Analysis**

After completing the interviews I was faced with well over 100 pages of transcription and ready to start analyzing the data. I took the pages of transcription and read them through only to realize I did not really have a clue of where or how to start. According to Eskola and Suoranta (2000) and Ghauri (2004) this is normal as analysis can be the most challenging part of research.

I decided to continue by studying different possible ways to present and analyze data. I also chose a few theses, in which the researcher in my opinion had solved the problem in a clever way. As a result I knew I would need to continue reading the material until it would start speaking to me. This phase, however, took a long time as suggested by Eskola and Suoranta (2000) as my first insights were unsystematic and disconnected. As I aimed to concentrate on the material without any hypothesis or presuppositions according to Eskola and Suoranta's (2000) directions I finally started identifying emerging themes, which would help me to answer my research questions and to put the music industry professionals' perceptions into context. I had now found my approach to data presentation and analysis.

In the search for thematic patterns and identification of systematic units (Bernard & Ryan, 2010) the interview guide worked as a great help (Eskola & Suoranta, 2000). Accordingly to the organization of the interview questions under the four sub – research questions of this study, I started categorizing the data under these four research questions. As a consequence, each of the four sub – research questions became to represent a main theme of the data analysis. These themes are Finnish music industry as a business, internationalization in the Finnish music industry, the role of public promotion in the Finnish music industry and the Nordic MOI! Sounds from Suomi – flagship project as a tool of promoting the Finnish music export.

Under each of the four main themes I then looked further for sub-themes. Again, the organization of the interview questions assisted a great deal as I realized these sub-themes to follow closely to the organization of the interview questions under each main theme. To give an example, under the first section of the interview guide I ask questions regarding the Finnish music industry as a business, which stands for the first main theme of the data analysis. Questions asked under the first main theme concern the line of business, size of the business and growth potential of the business. These three points – the line of business, size of the business and growth potential of the business – compose sub-themes of the data analysis. The rest of the data analysis proceeded somewhat similarly although not the entire process worked this straightforward but sometimes some of the sub-themes might have been discussed under different main themes as well. Then I would connect these points of conversation under appropriate themes and sub-themes.

In presenting and analyzing the data I have aimed to describe the experiences and viewpoints of the Finnish music industry professionals as truthfully as possible giving citations of the actual comments made by the industry professionals in order to give life and transparency to the text as the text itself is always a version of the reality (Anttila, 2005). With citations I also aim to provide the reader with examples of the comments and to sum up the discussions (Eskola & Suoranta, 2000). Throughout the analysis I went back and forth between theory and the data in the aim to develop the theory (Dubois & Gadde, 2002) and to optimize the understanding of the case (Stake, 2005). After completing a draft of the analysis I sent it to be checked by two of the interviewees and one other employee of Music Export Finland in case of misinterpretations or invalid comments and in order to thus improve the validity of my results (Ghauri, 2004).

### **3.4 Validity and reliability**

I recognize that my own subjectivity may affect the validity of this research through my choices and interpretations, and that each step of the process should be made logically keeping the purpose of the study in mind (Eskola & Suoranta, 2000). Thus, throughout the thesis I aim to describe my choices and interpretations as transparently as possible by taking the reader step by step through the process of methodology and data analysis. For example, I understand that there is no one objective way to select the sample of a study, but I have aimed to describe the way I have chosen as truthfully as possible and to make the selection as appropriate as possible considering the purpose of the study.

Also, regarding the sample of the embedded mini-cases it is good to take into consideration that while each of these organizations has free-willingly decided to apply and participate the Nordic MOI! Sounds from Suomi –flagship project, they have completed their projects to varying degrees for different reasons, which may affect their experiences and viewpoints regarding the Nordic flagship project as a whole. That is, as will become apparent in the data analysis three of the participant organizations could be said to have completed their projects all the way while one

organization soon after the start of the project decided not to complete it, and another organization partly completed it. Moreover, one organization participated and wanted to complete the project all the way, but with such a line of music product and genre that did not allow the project to be completed in the given time frame. Still the work to accomplish the objectives set for the project continues for this last exemplar organization despite the end of the flagship project. All in all, these varying opinions were welcomed as they were exactly what I as a researcher looked for to include in order to avoid getting solely very optimistic or solely negative viewpoints. Also, each of the representatives of the participant organizations felt he or she could contribute to the assessment of the Nordic MOI! Sounds from Suomi – flagship project based on his or her own experiences despite the end result of their projects.

Secondly, I understand that my choices of written words represent one version of the meanings and may thus have unwillingly ruled other versions out as suggested by Eskola and Suoranta (2000). However, by acknowledging this I have wanted to make sure not only to tell about the data but to show authentic citations of it to the reader as well as suggested by Yin (2009). Moreover, as the language for interviews was Finnish the translation of them into English may have understandably affected the meanings, but to minimize this effect I have let a draft of the data presentation and analysis circulate among two of the interviewees and one other employee from the case organization, Music Export Finland. Throughout the process I have aimed to keep the level of authenticity as high as possible when translating the text into English. Fortunately, as the interviews were conducted face-to-face, also the one interview conducted via Skype using video connection, I was able to catch the gestures and facial expressions as well as the tones of the interviewees, which may in general act as a source for misinterpretations as well, but in this case have rather assisted me in the choice of correct words when translating the text from Finnish into English.

Thirdly, inner and external logic, repeatability and reliability are important aspects when assessing the validity of a research and according to Eskola and Suoranta's (2000) and Anttila's (2005) suggestions to ensure these aspects I have continuously consulted the guidelines of qualitative research to check the compatibility between methods and I have aimed to keep the logic between theory, methodology and

findings consistent and smooth leading me to answer to the research questions set in the beginning of the study (Stake, 2002). Moreover, along with the data gathered through the interviews I have continuously consulted the different sources of data listed in the methodology and data – section including organizational documents, annual reports, websites, industry papers, press releases, policy documents and other leaflets, a visit to MOI! Sweden, the four days' culmination event of MOI! Sounds from Suomi – flagship project in Stockholm, and discussions with the personnel of Music Export Finland. With the eight face-to-face interviews as my primary source of data these other sources have been used not only to assist the drawing of the interview guide and the flow and understanding of the interview discussions but also to double-check and supplement issues discussed during the interviews. This I have done in the aim to triangulate the data in order to reduce misinterpretation, to clarify meaning and to verify repeatability as suggested by Eisenhardt (1989) and Ghauri (2004). A special challenge in studying creative industries according to Anttila (2005) is pluralism and liberalism in bringing out the different and authentic aspects of experiences, and thus attention has been paid to respect these authentic experiences for example by choosing face-to-face interviews as the primary methodological tool.

## **4. Discussing the research data**

In this chapter I discuss the public export promotion in the Finnish music industry by first presenting the Finnish music industry and the Finnish music export promotion organization Music Export Finland with its Nordic MOI! Sounds from Suomi – flagship project. Second, I turn to discuss the experiences of Finnish music industry professionals regarding public export promotion in the Finnish music industry.

### **4.1 Focusing on the Finnish music industry**

In this section I present the Finnish music industry, Music Export Finland and the Nordic MOI! Sounds from Suomi – flagship project.

#### **4.1.1 The Finnish music industry**

The worldwide trends in the music industry have largely affected the Finnish markets as well. That is, worldwide the recorded music sales have gone down and music has to a large degree become digital allowing consumers to acquire it without paying for it, which in turn has increased the importance of live music (Wikström, 2009). Instead of traditional recordings the revenue now often comes from different sources like online streaming, live performances, merchandising, sponsorships, publishing and emerging markets, which allow a significant rise in music business incomes (The Economist, 2010). In Finland this has led to an emergence of new players and business models, strengthening of the role of smaller businesses and internationalization, increased importance of networking and disappearance of previously clear boundaries of fields (Argillander & Martikainen, 2009; Music Export Finland, 2010).

Figure 1 shows a summary of the Finnish music industry actors and their relationships regarding money flows. The core of the Finnish music industry consists of performers and composers, lyricists and arrangers. Around them work publishers, producers, record companies, distributors, management companies and agents, radio, tv and Internet, live music, instruments, games and merchandise. Additionally, government officials, grants, education, the copyright societies Teosto and Gramex as well as the fans and clients all play an important role. (Argillander & Martikainen, 2009)



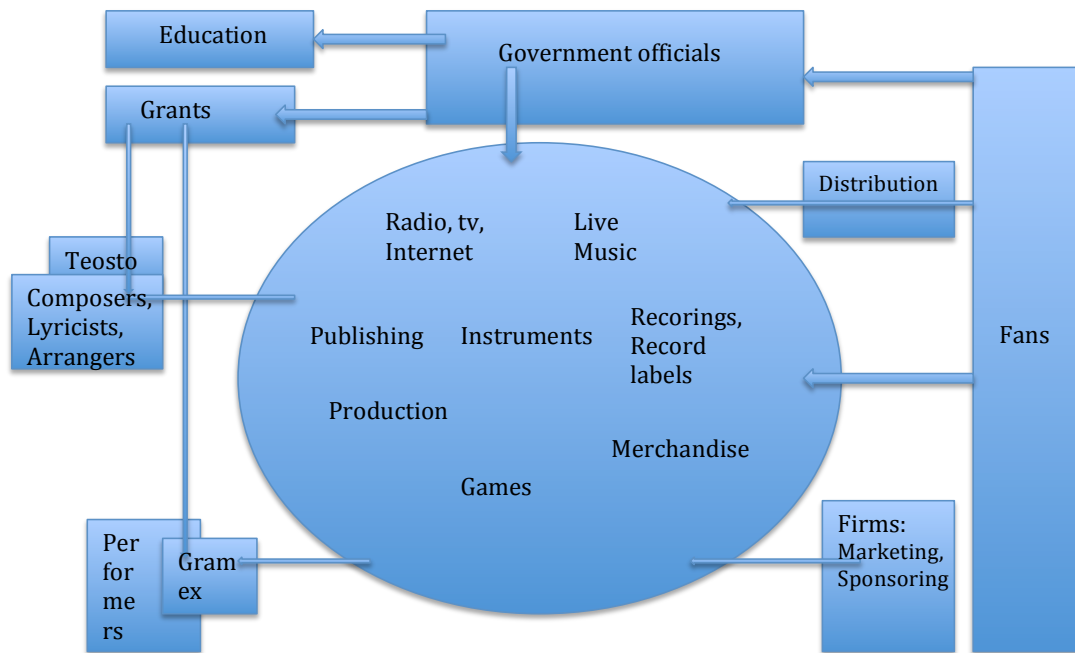


Figure 1. The Finnish music industry actors (Argillander & Martikainen, 2009)

Government officials play an important role in supporting the Finnish music industry. Together with private foundations and other equivalent parties, government and municipalities support the industry with some 150 million euros annually. Including economic volume and education the Finnish music industry was worth 700 million euros in 2009 and the role of exports is increasing (Argillander & Martikainen, 2009) as in 2009 Finnish music exports accounted for 32,1 million euros, which stands for 38% increase compared to the year before (Ahokas, Koivumäki & Frisk, 2011) and 28,3 million euros' increase compared to the figures from ten years before (Media Clever Oy, 2008).

