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Master's Thesis

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ELICITING VISIONS OF THE PERFORMING ARTS

A qualitative research on cultural entrepreneurship

in the performing arts in Rotterdam

marketing
market
programming
business
different
people
audience
available
network

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(The image on the cover is the Tag Cloud with the ten top recurring words that the respondents adopted discussing the vision of the future of the performing arts)

Abstract

The most recent approaches have defined entrepreneurship as a process of opportunity creation and exploitation based on knowledge and opinions. The focus of the research has shifted from parameters and performances to people and perceptions, while the qualitative approach has entered economics to investigate how the participants interact in the market, spotting missing information and actively creating new sources of value.

The present research combines these theoretical and methodological insights in order to investigate entrepreneurship in the performing arts. The thesis discusses the results of ten semi-structured interviews carried out among performing arts practitioners of Rotterdam. The thesis explores how these practitioners put entrepreneurship into practice, combining institutional incentives, market opportunities, organizational strategies, and visions of the future.

Through a computer aided analysis of the themes and the narratives that the respondents have elaborated on throughout the interviews, the results indicate that the practitioners in the performing arts are mainly working to enhance the social accountability of their organizations. The emerging business models and the implications for the cultural policies are addressed, indicating avenues for further research.

Keywords: entrepreneurship; cultural entrepreneurship; entrepreneurship in the performing arts; economics of the performing arts; cultural policy.

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A special thought for my *walking* friends. All the walks and the long conversations throughout have shaped most of my decisions over the last years. Evaluating alternatives, experimenting with new pathways, tracing the itinerary on the map, and getting lost most of the time, well, isn't all this already the essence of the research process?

This process used to scare me. Luckily enough, back in the days, my mum rescued me from the feeling of total discouragement. Sometimes, I still hesitate, but then I talk to Adele and the challenging alternative becomes the only natural outcome.

The challenging alternative of Rotterdam has now been embraced. After several months, I would like to conclude with a "thank you" to my Dutch friends, who introduced me to life "behind the scenes". They have made my life experience as rich as my academic one.

1 Introduction

This thesis investigates how entrepreneurship is put into practice by practitioners in the performing arts. The research attempts to tackle entrepreneurship as a heuristic and holistic decision process. The investigation focuses on knowledge formation, knowledge asymmetry, perceptions, and opinions. The aim is to take the practitioners' standpoint to individuate the personal perspectives, opportunities, strategies, and visions that shape their decisions in everyday practice. Following recent theoretical models of entrepreneurship (Shane & Venkataraman, 2002; Sarason, Dean & Dillard, 2006), the study assumes that entrepreneurs do not only spot existing opportunities, but co-create these opportunities, interacting with the cultural and economic system that they inhabit.

The sample of this research is provided by practitioners operating in the performing arts in Rotterdam. Producing companies and organizations managing theater venues are both included.

The present chapter outlines the aims of the analysis, while introducing the main sections in which the information is organized.

1.1 Entrepreneurship: Relevance and Issues

Over the last decades, entrepreneurship has been increasingly addressed as a key determinant of economic growth (Davidsson & Wiklund, 2001). In such a perspective, entrepreneurship has become a common criterion for the cultural policies that want to stimulate creativity and business growth beyond the cultural realm (Gray, 2007). However, entrepreneurship still lacks a shared definition (Ahmad & Seymour, 2008). It is interesting, therefore, to investigate how practitioners in the cultural sector put entrepreneurship into practice and how cultural dynamics interact with institutional incentives.

The cultural policies of Rotterdam provide the framework to conduct such an analysis. Over the last decades, the urban and cultural policies of the city have increasingly stressed the role of public and private partnerships (Hitters, 2000; Russo, Van der Borg, Lavanga & Mingardo, 2005), and, in the Cultural Plan 2013-2016, entrepreneurship has been introduced as the main criterion for the allocation of the structural funds¹.

In the final published report about the Cultural Plan 2013-2016, the *Raad voor Kunst en Cultuur* (2011) has identified in the fields of Dance, Theater and Stage, the organizations proving

¹ See the Appendices (section 6.2) for a wider introduction to the cultural policy of Rotterdam, a detailed description of criteria adopted for the allocation of the structural funds in the Cultural Plan 2013-16, and a summary of the pre-research conducted on the applications.

the most unsatisfactory performances in the criterion of entrepreneurship. The applications submitted by the organizations operating in the field of Dance, Theater and Stage have been addressed as “uninspiring reports”, offering no vision of future scenarios for economic sustainability and artistic creativity. The relationship between entrepreneurship and the performing arts thus seems to be particularly worthy of analysis.