#### 4.1.2 Music Export Finland

Music Export Finland (Musex) is an export promotion organization, a partnership representing the entire Finnish music industry with an objective to help the Finnish music industry increase its export revenues. It was established in December 2002 by a wide range of professional parent organizations operating in the Finnish music industry. These member organizations include IFPI Finland, Finnish Independent

Record Producers' Association Indico, Finnish Musicians Union, Finnish Composers' Copyright Society Teosto, Finnish Composers' and Lyric Writers' Association Elvis, Copyright Society of Performing Artists and Phonogram Producers in Finland Gramex, The Finnish Music Publishers' Association. (Music Export Finland, 2009) In figure 1 Music Export Finland would be located in the interface of public sector and all the different companies operating in the Finnish music industry.

Music Export Finland promotes the Finnish music exports in three ways. Firstly, it provides international marketing directed to the Finnish music industry professionals abroad by organizing joint export projects and product launches and providing networking services, organization-specific export services and international communication. Secondly, Music Export Finland practices domestic marketing to help the Finnish music industry professionals develop their expertise and to stay abreast of events and developments in their target markets. This is done through services aiming to build the know-how and strategic development of music export as well as coaching services, business development services, music export surveys and domestic communication. Thirdly, Music Export Finland offers financing services, coordination of export investments and networking opportunities with its live tour support, project specific support and joint project supports. (Music Export Finland, 2010; Music Export Finland, 2011a)

The main financiers of Music Export Finland include the Ministry of Employment and the Economy (68%), the Finnish music industry (25%), and other sources (7%) (Music Export Finland, 2010). In 2010 the Ministry of Employment and Economy assisted Music Export Finland's operations with some 280 000 euros in addition to 1 196 600 euros granted for joint export projects (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2011). In 2010 thanks to the financial support Music Export Finland realized 43 projects in 14 different countries improving its result from year before by 22 projects and 2 countries. Altogether 286 Finnish firms or organizations and 680 foreign professionals took part in the projects through which 88 Finnish artists performed in 10 different countries. (Music Export Finland, 2010)

#### **4.1.3 The Nordic MOI! Sounds from Suomi – flagship project**

MOI! Sounds from Suomi is Music Export Finland's Nordic flagship project for the years 2010-2011 with an objective to concentrate the Finnish music export efforts on the Nordic region. In this context a flagship project stands for the concentration of Music Export Finland's operations. The Nordic region was chosen as the focus of Music Export Finland's operations, because according to annual market value surveys conducted by Music Export Finland the Nordic region has often been indicated as the most important export market for the Finnish music exporters after the German speaking Europe (MOI! Sounds from Suomi, 2011). Moreover, the Nordic region was considered a logic choice for Finland due to its location, culture and business politics, and outside of Europe the Nordic region is often considered as one market, which calls for increased cooperation to make the intra market more solid. The Nordic countries and media were also said to have shown increased interest in the Finnish music, which made the timing for investments in the Nordic region apt. (MOI! Sounds from Suomi, 2009)

The Nordic flagship project MOI! Sounds from Suomi aims to concentrate the Finnish music export efforts on the Nordic region in four ways: one, by increasing the networking of Finnish music professionals in the Nordic region; two, by increasing the media attention of Finnish music in the Nordic region; three, by increasing the number of live performances of Finnish artists in the Nordic region; and four, by supporting the development of export strategies and the realization of related artist and firm-specific export projects directed to the Nordic region (MOI! Sounds from Suomi, 2011). In order to meet these four objectives the Nordic flagship project is divided into three partnership programs, Networks & Promotion, Live, and Export Strategies, through which MOI! Sounds from Suomi provides the Finnish music industry professionals with financing, coaching, consulting, sales training and international events and conventions for networking and product show casing. (Music Export Finland, 2011b)

Export Strategies is one of the three partnership programs and it aims to support the development of Finnish music export strategies and the realization of related artist and firm – specific export projects directed to the Nordic region by offering financing,

market knowledge and key contacts (Music Export Finland, 2010). In the Spring 2011 eleven organizations were chosen for the Nordic Export Strategies – partnership programs and before taking part to the program each organization had to document their objectives, plans of action and plans to monitor the achievement of their objectives according to measures of different aspects of export strategies listed by Music Export Finland and provided to each participant organization. During the program the organizations were obliged to report on their actions and after the program each organization needed to look back and carefully document what kinds of objectives did they have, what had been done to achieve them and what has been achieved in order to further report these pieces of information to the financiers of MOI! Sounds from Suomi – flagship project. (Music Export Finland, 2011b) Same kind of reporting is required about the Nordic flagship project from its organizers, Music Export Finland (MOI! Sounds from Suomi, 2009).

The main financiers of the Nordic MOI! Sounds from Suomi – flagship project include the Ministry of Employment and the Economy and the Ministry of Education and Culture. Other financiers include The Finnish Performing Music Promotion Centre, The Foundation for the Promotion of Finnish music and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. Additionally, MOI! Sounds from Suomi cooperates with the Finnish Cultural and Academic Institutes located in the Nordic countries. (Music Export Finland, 2010) Each organization taking part to any of the three partnership programs has the responsibility of self-financing part of their projects within the partnership program. For small organizations this share is minimum 35%, for medium-sized organizations it is 50% and for large organizations it is 75%. Same organization is able to apply and receive funding from more than one of the partnership programs, but each time it has to self-finance part of it according to the shares listed above. (Music Export Finland, 2011b)

The Nordic flagship project is first of its kind and it is also a pilot to test the effectiveness and profitability of opening an office to the target market and sending a Finnish music industry agent, the project leader, to the target country to work from the host country (Music Export Finland, 2010).

## **4.2 Focusing on the experiences of Finnish music industry professionals**

In this section I present and analyze the data gathered through the interviews of two Music Export Finland employees who have been involved with the Nordic flagship project the most and six representatives of six different Finnish music industry organizations having taken part in the Nordic Export Strategies partnership program of the Nordic MOI! Sounds from Suomi – flagship project described above.

### **4.2.1 What is Finnish music industry as a business?**

The lines of businesses of the six Finnish music industry organizations interviewed range from live music and publishing to digital and physical distribution, recordings, production, mobile and online services, merchandise, and management. The organizations both create artistic or entertainment content themselves and for example manage and sell this kind of production. Each organization is a micro or small firm with numbers of employees ranging from 1,5 to 15 and averaging in 5 employees. Annual turnovers of micro organizations do not exceed 2 million euros and turnover of small organization do not exceed 10 million euros. Growth is sought especially from exports and increased internationalization of operations. Moreover, those organizations focusing on more than one line of business recognized digital and live music as the two most potential areas of growth at the moment.

From Music Export Finland's view the music industry as a whole along with other creative industries in Finland has a positive necessity to grow. The situation is described as follows:

”In Finland the creative industries grow at a faster phase than the traditional industries and the growth needs to be sought particularly from exports. More and more jobs and industrial productions are lost abroad creating a need for the growth of knowledge intensive industries like music. Finland has the know-how and talent on which to build the industry's future thanks to the long history of exceptional investments in the music education. Moreover, music also has an important social effect on the well-being of people and on the image of Finland as a country. Music industry is also more

intensive in creating employment than for example IT sector in Finland, because of the industry's well networked small and micro firms.”

All in all, this comment in my opinion points out that the Finnish music industry together with other creative industries is seen essential for the development of Finland's economy and society as discussed in the theory chapter of this thesis and that the potential inherent in the Finnish music industry is thought to be based on at least the heavy investments in the music education and the well connected micro and small organizations constituting the industry.

#### **4.2.2 What is internationalization in the Finnish music industry?**

The Finnish music industry organizations represented by the industry professionals interviewed have almost consistently internationalized right from the start of their operations. Out of the six participant organizations one had first concentrated solely on the domestic market before now after seven years taking their business abroad. Consistently the main reason to start to export was said to be the small and restricted domestic market Finland has to offer. At the same time, advancements in technology like the Internet, the potential of bigger foreign markets, digitalization and globalization of music and the owner's or founder's characteristics and experiences were mentioned as factors influencing internationalization. Exports account for anything between zero to approximately 80% of overall revenues averaging in approximately 28%. More specifically for two organizations exports account for zero percent as one was only now starting their export activities and other had recently experienced credit loss in exports. For third organization their exports account for 5%. The average percentage was however lifted by the other three organizations, which told their exports to account for approximately 33%, 50% and 80% of the revenues. While each organization targets international markets the commitment to export activities still varies. For some organizations export activities are more occasional although these organizations are active or are now becoming more active in their export efforts. For other organizations exports represent their everyday business with long-term plans and objectives. These organizations might not even make a distinction between domestic and foreign activities.

The main exports of the organizations represented by the interviewees include digital and physical (recorded) music, live music, copyrights, sheet music and merchandise. Main export regions often include Germany and the German speaking Europe, Japan, Nordic countries, UK and USA, other European countries, and newcomers in the Asian markets like Indonesia, Korea and China. The order in which the different export regions have come along has similarities between the six Finnish music industry organizations represented by the interviewees as the Nordic countries, Germany and Japan are most often among the first three. All these three countries are also often described as being similar to the Finnish music business culture in some sense. The Nordic region is often considered as one market region especially from outside the Nordic countries. Germany on the other hand is described as being welcoming and trustworthy business culture for the Finnish music professionals as the mentality of for example keeping promises and time schedules is the same. Japan as well is said to be similar to the Finnish music culture for example in the sense that rules and preferences in song writing are often the same. Also, it was a Finnish band Hanoi Rocks who as a very first non-Japanese band ended up breaking internationally in Japan and this opened doors for other Finnish artists in Japan. Also, Music Export Finland's supports directed to Japan were told to have had an influence on the Finnish music industry professionals' efforts there.

The development of internationalization of the organizations is based on networking, geographic proximities or cultural similarities, globally emerging opportunities and entrepreneurial behavior. The most often mentioned factors in influencing the development of export activities and internationalization were networks and relationships, which were mentioned by each interviewee. Additionally, three mentioned the cultural proximity or similarity, three mentioned the founder's characteristics and influences like experiences, desires, visions, status, name, knowledge and know-how, and three talked about conceiving the entire world with globally emerging opportunities as one possible market without geographic or cultural boundaries thanks to for example new technologies like Internet. The significance of networking and globally emerging opportunities are described below:

”This is a people’s business. If you are not ready to travel and meet the people, to spend time in the markets, to understand the market sector, to listen to the radio, to read the paper, then you do not know anything about the market.”

”China has potential. There’s no market yet, but Chinese markets will probably be born in the same way as Korean markets were born. First there is a lot of piracy, but as people learn to pay for the music through using mobile music services a profitable market is born.”

Music Export Finland was established for the purpose of promoting the Finnish music exports at a time when the Finnish music professionals increasingly sought to internationalize their operations. The clientele of Music Export Finland is composed of the entire Finnish music industry. In its export promotion Music Export Finland focuses mainly on Japan, German speaking Europe, the Nordic countries, UK and USA. Recently Asian newcomers like Singapore, China and Indonesia have come along as well. Speaking for the Finnish music industry the development of internationalization is estimated to be based mostly on networking. The development of internationalization of Music Export Finland itself is described to be based mostly on networking, that is, physically spending time in the markets and with the people.

#### **4.2.3 What is the role of public promotion in the Finnish music industry?**

In general public support directed to the Finnish music exports is highly valued and appreciated by the Finnish music industry professionals and it is considered necessary. The willingness to invest in the Finnish music industry in the first place is seen extremely important and great. Public support is said to play a significant role especially in the beginning of internationalization and exports of Finnish music as most often the exported music is English while top artists in the Finnish charts still mostly sing in Finnish. It is thus challenging to collect capital from the Finnish domestic market with which to make international efforts. Moreover, one explains that if financing is applied from abroad the copyrights as well are lost abroad. In the long term it is thus seen vital that the Finnish music industry is supported by domestic financing in order to keep the copyrights in Finland.



The interviewees agreed that public support is reasonably easy to apply for and that the Finnish music industry professionals should know that different available modes of public support exist. However, it is agreed that one needs to be very active in following different websites themselves, reading the industry papers and talking to industry professionals in order to keep up with the latest available modes of public support. Still it was said that one could only blame oneself if an opportunity to public support was missed.

One solution to simplify this practice was however suggested by several of the interviewees. That is, now that the fusion of Music Export Finland and Finnish Music Information Centre Fimic starts its operations as Music Finland in 2012 it was suggested that it would gather the different available modes of public support under one roof. It was added that in addition to bringing clarity to the structure of available support modes this would take the responsibility of remembering to inform of possible overlaps of different support modes away from the music industry professionals applying the support as this data would already exist in the records of Music Finland.

Often the very first reaction to public export promotion after expressing its importance was the dissatisfaction with systems of self-financing, reporting requirements and other strict bureaucracies. One micro organization describes the problem:

”One has to invest about 40-60% themselves in a project of which target has been decided for them. Plus, for the financing that we get we are required to report plans, objectives, actions and achievements, collect receipts, send invoices and so on, which take up a significant number of working hours. If for example the total sum of financing for a project is 2000 euros of which 1000 euros is admitted for one week’s worth of working hours, then it is not really reasonable use of time resources. ”

”These types of very bureaucratic modes of support don’t serve the needs of our business. As a micro firm of two employees we don’t even have the chance to build any large projects but rather some isolated measures, which may come up

spontaneously after randomly meeting a possible business contact suggesting collaboration the next week. This is then not supported by any mode of public financing according to which everything should have been carefully planned well in advance.”

Another typical reaction to public support was to compare it with the support systems in Sweden. It was told that in Finland there is a tradition of heavy investments in the music education and now music export. In Sweden on the other hand the investments are mainly directed to product and business development, that is, song writing and music production earlier on in the development of the businesses. Even if one did not know how the financing of the music industry in Sweden works there was the image of things being better there. The investments were described as multifold in Sweden. One view suggested that like in Sweden Finland would need to invest in recruiting international top music professionals to work in the Finnish music industry in order to make the music industry into the corner stone of the Finnish exports and growth. Another view explained the comparison:

”In Sweden there is a tradition of the international large music enterprises having a branch office there representing all the Nordic countries. This way Sweden has had the money to invest in the artists and musicians. Additionally, music production and knowhow in the popular music arena has traditionally been of high quality. Lately, investments in educating skillful songwriters have been great as well. In Finland it will be very hard to copy this kind of a model of large international enterprises as Finland is a very small and thus not very lucrative market for branch offices of large international enterprises. It would probably take many years to make a business based on the sales of rights and copies of work profitable, but it would anyway be great if there were some companies that would invest in the export of Finnish music and work as the promoters and owners of the rights so that the rights would not be lost abroad. This is important. We would need more competitive spirit and hunger.”

These are great viewpoints to point out the needs and expectations of the Finnish music industry professionals and in my opinion these comments should be treated as such as otherwise the facts concerning the Swedish music markets are unconfirmed and out of the scope of this study and cannot thus be treated as absolute truths.

Out of all the providers of public export promotion in the Finnish music industry Music Export Finland was the most commonly mentioned and the most familiar one to the Finnish music industry organizations interviewed. In addition to the Export Strategies partnership program of the Nordic MOI! Sounds from Suomi – flagship project the Finnish music industry organizations’ representatives interviewed told to have used such export promotion support provided by Music Export Finland as discounts in travelling expenses and participation fees of numerous significant international and domestic music fairs and seminars for both the organizations themselves and their artists, export support and touring support, Jalostamo-consultation services and Song Castle – songwriting services.

None of the interviewees representing the Finnish music industry organizations demonstrated knowledge of a clear structure of the different available possibilities of public support. It was known that support exists and many have used such support, but it was still not clear enough which organization provided what and when. Other modes of public support applied for and used besides those provided by Music Export Finland include support for product development provided by the Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation (Tekes), internationalization support provided by the Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment (ELY), support for recordings provided by the Finnish Performing Music Promotion Centre (Esek), the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Foundation for the Promotion of Finnish Music (Luses), flagship support for cultural export provided by the Ministry of Education and Culture, some type of management course provided in cooperation by Fimic, Sibelius Academy and perhaps some other organization, which the interviewee did not recall at the moment, start up – support provided by one of the ministries, and different types of support provided by interest groups and member organizations like The Finnish Music Publishers Association, Composers and Lyricists Elvira and TeleForum.

Overall, four of the six organizations have used also other modes of support provided by Music Export Finland while two have only had experience of Music Export Finland’s services through the Export Strategies partnership program of the Nordic flagship project. Moreover, four of the six organizations, not the same foursome, have

used support provided by other organizations than Music Export Finland listed above. Only one organization told not to have been active in general when it comes to public support. Another organization has used a wide range of different modes of support but they have always been provided through Music Export Finland.

Representatives of Music Export Finland define the public export promotion as the different services provided by the Ministry of Employment and the Economy, the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland. The Ministry of Employment and the Economy encompasses big organizations like the Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment (ELY), the Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation (Tekes), Finpro – the consultation organization for different phases of internationalization which provide support among others for the Finnish music industry professionals. The most common mode of support was said to be start up support, but in the music industry it is apparently often provided too late. One of the organizations interviewed told to have applied and used start up support. The Ministry of Education and Culture includes cultural and export institutes, Finnish music information centre Fimic, flagship support, show case support, copy of work support, publishing tour support, which are mainly provided through Music Export Finland at the moment. The Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland cooperates with embassies and might provide some kind of visiting services abroad. Other organizations providing the Finnish music industry with support include for example the Finnish Performing Music Promotion Centre Esek and the Foundation for the Promotion of Finnish Music Luses. According to Music Export Finland itself Music Export Finland is the most important provider of public support in the Finnish music industry based on their market value surveys.

According to the interviewees the biggest difference between support provided by Music Export Finland and other organizations is the duration of time it takes to get the payment of the financial aid applied for, which with Music Export Finland was considered too long. According to one interviewee Music Export Finland may take even one year before paying the financing while other organizations were said to take maximum two months. Be it a year or not, more than six months' wait for the payment of the aid was said to cause dissatisfaction. At the same time, the support provided by Music Export Finland is considered more focused, more target-oriented,

more context specific and most comprehensive including extra services like a possibility of getting advice and helpful business contacts when needed.

There were several suggestions concerning the future of the public export promotion in the Finnish music industry and the main message was that support is needed at least as much in the future and should not be cut down. As artists do more and more themselves support may be needed even more. The support should be paid in time considering the organizations' trajectory and the system of payment of the financial aid should be developed (this will be discussed in more detail in the context of the fourth section of analysis focusing on the Nordic flagship project). Overall, it was said that a lot less would be done without the support. Song Castle – songwriting service was given as an example:

”Song Castle has been one of the most profitable tools for the Finnish songwriters in getting foothold internationally, but the system does not allow financing to be applied for the same project more than once which could endanger the future of the service unless participants are willing and able to find other sources of financing. As small businesses maintaining it ourselves financially is too expensive.”

When agreeing on the public export promotion being important, one other interviewee suggested however a more careful and strategic selection of the most profitable projects and organizations to be invested in, because the support could be misused for short term activities. The interviewee did not know the reasoning behind the investment decisions, but wondered whether investments should rather be made in projects and organizations, which have demonstrated clear-cut and well planned strategies to for example exploit a market also in the longer run rather than investing in sending someone to Japan or Singapore to perform once.

Another thought concerning the role of the public export promotion in the future represented the idea that it would be desirable if the industry gained legs by increasing the level of experience and export know-how and in consequence would require less public support in the future. At the same time it was agreed that the industry would always have newcomers in need of the support. Considering the role of Music Export Finland it was however contemplated that perhaps the support

provided by Music Export Finland could focus more on training and coaching. In the future Music Export Finland will operate under Music Finland, which combines two different organizations of which Music Export Finland has traditionally invested in the Finnish music as an export and the Finnish Music Information Centre Fimic in the visibility and reputation of Finnish culture more generally. Consequently one view presented a fear of losing important investments in music genres like high quality jazz, which does not perhaps create as much export revenues as mainstream popular music.

#### **4.2.4 What is the Nordic MOI! Sounds from Suomi – flagship project as a tool of promoting the Finnish music export?**

The representatives of the participant organizations heard from Music Export Finland's Nordic flagship project through different medias. Some heard of it through a newsletter from Music Export Finland or through an email from an organization for Finnish music publishers while others heard from it personally from Music Export Finland employees or for example by being part of one of the member organization boards.

Starting points and expectations of the interviewees for the flagship project were very different. Some of the participant organizations had had a longer history in the music industry than others and some had had more experience of applying and using public export support and particularly services provided by Music Export Finland. Moreover, some had already operated in the Nordic region and thus had a more clear view of how the particular region would fit their strategies. According to many of the interviewees a target participant organization for the Nordic flagship project was considered to be an organization that exports artists. Out of the six organizations interviewed two concentrated mainly on exporting artists. These two participant organizations also considered their projects within the flagship project successful and indicated satisfaction towards the flagship project. Other four organizations took part in the flagship project with different types of products like online music services, sheet music and songwriting. Out of these four two felt that their product was not

especially suited for the project although one of them still felt they learned a lot and got encouragement from the project for their future endeavours.