In addition, in the Netherlands, the performing arts have had one of their main stakeholders in the government. Consistent with the trend of the 24 most developed countries, and following the introduction of the German system of contribution to the arts (Hitters, 1996), government subsidies currently constitute 38% of the income of the theater halls and 85% of the income of producing companies². Cuts in the structural funds of the city council affect, therefore, a relevant source of income for the performing arts. Since the performing arts in Rotterdam have received 13.71% less in subsidies in the Cultural Plan 2013-2016 than in the Cultural Plan 2009-2012³, an impact on the strategic decisions of the practitioners may be expected. Understanding this impact is one of the aims of the present research. Elucidating how the practitioners make their decisions may actually provide clues about future developments in the performing arts.

The performing arts organizations of Rotterdam include producing companies (organizations mainly touring with original shows in different theaters) and companies managing theater venues (organizations mainly programming shows in a specific venue). These organizations have different artistic and business aims, but they all operate in the realm of the performing arts, offering “live performances at a given moment in time” (Towse, 2010, p. 200). These organizations that have produced uninspiring reports on entrepreneurship and have suffered budget losses during the last Cultural Plan are the focus of the present study.

1.2 Researching Entrepreneurship: Approach and Aims

The main research question that steers the research can be stated as follows:

RQ: “How is entrepreneurship, as a heuristic decision process, put into practice by practitioners in the performing arts?”

Following the invitation to a qualitative approach to entrepreneurship (Busenitz e al., 2003; (Neergaard & Ulhoi, 2007; Bygrave, 2007), this research conducts a series of semi-structured

² Source: Theater Analyse Systeem (2010) by VSCD (*Vereniging van Schouwburgen en Concertgebouwdirecties*); Poppodia in cijfers (2011) by VNPF (*Vereniging Nederlandse Poppodia en -Festivals*); Kunst in cijfers (2010) by OCW (*Ministerie van Onderwijs, Cultuur en Wetenschap*).

³ See the Appendices (section 6.2.4) for a chart reporting the level of subsidies received by each performing arts organization in Rotterdam during Cultural Plan 2009-2012 and 2010-2013.

interviews to capture the standpoint of practitioners operating in the performing arts. The interviews investigate perceptions and opinions of the practitioners in order to elicit their vision of the future. These visions are expected to shape the development of the performing arts. As Sarason (Sarason et al., 2006) points out, entrepreneurs do not only individuate external opportunities, but they also contribute to their creation through their thoughts and beliefs.

The results of this research outline what the strategic decisions are that the performing arts organizations are now expounding in order to position themselves in their evolving competitive environment. The analysis reveals that the cultural organizations are working towards increasing their social accountability. Opening up the process that tries to generate this social accountability, the research provides some clues for understanding why entrepreneurship, as a criterion, turned out to be problematic in Cultural Plan 2012-16. Finally, the results suggest that evolving business models in the performing arts are of interest for further research.

1.3 Content Outline

The present thesis consists of four chapters. Chapter 2 conducts a literature review to come to the definition of entrepreneurship that drives the study. Chapter 3 elaborates aims and methodology of the empirical research. Chapter 4 discusses the results of the data analysis. Chapter 5 finally summarizes the conclusions and suggests avenues for further research.

Additional information about the research design and the cultural policies of Rotterdam are discussed in the Appendices. The attached CD contains the transcription of the interviews.

2 Entrepreneurship: a Heuristic Approach

2.1 2.1 Entrepreneurship: a Multidimensional Concept

Every literature review on entrepreneurship has remarked on the lack of a clear definition (Ahmad & Seymour, 2008; Baumol, 1993; Montanye, 2006; Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). “The theory of entrepreneurship is one of the weakest links in modern economics (Montanye, 2006, p. 547). “Rather than explain and predict a unique set of empirical phenomena, entrepreneurship has become a broad label under which a hodgepodge of research is housed” (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000, p. 217). Fourteen complementary definitions are listed in the OECD report (Ahmad & Seymour, 2008). The entrepreneur “is at once one of the most intriguing and one of the most elusive in the cast of characters that constitutes the subject of economic analysis” (Baumol, 1993, p. 2). The concept of entrepreneurship is contemporarily linked to consumers' interest, social benefit, innovation, rent seeking, profits, industrial organization, institutional change, economic evolution, human action, economics, sociology, psychology, history and political sciences.