Expectations for the flagship project were different. One organization had moderate expectations because the flagship project was new to its kind and their own product was still in the development. Second organization too expected little and was positively surprised by the activity of the project. Third organization was familiar with how Music Export Finland works and thus knew what to expect. Fourth organization expected such cooperation with Music Export Finland that could be useful but did not fall in the range of activities or objectives of the flagship project. Fifth organization expected support for such Nordic operations that fell nicely in the categories of services on offer and sixth organization expected outcomes realistic to the Nordic flagship project. Based on expectations only one organization had unfitting expectations regarding the Export Strategies partnership program of the Nordic flagship project MOI! Sounds from Suomi.

From Music Export Finland's perspective the potential was seen to be great but the resources to achieve this potential were considered too limited. More importantly the objectives set for the project by its financiers were seen a little unrealistic and incompatible considering the available resources and the potential. The Nordic flagship project was expected to include big Nordic productions, which take place in different Nordic countries consisting often of some type of seminars and organized networking opportunities for international music professionals and a few days' show case clubs presenting different Nordic artists. These big productions include for example the Norwegian By:Larm, Danish Spot and Swedish MOI! Sweden, which was organized in October 2011 for the first time as the main event of the Nordic flagship project MOI! Sounds from Suomi. These productions are considered great platforms for networking and promotion, but known to tight up a lot of resources. Additionally, the objectives set for the Nordic flagship project included organization of several Finnish music festivals to which the bookings were seen to be late already once the project was started ten months late adding to the pressure of using the readily scarce resources available to their optimum.

#### ***4.2.4.1 Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats***

Strengths of the Nordic flagship project listed by the interviewees include contacts provided, the feeling of not being alone, guidance, additional services to financing such as contacts and discussions, project manager as a person and her personal contributions such as conversations and assistance, leader of Music Export Finland as an inspiring example, and well-established brand and visibility. The most significant strength in general was possibly the degree the flagship project enabled participants as well as the organizers to learn about their own work and that of the industry and financiers in order to improve their future efforts. Overall, the flagship project worked as a great stimulus and encouragement for the participant organizations.

From Music Export Finland's perspective they were able to offer the Finnish music industry with great financial and business services to boost exports. MOI! Sounds from Suomi had a great network of contacts to be used and a comprehensive range of services including for example product launch support, promotion support, performance support and financing. Also, with hard work and despite of the bold objectives, scarce resources and ten months' delay in starting the project, objectives set for the flagship project were met.

As the biggest weaknesses of the Nordic flagship project the interviewees listed the system of payment of the financial aid and the six months' overall duration of the project. The duration of time it takes to get the payment of the financial aid applied for the flagship project was seen too long. In December an interviewee told dissatisfied not having gotten the payments after having sent the final report already in July. In the future it was suggested that Music Finland could have a separate cashier for smaller financial aids, which could be paid quicker. The six months' overall duration of the flagship project was seen too short and to damage the preparedness for and the implementation of the project. For one participant organization this short period of time prevented their project from being realized as in their line of music business the plans should have been made a year earlier in order for them to be realized during the six months of the actual project of the Export Strategies partnership program. Thus, in general the project was hoped to last longer and to be informed of earlier on considering the level of commitment and strategically



binding objectives expected. Other observed weaknesses include the amount of reporting required especially compared to the resources of the participant organizations. A representative of one participant organization of two employees described the situation:

”Because of the lack of time resources the applied finances granted by MOI! Sounds from Suomi have been left unused. We have not been able to take advantage of them as we are not able to commit to such project with all of our few resources. We need to take up on opportunities arising unexpectedly. Also, trips to for example Sweden are naturally made with minimal expenses because it is everyone’s benefit and consequently there is no point to apply financing for a 400 euros’ trip with all the required reporting taking more than the 400 euros in the form of lost working time.”

Also, if own objectives for the project were set too high they could be considered a weakness for the overall success of the project. All in all, the interviewees agreed on the weaknesses and seemed to feel pretty strongly about them.

From Music Export Finland’s viewpoint the objectives set for the flagship project by its financiers and the potential of the project in promoting and serving the export needs of the Finnish music industry professionals did not fully meet. Too much resources were tight to organizing the big Nordic productions and in selling the flagship project to the Finnish music professionals taking four active months of working time in the beginning of the project. The resources at hand for serving the participant organizations were divided between too many organizations. That is, the goal of getting as many participants as possible set for the project was felt to work a little against the desire to provide personalized service for each participant organization. Objectives set for the flagship project were met so in that sense the flagship project could be described as a success, but overall, in the light of these objectives the resources to meet them were a little too scarce especially as the project was started ten months late.

Opportunities suggested for the flagship project were numerous. Interestingly, concerning one of the two biggest weaknesses, the short duration of the flagship project, no actual suggestions for extending the duration were made when asked about

opportunities. However, it was mentioned that information about the start of the project earlier on would help in planning the objectives and actions to be taken during the project. Other main opportunity mentioned concerns the other main weakness mentioned earlier, the system of payment of the financial aid, suggesting that the payment would take place in two instalments so that the participant organizations would be paid with for example 70% of the total financial support right away and the remaining 30% would be paid once and if the project was finished successfully. The suggestion was argued as follows:

”This way the micro firms which now often do not even have the chance to participate because of the requirement of self-financing until the project is finished. Moreover, getting a large portion of the financing right in the beginning of the project would enable the participant organizations to start actually using the financing to realize their project objectives and plans of action without for example having to take a bank loan to get started causing extra expenses if one did not have the financing sitting in the bank. As more numerous firms including the smallest ones with the fewest resources could participate the flagship project, the percentage of successfully completed projects would naturally rise in consequence as well.”

Additional opportunities suggested include taking even more advantage of local professionals of the target market who readily belong to the local networks being thus able to provide ideal contacts for the Finnish music professionals aiming to do business there. As the Finnish music professionals represent many different products and genres, not a same person is seen to be able to serve all these different needs. This is why local contacts representing the right product segment or the right music genre are seen the most efficient way to enter a market. More modern solution, increased use of online services as well as more synergies and benchmarking with other knowledge intensive industries were seen potential opportunities for improvement. The organizations represented by the interviewees also acknowledged their own contributions or lack of them having an impact on the results. These will be discussed later in more detail. Further, mirroring to Sweden, more investments and services to the product and business development were seen as profitable opportunities. It was reminded that the Finnish music industry professionals are often similar to any other small and micro start-ups and should be treated as such considering for example

business development support. Also, more sales training was suggested to be included especially with peer support from other music industry professionals, and still more attention to detail like making sure that sound reproductions work when they are needed was suggested to improve the overall image of the flagship project.

From Music Export Finland's perspective the main opportunity to get better results is that the project leader would have the chance to focus on fewer participant organizations enabling a more tailored approach to serve their needs hand-in-hand from the beginning till the end of the project. This would probably require less resources to be tight up with big productions. Part of this objective is the ability to provide right organizations with right services at the right time. This is better enabled if the package of services provided by the flagship project was more popularized than it is at the moment meaning that the services would be more clearly understood also by someone who did not know business language and terms. Additionally, this objective could be better achieved if the objectives and schedules of the flagship project were known earlier on enabling both the project organizers and the participant organizations to be better prepared as the music professionals interviewed as well suggested.

Another mutually suggested opportunity to improve the effectiveness of a flagship project as a tool of Finnish music export promotion was the increased usage of local contacts in providing networks for client organizations instead of sending one project leader from Finland abroad to the target market to build these networks from scratch, which is time-consuming and possibly a little lonely. Music Export Finland also agreed on the situation of self-financing being a little troublesome. The ankle to solve this problem, however, differs from that suggested by the music professionals interviewed. From Music Export Finland's perspective the Finnish music industry organizations should have better options for bank loans on offer in order to get the self-financing needed. From the Finnish music organizations' perspective this however causes extra payments for them as was mentioned earlier on in the thesis. Finally, unlike now that one Music Export Finland's project leader answers for everything concerning one target market area the different project leaders could work more together horizontally answering for specific phases of business development or specific needs.

Possible obstacles for a flagship project to work as a tool of promoting the Finnish music export were mentioned to include the lack of self-financing not enabling the participation in the first place, the system of payment of the financial aid taking too long of a time for the participant organizations to get their investments back, the timing of the project's specific target market not meeting the needs of the participant organizations, the irregularity of business opportunities in the music industry not necessarily enabling full commitment of the participant organizations to a flagship project, and the short duration of the flagship project not necessarily enabling different kinds of music industry organizations to realize their strategies in time. Additionally, the participant organizations recognized their own inefficiencies, too strict of criteria or rules for what is allowed in a project and what is not and possible tax dues as possible obstacles for a success in a flagship project.

From Music Export Finland's point of view an important obstacle in a way of successfully completing a project of one of the participant organizations within a flagship project might be:

"...the inability of the participant organization itself to realistically tell the core of their needs, capabilities, readiness and objectives. This kind of inability will waste everyone's time and lead to a situation of needs not meeting." Also:

"It is a challenge to get the participant organizations to fully commit to the project when there might be other lucrative business opportunities rising at the same time and for micro organizations operating in the Finnish music industry these kinds of opportunities might become expensive not to take."

"Other possible obstacles include Music Export Finland not getting financing for organizing a flagship project especially when the willingness of the Finnish music industry organizations to self-finance some of the services is low and they are used to getting a great deal of services like marketing and promotion free of charge. For the organizers of the flagship project these marketing and promotion services however are not free of charge and thus need to be financed somehow. For example now that the processes have been created and the Finnish music industry has become familiar with

the purpose of this type of a flagship project, the Nordic flagship project might have been beneficial to be continued for another two years starting now, but there is not financing for another two years of such a project.”

Additionally, the possibility of the target market chosen not being lucrative enough for the Finnish music organizations was mentioned as a possible obstacle. The same was mentioned by the representatives of the participant organizations interviewed. Overall, not being able to meet the needs of each other somehow at the same time is an obstacle for a successful project for both the organizers and the participant organizations.

#### ***4.2.4.2 Objectives, measures, plans of action and outcomes***

During their projects within the Export Strategies partnership program of the Nordic MOI! Sounds from Suomi – flagship project the participant organizations have worked with objectives, measures, plans of action and outcomes in their own different ways. Each organization told to have set objectives for their projects and most of them also said to have made a plan of action and measured their objectives with achieved outcomes. Outcomes will, however, often be seen after a varying time, which could be measured in years.

Each participant organization set some kind of objectives for their projects but the practices to set them varied quite a lot. One had set their objectives too high at first, but after a refinement session with the project leader those objectives were set to better correspond the financing of the project. Other organization had objectives, which were said to bring faith, but the duration of the project being six months was considered too short to allow these objectives to be achieved. However, their work to achieve these goals is still in process even after the actual flagship project has finished. Third organization chose to follow the objectives set for the entire organization long before the flagship project and for a longer time period. The flagship project was then expected to support these objectives set for a longer term. Fourth interviewee had some kind of objectives in his head, but the project was never realized as it was felt not to serve the needs of their particular line of business so the

objectives left unrealized as well. Fifth interviewee had clearly stated objectives, which were seen to help focus on the right aspects of the project. The objectives were also achieved although the project as a whole ended up falling by the wayside for reasons not relating to the project. It was added that generally one weakness of the music industry as a whole is the lack of clearly stated objectives. Sixth participant organization thought that it is important to set objectives and they did but admitted that they were not set to be motivating enough for themselves to fully commit to them.

The list of measures set for the Export Strategies partnership program by Music Export Finland and provided to each participant organization was seen comprehensive and mostly accurate, but some unnecessary measures were also identified. In general measures were told to be useful in enabling efficient monitoring of the outcomes, which can then be compared to the objectives set. Also, the list of measures was told to have worked as a positive push forward. Monitoring with specified measures was stated as important also because it helps in the planning for future objectives when there is data on prior operations. Monitoring was also understood to be important from the perspective of the flagship project's financiers. Few challenging measures named include the number of records sold and the quality of gigs as they are hard to estimate either because of the short time period or because they are affected by so many different factors. One organization interviewed stated that they would have needed special measures for their line of business. The same organization did not go through with the project. Other organization that identified some measures as unnecessary described it as follows:

"It is difficult if one has to themselves pick relevant measures or services from a large project. In general measures will always be abstract in the music industry as the results arise and become visible a long time after the operations and actions have taken place. This is why strict bureaucracies in reporting and monitoring are to some extent problematic in this kind of projects. Success in an export project might mean that we met one great person who took our lyricist to be managed, who then gets to write a song with someone who has good connections, which results in the song being released in two years' time resulting us getting profits two years from that."

The participant organizations had some kinds of plans of action, which were useful to different degrees. For one organization it brought clarity and for another it worked as a push forward. For a third organization a plan of action was a picture in their head, which did not end up in use as the project was not realized. One organization had a well-structured plan of action already in their original project application, which worked well during the project. Still having drawn a separate one was admitted possibly to have made the implementation of already successful project even better. For one organization their plan of action was not structured enough and for another it did not hold as the project was so short:

”If more orderliness is needed then the schedule and expectations of the project need to be communicated earlier on and the project must be lengthier.”

All but one organization got some kind of outcomes out of their projects on a small or microscopic scale. Above all, the flagship project taught the participant organizations valuable aspects for their future projects. For example, if they took part in future flagship projects to other geographic regions organized by Music Export Finland they would be better prepared and aware of what to expect from both themselves and the project organizers. Another clear outcome to several of the organizations interviewed was increased networks and connections, which can bring valuable future cooperation and new business agreements.

Similarly, objectives, monitoring, plans of action and outcomes are important aspects of work for Music Export Finland. It was told that Music Export Finland always sets very clear objectives and sub-objectives for everything they do including the Nordic MOI! Sounds from Suomi – flagship project and the Export Strategies partnership program. These objectives are monitored with consistent measures. A plan of action is also drawn. Objectives and plans are seen to increase the quality of operations and to work as an effective and important tool of communication between all participants. This is why same kind of structured way of working is expected from the participant organizations applying financing from Music Export Finland. The best plan of action is seen to be as specific as possible stating who does what, when and how. The industry might benefit from a training concerning the use and drafting of such a plan of action. The list of measures set for the Export Strategies partnership program was

admitted to be extensive, but the purpose was that each organization could find measures relevant for their operations. For Music Export Finland the most concrete outcomes of the Nordic flagship project include those aspects learned for the next flagship project. For example, it was learned that better results might be achieved with a flagship project concentrating on fewer, say 10, participant organizations for a longer time, say three years, making excellent outcomes instead of aiming to get as many participant organizations as possible who might not all be motivated and committed enough or to whom the flagship project's resources are not sufficient enough to give personal mentoring to a degree that is seen ideal.

#### ***4.2.4.3 Assessment of own action***

Each organization identified their own actions as important influences to the successes of their projects within the Nordic flagship project. Some of these insights include:

”There is only 24 hours in a day and as an entrepreneur who needs to pay the mortgage I can not afford to commit all my time and resources to one project from which I do not get any financing for a long time. I do not even want to commit all my time for it because I enjoy being a musician too. If I worked on this project everyday from 8am till 4pm I would have the ten concerts already. But now I still have not written the final project report.”

”One has to give feedback to oneself as well. Perhaps we were not emotionally motivated to conquer Sweden after all. At the end of the day if the project would have felt so important then we would have committed to it with enthusiasm and suffered the work. For many of our clients this is not their full-time business meaning that we need to live with the uncertainty of not knowing when someone will have a business opportunity somewhere. It is hard to schedule. To a great deal it is about uncertainty.”

Other organization told that their artist had demand elsewhere at the same time and they were not ready to invest all of their inputs in this one project. Personally for this organization the timing considering the Nordic region would have been better a year



before although industry-wide the timing to concentrate on the Nordic region was considered good. Yet another organization told that they did their best but the available time and human resources limited the operations. They were active but they admittedly still could have had a more organized approach.

For Music Export Finland the technical side of the partnership program was successful, but ideally a little more resources could have been allocated to personal mentoring of the participant organizations.

”We have promoted the flagship project well, we have sold it well and we have got it going well. We have created all the processes and forms well without prior models. ...but then we could have succeeded better if there were fewer participant organizations and thus more resources to provide tailored mentoring for each existing participant organization. ...if we could have used synergies more as one mutual export team in which each participant has to commit and invest in.”

#### ***4.2.4.4 Future effect***

Taking part in the Export Strategies partnership program of the Nordic MOI! Sounds from Suomi – flagship project was thought to have a positive effect on the future export activities of the participant organizations. Understandably no single project is considered likely to carry significant impact on future exports, but still the participation in the Export Strategies partnership program was thought to have taught a great deal of what kind of actions should be taken, how to approach a targeted market region in general and what to expect from Music Export Finland’s future flagship projects to other market regions. Moreover, the participant organization interviewed felt the flagship project gave them encouragement and a nice gentle push and reminder of the Nordic colleagues, perhaps lowered the threshold to do business with Nordic professionals and brought them new business contacts, which in the future can lead to new business deals. Only one organization said it did not have any influence on their future export activities as they already know their Nordic contacts. This organization decided not to implement their project after all because of other simultaneous projects elsewhere and because they originally wanted to offer Music

Export Finland with a service, which perhaps was not the purpose of the flagship project this time. Overall, however, the participant organizations were left with a positive spirit and above all great lessons learned to help them prepare for the next flagship project.

Similarly, for Music Export Finland the Nordic flagship project was above all a valuable learning experience for their future flagship projects. Great suggestions for improvements include starting the project in good time as now the time resources of the flagship project suffered from the ten months' delay. The progress of each participant organization could be followed more closely during the project. This, however, requires an increase in the resources or then there should perhaps be fewer big productions to be organized. The package of services could possibly be organized to match different business development phases of the Finnish music industry organizations to more effectively match the right services to right needs. Moreover, a great deal of processes was created during the project, which will be useful in the future. Actually, now that all the processes have been created the readiness to start the Nordic flagship project all over again would be a lot better. Perhaps, however, the Nordic region as an export market was not interesting enough after all and despite the market surveys telling otherwise, as not all of the organizations were fully committed and motivated. The Nordic flagship project has also proven that the usage of the know-how and contacts provided by the local consultants and market professionals is a very effective method to serve the needs of the Finnish music industry organizations. In the future this could be practiced to even greater degree. Finally, although the big Nordic productions took up a lot of resources they were good platforms for building the brand and getting media attention. If resources are cut from organizing them in the future, some other methods for getting media attention have to be built in future flagship projects.

## **5. Answering the research question**

With the experiences and viewpoints of the Finnish music industry professionals discussed above I now aim first to answer the research question of: "What are the best

practices of public export promotion in the Finnish music industry?”. Second, I describe lessons learned about the best practices of public export promotion in the Finnish music industry to enable a more effective match between promotional actions and the needs of the Finnish music industry professionals. Finally, I suggest areas for further research.

## **5.1 Public export promotion in the Finnish music industry**

In this section I answer the research question of: “What are the best practices of public export promotion in the Finnish music industry?” by discussing and linking my findings to the existing theories presented in the second chapter. The main findings are discussed under four themes constituting the four sub- research questions of this study: Finnish music industry as a business, internationalization in the Finnish music industry, the role of public promotion in the Finnish music industry, and the Nordic MOI! Sounds from Suomi - flagship project as a tool of promoting the Finnish music export.

### **5.1.1 Finnish music industry as a business**

The Finnish music industry professionals themselves seem to think that the creative industries like music have great growth potential inherent in them (Wilenius, 2006), and that they drive both economic as well as social and cultural development as suggested by Jones et al. (2004), Hesmondhalgh and Pratt (2005), Matheson (2006) and Bandarin et al. (2011). These professionals can be called the creative class according to definitions of Florida (2002), Matheson (2006) and Andersson and Andersson (2006) as their functions consist of producing new ideas and creative contents using cultural capital. Moreover, according to the definition of Higgs et al. (2008) explaining the creative segment these professionals represent both the core creative people and the embedded employees working in for example management and sales within the creative industries. As has been suggested that the creative industries would consist mostly of micro and small organizations rich in creating employment and growth (OECD, 2002; Jones et al., 2004), the group of music organizations interviewed in this study confirms this view as each of them fell into the

EU Commission's (2005) definition of micro and small enterprises presented in the second chapter.

The qualities characteristic to the creative industries listed by Caves (2000) are visible in practice having an influence on how the music industry professionals assess the public export promotion. Because demand in the creative industries is uncertain, full commitment of the industry professionals to a project like Export Strategies partnership program of MOI! Sounds from Suomi - flagship project can be challenged by other sudden lucrative business opportunities elsewhere, which especially for micro and small organizations can be too expensive not to take on. Uncertainty of the industry applies to the organizers of the flagship project as well as the Nordic region was not necessarily after all as lucrative a business market for the Finnish music industry professionals as market surveys had indicated. Then again, as Caves lists that creative products bring value even long time after the product has been created, so may be the case with the Nordic flagship project as well once outcomes to both organizers and participant organizers first become visible. Commitment to a project like the Nordic flagship project may also be dependent on whether the creative industry professionals feel emotional attachment to it or not. This applies to Caves' quality of creative workers' care for their product defining the amount of their investment and commitment. This was demonstrated in the flagship project as well by one participant who admitted enjoying his activities as a musician too much to disengage himself from it in order to commit to organizing his project within the flagship project to the degree he could have. What further may challenge the commitment of creative professionals to this sort of an export promotion project is the creative industry characteristic saying that time is of essence meaning that in the creative industries an input might be available only at a certain moment forcing the creative professionals to take on such sudden chances if they appear elsewhere and even if they threatened their commitment to the promotion project. At the same time, from the organizers' perspective the flagship project might be possible to be provided only at a certain time when all the necessary creative inputs are in place. Finally, as Caves lists that some creative products require diverse skills demanding settlement and collaboration between numerous professionals so is the case with the flagship project, which in order to succeed is dependent on the contributions of the participants, the project financiers and collaborative networks.

### **5.1.2 Internationalization in the Finnish music industry**

Export and internationalization compose the main source of growth for the Finnish music industry professionals due to the restricted domestic music markets as suggested by Luostarinen (1979, 2002), Gabrielsson and Luostarinen (2002), Wilenius (2006) and Chetty and Stangl (2010). In addition to this domestic factor of restricted market, other factors listed by Luostarinen (2002) like global factors including the Internet, target market factors including the potential of bigger markets, industry factors including globalization and digitalization of music, and organizational factors including the founder's personal characteristics and networks were told to influence the decision to export and internationalize. Like Seristö (2002) suggests that international business is the standard mode of doing business today, the Finnish music industry professionals seem to agree.

In fact, each of the music industry organizations of which representatives were interviewed demonstrated an international orientation to some degree and five out of the eight interviewees told to perceive the entire world as their potential marketplace (Cavusgil, 1994; Knight et al., 2004). Further, the organizations have internationalized either right from their inception or maximum seven years after their inception (Rennie, 1993; Knight & Cavusgil, 2004) with often little or no domestic market experience indicating behavior characteristic to born globals (Oviatt & McDougall, 1994; Chetty & Campbell-Hunt, 2004). Moreover, when looking at the six organizations having participated the Nordic flagship project, for three of them their exports account for percentages of their total sales (estimated to stand for about 33%, 50% and 80%) that correlate with figures typical to born globals (Rennie, 1993; Knight et al., 2004). Further, if the definition of Luostarinen and Gabrilesson (2004) is applied suggesting that it is enough if the organization pursued a global vision from the start regardless of current still non-existing international sales figures only one organization could be said to have first concentrated on building their domestic market position without international sales. Their vision, however, still demonstrated global aspects as their competition consists of international players and they now after only seven years were in the middle of internationalization. When looking at the

export behavior through the three export stages suggested by Cavusgil (1984), most organizations represent the second and third stage being committed to export activities in the long-term and actively searching for business opportunities worldwide or not even making a distinction between domestic and foreign activities. For a few of the organizations export efforts are more occasional referring to the first stage suggested by Cavusgil although each of them are active, not passive like suggested by Cavusgil, or now becoming more active in their export efforts. One of the organizations told to have experienced credit loss recently regarding their exports, but they believed it to be temporary. According to Welch and Luostarinen (1999) this sort of de-internationalization at any stage is a natural part of internationalization as well, and most often, if at all, it takes place at an early stage like it has with this organization now.

When it comes to the development of internationalization the most important factor for the music industry professionals is networks, which were said to support and drive international operations to a great deal as suggested by Coviello and Munro (1997) and Osarenkhoe (2009). Networks might thus have played an important role in their rapid born global – like internationalization and recognition of global opportunities like theories of McDougall et al. (1994), Cavusgil (1994) and Oviatt and McDougall (1994) suggest. To some extent the organizations have also followed the suggestions of Johanson and Vahlne's (1977, 1990) Uppsala model of incremental internationalization. That is, the Uppsala model suggests that firms internationalize incrementally starting with countries physically or psychically close to them. In line, the Finnish music industry organizations have often internationalized to Germany and Japan among the first foreign markets, which were described as having many similarities in character to the Finnish culture. However, this is not necessarily in contradiction with born global – like internationalization like suggested by Luostarinen and Gabrielsson (2004) who say that born globals too might still follow natural development steps of internationalization. Still, as the revisited Uppsala model and SME network theories (Bell, 1995; Chetty & Wilson, 2003) suggest the networks to for example Music Export Finland might have had an influence as these export markets match closely the markets to which Music Export Finland has provided export support. Further, as entrepreneurial behavior with the founder's personal characteristics, desires, previous experiences and especially personal networks were

named as additional factors influencing internationalization the suggestions made by Chetty and Campbell-Hunt (2004) might be applicable saying that born global – like behavior and entrepreneurial firms go hand in hand as born globals are entrepreneurial when they from inception perceive the world as one market. Similarly, McDougall et al. (1994) continue that the founders of born globals are entrepreneurs who see international opportunities thanks to their competencies of networks, knowledge and previous experiences that are unique to them just as mentioned by the interviewees themselves. Although the focus of this study was not on the entrepreneurial passion or on separating different entrepreneurial identities, the characteristics and desires of the entrepreneur who had started the business were said to play a role in the business development like suggested by Laaksonen et al. (2011). However, then too, network relationships are felt useful in accordance to the SME internationalization perspective of international entrepreneurship (McDougall & Oviatt, 2000; Ruzzier et al., 2006).

In summary, the motivation to internationalize and the process of internationalization of the Finnish music industry organizations represented in this thesis partly support the theories discussed in this research. First, the motivation to start exporting and to internationalize is mainly driven by the restrictedness of the domestic market in Finland (Gabrielsson & Luostarinen, 2002). In addition, such factors as the Internet, the potential of bigger markets, globalization and digitalization of music, and the founder's personal characteristics and networks were told to influence the decision to start export and internationalize while for example financiers and production possibilities were not named as primary motivators to start export although they might act as supporters later on in the development of internationalization (Luostarinen, 2002).

The process of internationalization, on the other hand, supports to different degrees the SME internationalization theories – the internationalization approaches of stages, networks, born globals and international entrepreneurship – discussed in this thesis. First, the willingness to start with physically or psychically close markets like suggested by the stage models of internationalization (Johanson & Vahlne, 1977) is partly supported as many times the Finnish music industry organizations have entered Germany and Japan among the first international markets and these markets were

described having many similarities in character to the Finnish culture. However, other reasons for entering these markets like the impact of networks were named as even more important motivators than the psychic proximity. Further, other aspects of the stage models such as making additional commitments to internationalize as capabilities and resources grow were not supported. Second, the network approach suggesting that business environment consists of networks and relationships affecting internationalization is supported as networks were stated as the strongest factor influencing market entry decisions and getting an access to a market or information regarding a market (Bell, 1995; Chetty & Wilson, 2003; Chetty & Stangl, 2010).

Third, the born global approach is supported as the internationalization is rapid and it takes place soon after the inception (Knight et al., 2004; Knight & Cavusgil, 2004), home market is not essential (Oviatt & McDougall, 1994) and the founders assume the entire world as potential market (Cavusgil, 1994). However, not all of the organizations support the highest international sales figures of 75-80% often suggested for born globals (Rennie, 1993; Chetty and Campbell-Hunt, 2004), not necessarily even the figures of 25% often suggested as the minimum (Knight et al., 2004) but they have all pursued a global vision from the start as suggested as the ultimate minimum (Luostarinen and Gabrielsson, 2004). Fourth, the suggestion that international entrepreneurship is the composite part of SME internationalization closely relating and integrating the approaches of networks and born globals (Ruzzier et al., 2006) is supported by this research at hand. That is, these organizations are not only born globals but also entrepreneurial as they from inception perceive the world as one market (Chetty & Campbell-Hunt, 2004) and demonstrate proactivity in the pursuit of international markets (Knight & Cavusgil, 2004). Also, these small and micro entrepreneurial born globals use their networks in identifying international opportunities (McDougall & Oviatt, 2003) and in accelerating and facilitating their internationalization (Coviello & Munro, 1997; Osarenkhoe, 2009), and their previous entrepreneurial experiences in developing their international footholds (McDougall et al., 1994).

All in all, the internationalization process of the Finnish music industry organizations suggests that the approaches of networks, born globals and international entrepreneurship go hand in hand to a great extent as suggested by previous theories.



The idea that especially networks affect the accelerated internationalization of born globals and support the identification of entrepreneurial opportunities internationally is supported.

### **5.1.3 The role of public promotion in the Finnish music industry**

The Finnish music industry professionals say that public export promotion is vital for their business and it should be continued if not even increased in the future. This is no wonder as internationalization and export were named as the most important source of growth and as the Finnish music industry organization seem to possess an international orientation from their inception typical to born globals. The view is also in line with Hesmondhalgh and Pratt (2005), Venturelli (2005) and Bandarin et al. (2011) who say that government initiatives play an important role in enhancing the internationalization and export of micro and small creative industries organizations. Moreover, the Finnish music industry professionals agree with Wilenius' (2006) view that the conditions for making the creative industries into the cornerstone of Finland's national competitiveness are considered favorable, but reliant on public support. In some sense one could hope that the Finnish music industry would gain legs so to speak and do without public support, but it was agreed that there are newcomers entering the industry all the time, who would anyway need the support. Also, as the industry model is changing more and more towards artists being able to do almost everything themselves thanks to the Internet and other technological advances, new requirements for public promotion supporting this work arise at the same time.

In Finland there is a great number of sources for support for the music industry professionals, but the structure, variety and timing of these different options is not very clear. In consequence one needs to be very active in following different websites themselves, reading the industry papers and talking to industry professionals in order to keep up with the latest available modes of public support. This was apparent in the number of different ways the Finnish music industry professionals had heard from Music Export Finland's Nordic flagship project including such medias as newsletters, emails, personal conversations with other industry professionals and memberships in other music industry organizations. Still it was said that one should only look in the

mirror if an opportunity to public support was missed. At the same time the Finnish music industry professionals warmly welcome a system, which would gather all the different support modes to one place.

When asked about different public support modes used the Finnish music industry professionals listed mainly different sort of grants provided by the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Employment and the Economy with its sub-organizations the Finnish Funding Agency for Technology and Innovation (Tekes) and the Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment (Ely). Interestingly, the support from different foundations, interest groups and member organizations like the Finnish Performing Music Promotion Centre (Esek), the Foundation for the Promotion of Finnish Music (Luses), the Finnish Music Publishers Association, Composers and Lyricists Elvis Ry and TeleForum were listed as well when asked about public support although according to Music Export Finland public support is that provided by government officials. This is descriptive of the unclear notion of what exactly compose public support. The most important and most common provider of public support is Music Export Finland of which services many of the Finnish music industry organizations had applied and used outside the Nordic flagship project as well. The public support of the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Employment and the Economy provided via Music Export Finland is considered most focused, most target-oriented, most comprehensive and more context specific with all the target market music fairs, coaching and networking services. This view is in line with Raffo et al.'s (2000) and Rae's (2004) findings suggesting that the closer the support, guidance or training is to real-life experiences and the more context-specific it is the more effective it is considered in the creative industries especially during the incipient and growth stages of the organizations. That is, similarly any mentoring or training services provided by Music Export Finland is considered effective when it enables the industry professionals to experiment, realize and network within their real-life industry context through participating seminars and networking events organized by Music Export Finland. Biggest difference between support provided straight by the ministries and support provided via Music Export Finland is the duration of time it takes for the participant organizations to get their payments of the financial aid applied for which with Music Export Finland is considered too long if it exceeds six months as now was stated to have been the case.

Although the overall reaction to public promotion in the Finnish music industry is positive and optimistic, some dissatisfaction was expressed concerning systems of self-financing and strict bureaucratic procedures like reporting requirements. That is, for especially micro firms it might be challenging to get self-financing for a project in the first place, which stops them from applying for such public support that requires self-financing before the aid is paid only after the project is completed. This view is in line with Jones et al.'s (2004) suggestion that the greatest barrier to growth for micro and small firms in the creative industries is the lack of finance. Secondly, projects for micro and small music industry organizations might come up suddenly making it impossible to apply public support for them which would require well ahead planned project objectives and descriptions although from the perspective of one organization, which has not been active user of public support the selection of projects to be supported should be even more strategic in order to ensure outcomes in the longer term. For smallest projects, however, the amount of financial support applied might not correspond the amount of working hours required to complete all the bureaucratic reporting requirements before, during and after the project. This concern is very similar to those expressed by Tambunan (2005) and Flew (2005) suggesting that the often too standardized instruments and costly bureaucratic procedures constitute a constraint from the perspective of micro and small firms and that strict bureaucratic or rule-governed structures may not work with creative workers who need autonomy and nonconformity in their work environment. Moreover, the concern expressed by the Finnish music industry professionals is in line with Oakley (2004) who thinks that the nature of public funding in the creative industries is unfit with the needs of creative industry professional, because the funding is short-term and concerned with measurable outcomes whereas the creative work force value for example networks and trust as outcomes, which are very challenging to measure reliably.

Also, the Finnish music industry professionals hope that finance could be applied again for a project that has proved to be successful, but too expensive to support oneself. Moreover, there is indication that more support is needed earlier on in the development of businesses, that is, like in Sweden, the Finnish music industry organizations could use more support in the business and product development. This

correlates with the other growth barrier to micro and small creative industries firms, inadequate business support, identified by Jones et al.'s (2004).

#### **5.1.4 The Nordic MOI! Sounds from Suomi - flagship project as a tool of promoting the Finnish music export**

The Nordic flagship project was considered as a great platform to learn from one's own activities considering future export efforts and future flagship projects for both the participant music industry organizations and the organizers of the flagship project, the Finnish music export promotion organization Music Export Finland. Also, a great amount of possibly advantageous network relationships gained was named as one of the main outcomes of the flagship project and as one of the main influences regarding future export efforts just like Oakley (2004) has concluded in her studies within the creative industries. Overall, a lot of good things were identified and some areas for improvement were suggested, which could further help fill the need of better knowing the practice of the creative industries and the reality of what works and what does not when it comes to the public promotion in order to better match the needs of cultural policy makers and the creative industries practitioners as suggested by Hesmondhalgh and Pratt (2005) and Jones et al. (2004).

Aspects that the Finnish music industry professionals appreciate regarding the Nordic MOI! Sounds from Suomi - flagship project as a tool of promoting the Finnish music export include the readiness to help, guidance, the feeling of not being alone, additional services to financing such as contacts and discussions, personal contributions, examples and approachability of the organizers, contacts provided and visibility of the flagship project's brand. To a great extent these strengths relate to the people, networks and social relationships between the organizers and participants indicating that the findings of Lily Kong (2005) in the Hong Kong film industry might apply to the Finnish music industry as well suggesting that trust and relationships play an important role in the creative industries and more specifically in the cooperation between cultural policy attempts and the creative industries professionals (cited in Hesmondhalgh and Pratt, 2005). Relationships seem to be valued also because of their risk sharing aspect as suggested by Pittaway (2004).

Furthermore, these strengths reflect flexibility, which according to Jones et al. (2004) might be essential for creative workers regarding their work environment. From the organizers' perspective they were content with the wide range of great financial and business services and network contacts that they had to offer for the participant organizers to boost the Finnish music exports. Also, the technicalities much needed in the future projects as well were put in place and a great amount of participants were gotten onboard although the flagship project was first of its kind in the industry.

Areas for improvement, on the other hand, include the system of payment of the financial aid, the short overall duration of the project of each participant organization of one partnership program within the flagship project and the amount of reporting required. The duration of time of getting the payment of the financial aid is considered too long if in six months' time after finishing the project one has not gotten the financing applied for as was reported to be the case. In the future a separate cashier allowing smaller amounts to be paid quicker could solve the problem. Another possibility to satisfy the needs of industry professionals would be transforming the payment system to take place in two instalments allowing for example 70% of the total financing to be granted right away enabling the participant organizations to start actually using the financing to realize their project objectives and plans of action without for example having to take a bank loan to get started causing extra expenses if one did not have the financing sitting in the bank. This way the smallest micro firms previously unable to self-finance such projects could be able to apply support likely increasing the total percentage of successfully completed projects. The other instalment of 30% would then be paid if and when the project is finished successfully. Secondly, the short duration of six months of each project within the flagship project do not necessarily allow the different participant projects to be fully realized meaning that final outcomes will not be reported for the benefit of the flagship project either. Information on the start of the project earlier on, could better enable commitment and strategically binding objectives to be created for the project. As mentioned in accordance to the role of public promotion in general, the reporting requirements can be too much for the smallest micro organizations considering their resources in relation to the sometimes very small amount of financing applied. Then the benefit does not match the amount of work and time efforts required by the reporting and planning. From the perspective of the organizers the actual needs could be better

satisfied with more tailored services and personalized mentoring during a longer period of time reflecting similar viewpoints as presented by Jones et al. (2004) suggesting that creative industry professionals need individualized approach to work from both management and policy makers. This of course requires perhaps more financing to extend the duration of the project and decreasing the number of participant organizations as well as possibly cutting down the organization of big production as part of the flagship project.

Both the participants and organizers of the flagship project suggest even greater usage of local contacts in the target export markets who readily belong to the local target market networks with ideal business contacts. It is important that each music genre and line of product or service is dealt with people who are familiar with that exact genre or product and service segment in the local target markets. For the Finnish music professionals to build these networks themselves would take too long of a time. Also, more synergies could be used with other knowledge intensive creative industries modernizing and professionalizing the approaches and for example increasing the usage of online services.

The different starting points, expectations, motivation and commitment have an effect on the success of the flagship project and any of its participant projects. Both the organizers and the participants think of objectives, monitoring and plans of action as important measures to give clarity and encouragement in order to realize a project successfully and each organization seemed to be aware of their meanings. Especially monitoring was named important in guiding future actions, which correlates with the suggestion made by Oakley (2004) saying that monitoring in the creative industries is important to get directions for future investments. Still, these measures were completed with varying contributions. An inability to realistically tell the core of own needs, capabilities, readiness and objectives were mentioned as possible reasons for needs not meeting considering the providers and applicants of support. Overall, the ones, who had more specific objectives, action plans and monitoring systems might have had better results, at least they themselves are better informed of them. On the other hand, the lack of implementing these measures might well have resulted from the feeling of the flagship project not meeting the overall business needs timing-wise or product-wise after all. This could well be among the most significant barriers to

project success as the flagship project was felt most appropriate for music industry organizations exporting artists considering the services and contacts on offer. However, only two of the participant organizations of which representatives were interviewed export artists. These two participant organizations also considered their projects within the flagship project successful and indicated satisfaction towards the flagship project. The difficulty to match the needs of music industry organizations with so different export products is an apparent challenge for a single flagship project. Moreover, when adding all the points discussed in this chapter to the picture, it seems as there were as many motivational factors affecting the level of commitment of the participant organizations as there were organizations. In this sense, both groups of music industry professionals, the organizers of the flagship project and the participant organizations, have come together in deciding that more tailored approaches could be advantageous.

## **5.2 Lessons learned**

There are several lessons learned about public export promotion in the Finnish music industry to enable a more effective match between promotional actions and the needs of the Finnish music industry professionals. Most importantly the Finnish music industry professionals agree that public export promotion in the Finnish music industry is vital now and in the future. It should not be cut down but rather increased and cultivated if anything. Other main lessons learned include:

- Among factors influencing the decision to export and internationalize the restricted home market Finland has to offer is the most significant one reflecting a strong need of public export promotion and support directed to the Finnish music industry.
- The Finnish music industry organizations demonstrate born global – like behavior and entrepreneurial characteristics regarding their internationalization in which networks seem to play the most important role. This calls for a need of support provided especially to networking and early development of internationalization.
- Trust, relationships and networks are probably the most important aspects regarding the quality of export promotion services and outcomes of a flagship project.
- As an effective use of local target market networks regarding promotional networking services as possible is preferred.

- More flexibility is wished for regarding the strict bureaucratic requirements and the systems of payment of the financial aid and self-financing.
- The great variety of differences in the needs of different Finnish music industry organizations calls for a more tailored approach to export promotion service.
- In addition to organization-specific needs, success of and motivation to fully commit to a project like the Nordic flagship project is challenged by the creative industries – specific characteristics.
- As concentrated a service regarding the information of different available public support modes as possible is appreciated.

### **5.3 Continuing the journey**

As discussed in the first chapter of this paper this study concentrates on the Finnish music industry as an example of public promotion and more specifically export promotion and one tool of export promotion. Accordingly, more evidence could be useful regarding other creative industries possibly in different countries. Also, other aspects than export and other modes of public support than a flagship project could be studied more closely.

On the other hand, longitudinal studies could be useful focusing on similar future flagship projects to see what has been changed and how these changes have been regarded by the industry professionals. This could be useful especially because the Nordic MOI! Sounds from Suomi – flagship project was first of its kind and the reality and experiences of it new to both the participant organizations and the organizers. Moreover, longitudinal studies concerning the same flagship project could be useful to get more evidence on the outcomes, as the outcomes of one project might be visible only years later.

More closely, I focused on one partnership program of the Nordic flagship project MOI! Sounds from Suomi and thus, the flagship project could be studied from the perspective of participant organizations of the other two programs as well. Additionally, other stakeholders of the Nordic flagship project like the Nordic partners' and financiers' experiences could be added to the picture.



On a wider scale, the contribution of the Finnish music industry to the Finnish economy and society could be further studied to better understand the worth and the role of the industry. Similarly, the impact of all of the Finnish creative industries together on the Finnish economy, culture and society could be studied to better understand their role.

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# Appendices

## Appendix 1. Interview guide in Finnish

### **Kuvaillkaa liiketoimintaanne**

- Mistä liitteenä olevan Suomen musiikkialakaavion osioista teidän liiketoimintanne koostuu? (LIITE1)
- Minkä kokoinen liiketoimintanne on henkilömäärällisesti?
- Miten liiketoiminnallanne on mielestänne mahdollisuus kasvaa?

### **Kuvaillkaa kansainvälistymistä**

- Mistä teidän vientituotepähe koostuu?
- Mille markkinoille teillä on vientiä?
- Miten suuri osuus myynnistä koostuu viennistä?
- Miten nopeasti liiketoimintanne perustamisesta kansainvälistyitte?
- Miksi te ryhdyitte viemään? (LIITE2)
- Missä järjestyksessä teidän eri vientimarkkinanne ovat tulleet mukaan toimintaanne?
- Mihin edellä kuvaamaanne kansainvälistymisenne kehittyminen perustuu? (LIITE3)

### **Kuvaillkaa kokemuksiinne Suomen musiikkiviennin edistämisestä**

- Mitä ajattelette Suomen musiikkiviennin edistämisen toiminnasta? (miten helppo hakea, miten hyvin siitä mielestänne tiedotetaan jne.)
- Millaisiin musiikkiviennin haasteisiin olette hakeneet tai saaneet tukea julkiselta sektorilta? Mikä merkitys tällaisella tuella on (ollut)?
- Millaisiin musiikkivienninviennin haasteisiin olette hakeneet tai saaneet tukea Music Export Finlandilta? Mikä merkitys tuella on (ollut)?
- Millaisena näette vientituen merkityksen tulevaisuudessa?

### **Kuvaillkaa kokemuksiinne Music Export Finlandin pohjoismaisesta MOI!**

#### **Sounds from Suomi - kärkihankkeesta**

- Miten saitte tietää MOI! Sounds from Suomi – kärkihankkeesta?
- Mikä sai teidät hakemaan mukaan MOI! Sounds from Suomi – kärkihankkeeseen?
- Mitä odotitte kärkihankkeelta?

Arvio kärkihankkeesta:

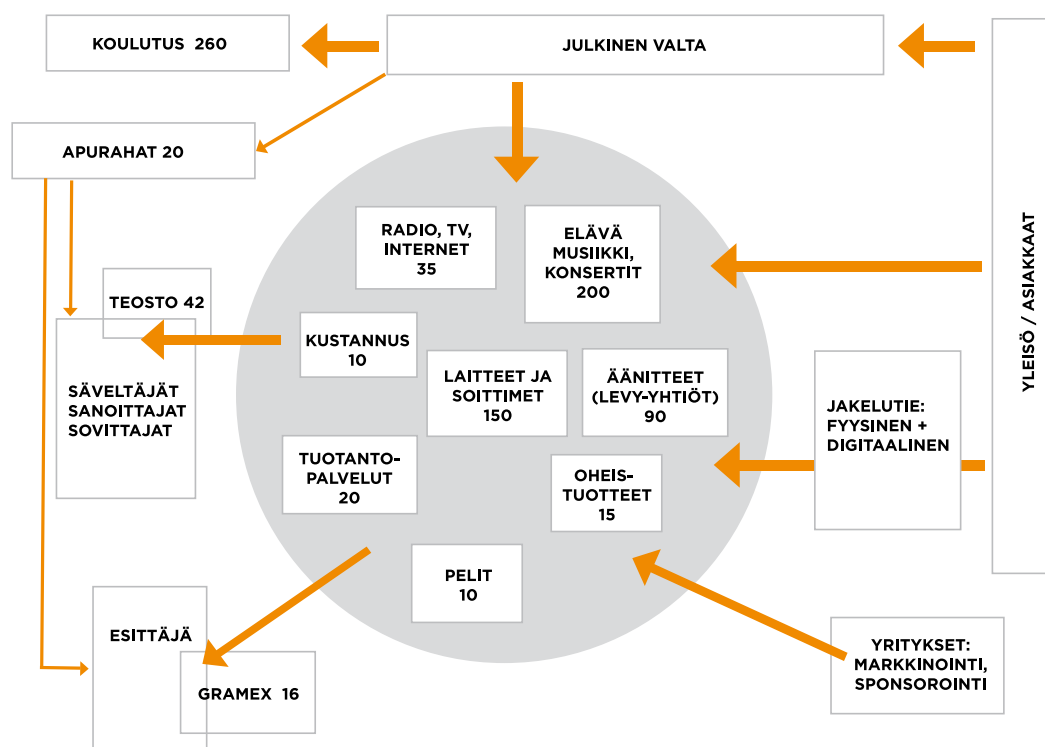
- Minkä te koette hyvänä MOI! Sounds from Suomi – kärkihankkeessa?
- Minkä te koette heikkona MOI! Sounds from Suomi – kärkihankkeessa?
- Mitä muuta te haluaisitte saada tällaiselta kärkihankkeelta vientitoimintanne edistämiseksi?
- Mikä voisi estää teitä hyötymästä tällaisen kärkihankkeen tarjoamasta viennin edistämisen tuesta?

Työskentely kärkihankkeessa:

- Asettetteko te tavoitteita omalle toiminnallenne kärkihankkeessa? Mikä merkitys tavoitteilla mielestänne on?
- Mitataanko kärkihankkeessa mielestänne oikeita asioita? Mittasitteko te onnistuneisuuttanne kärkihankkeessa? Mikä merkitys mittaamisella mielestänne on?
- Teittekö toimenpidesuunnitelman kärkihanketta varten? Mikä merkitys toimenpidesuunnitelmalla mielestänne on?

- Mitä tuloksia te olette saaneet kärkihankkeessa?
- Miten kärkihankkeeseen osallistumisenne on tähän asti onnistunut? Miten hankkeenne voisi onnistua vielä paremmin?
- Mikä merkitys kärkihankkeeseen osallistumisellanne on tulevaisuuden vientitoiminnallenne?

## Appendix 2. Interview guide supplement 1. in Finnish



## Appendix 3. Interview guide supplement 2. in Finnish

### LIITE 2

Esimerkiksi:

- Ulkoisia vaikuttimia kuten valtio ja kotimarkkinat, julkinen sektori, ala tai eri rahoittajat.
- Sisäisiä vaikuttimia kuten omat voimavarat, tieto, liiketoiminnan perustajan tai työntekijöiden kyvyt ja ominaisuudet.

### LIITE 3

Esimerkiksi:

- Markkinoiden tuttu luonne ja kulttuuri
- Suhteet ja verkostot

- Liiketoiminnan perustajan vaikutus ja ominaisuudet kuten halu ja kyky luoda jotain hienoa
- Opportunistinen toiminta perustuen koko maailman kokemiseen yhtenä mahdollisena markkinana ilman maantieteellisiä tai kulttuurillisia rajoja

## **Appendix 4. Interview guide in English**

### **Describe your business**

- In the music industry figure, where would you locate your line of business? (Supplement 1)
- How many people does your business employ?
- In your opinion, what kind of growth potential does your business have?

### **Describe your process of internationalization**

- What do you export?
- Which markets do you export to?
- What is the share of exports in your total sales?
- How soon after inception did you internationalize?
- Why did you start to export? (Supplement 2)
- In what order have your different export markets come along?
- What is the development of your internationalization described above based on? (Supplement 3)

### **Describe your experiences regarding public promotion in the Finnish music industry**

- What do you think of the promotion of Finnish music export? (how easy is it to apply for, how well is it informed of etc.)
- To what kind of music export challenges have you applied public sector support for? What is the role of this kind of support?
- To what kind of music export challenges have you applied support for from Music Export Finland? What is the role of this kind of support?
- How do you see the role of public promotion in the future?

### **Describe your experiences regarding Music Export Finland's Nordic MOI! Sounds from Suomi - flagship project**

- How did you learn about MOI! Sounds from Suomi – flagship project?
- What made you to apply for participation in MOI! Sounds from Suomi – flagship project?
- What did you expect from the flagship project?

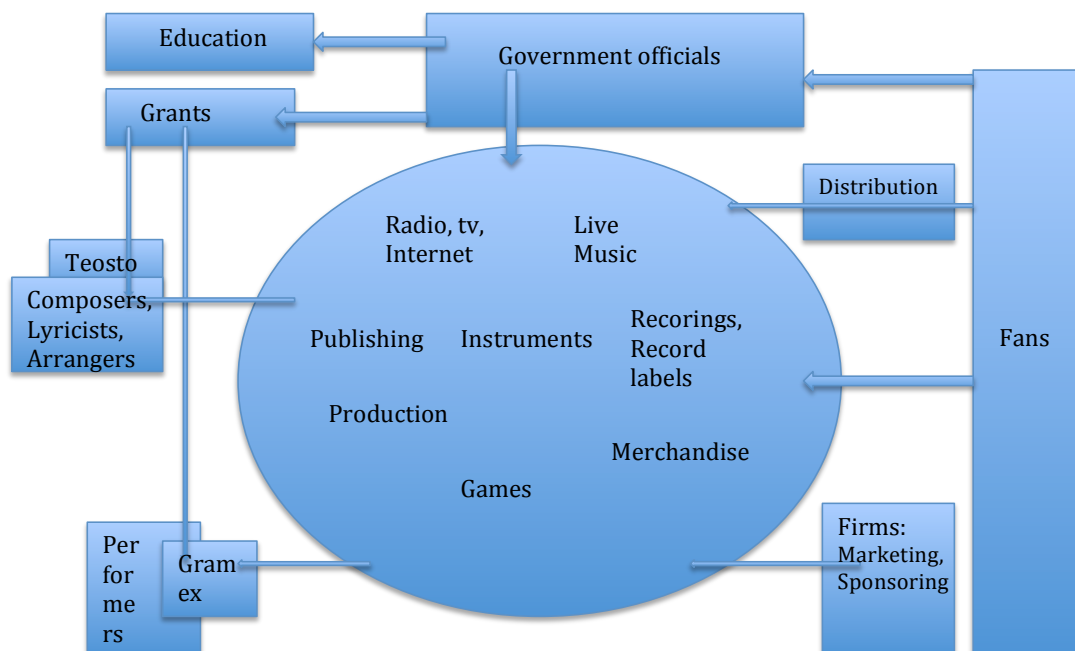
Evaluation of the flagship project:

- What do you perceive as the strengths of MOI! Sounds from Suomi – flagship project?
- What do you perceive as the weaknesses of MOI! Sounds from Suomi – flagship project?
- What else would you like to get from this kind of flagship project to promote your export activities?
- What could stop you from benefitting from export promotion provided by this kind of flagship project?

Working in the flagship project:

- Did you set objectives for your activities in the flagship project? What role do objectives play in your opinion?
- Are the barometers of the flagship project apt in your opinion? Did you monitor your success in the flagship project? What role does monitoring play in your opinion?
- Did you prepare a plan of action for the flagship project? What role does a plan of action play in your opinion?
- What kind of outcomes have you gotten in the flagship project?
- How has your participation in the flagship project succeeded so far? How could your project succeed even better?
- What impact does your participation in the flagship project have on your future export activities?

### Appendix 5. Interview guide supplement 1. in English



### Appendix 6. Interview guide supplement 2. in English

#### SUPPLEMENT 2

For example:

- External factors like government and home markets, public sector, industry or different financiers
- Internal factors like own resources, knowledge, founder's or employees' capabilities and characteristics

#### SUPPLEMENT 3

For example:

- Familiar character and culture of the market
- Relationships and networks

- Founder's influence and characteristics like desire and capability to create something great
- Opportunistic behavior based on conceiving the entire world as one possible market without geographic or cultural boundaries