Over the last decades, research on entrepreneurship has simultaneously followed all these pathways. According to Davidsson and Wiklund (2001), research on entrepreneurship has turned into a multidimensional concept that encompasses the complexity of the entrepreneurial phenomenon. Different conceptualizations coexist and determine different approaches to the empirical research.

This literature review explores the main approaches to the study of entrepreneurship in order to articulate the definition relevant for the present research. Classical and contemporary contributions are merged to support a holistic approach to the analysis of entrepreneurship in the performing arts. The chapter defines entrepreneurship as a heuristic decision process, based on opinions, perceptions and expectations. (1) First, the origin of entrepreneurship and the main approaches to the concept are discussed. (2) Then, the rise of entrepreneurship over the last decades is traced, till the emergence of the cultural entrepreneur. (3) The uniqueness of the cultural entrepreneur is therefore pinpointed. Finally, (4) focusing on the performing arts, the outcomes of changes in the revenue-scheme are considered. These changes are indeed similar to the ones that must be faced by performing arts practitioners that the present research investigates.

2.2 The Austrian School of Economics and the Origin of Entrepreneurship

The first definition of entrepreneur was provided by Cantillon in 1755, but the concept was introduced in the economic theory later in the Nineteenth Century, when the Austrian School of Economics challenged the neoclassic assumptions of perfect competition and perfect information

(Montanye 2006; Kirzner, 1973). As Kirzner summarizes it:

“Mainstream economics has always assumed that exploitation of gains from trade will take place automatically, as soon as the gains exceed the relevant costs. This assumes that all opportunities for winning pure gains are instantly perceived and exploited. (...) [The] Misesian-inspired perspective on markets permits us to see market processes as ones in which such opportunities – hitherto overlooked – come to be perceived and exploited. This has opened up an entirely fresh dimension for economic activity, a dimension necessarily missing from an equilibrium-bound microeconomics. This dimension is that of entrepreneurial alertness and entrepreneurial discovery” (Kirzner, 1994, p. 106-107).

Several scholars have contributed to the development of the entrepreneurial approach to economics. Knight (1921) introduced the concept of uncertainty, defined as “the fact of ignorance and necessity of acting upon opinion rather than knowledge” (Knight, 1921, p. 268). Mises (1949) articulated the connection between uncertainty and profit, describing the entrepreneur as “the first to understand that there is a discrepancy between what is done and what could be done” (Mises, 1949, p. 260). Kirzner (1973) called these discrepancies “opportunities” and specified entrepreneurship as alertness to opportunities. Finally, Schumpeter (1942) established entrepreneurship – the invention of new commodities and new ways of production - as the main determinant of economic growth. “Schumpeter proposed a theory of creative destruction, where new firms with entrepreneurial spirit displace less innovative incumbents, ultimately leading to a higher degree of economic growth” (Audretsch, 2003, p. 2).

Specific to all the economists of the Austrian School is the leading role of the entrepreneurial discovery in the market process (Kirzner, 1997). Far from being rational actors acting on perfect information, the entrepreneurs bring about the market equilibrium, acquiring knowledge through interaction. In the Austrian perspective, there is no such thing as perfect information. Each entrepreneur has his own level of imperfect information about the market, which he derives from being alerted to the effectiveness or the failure of the plans of other fellow entrepreneurs. Failures and successes on the market guide the entrepreneurial discovery, which is an imaginative reflection upon uncertainty. The entrepreneurs, like every human actor, operate in an open-ended world that they continuously scan in search of unnoticed and surprising features. Such is the unintentional search for opportunities:

“An opportunity for profit cannot, by its nature, be the object of a systematic search. Systematic search can be undertaken for a piece of missing information, but only

because the searcher is aware of the nature of what he does not know, and is aware with greater or lesser certainty of the way to find out the missing information” (Kirzner, 1997, p. 71).

From the Austrian perspective, this research is the engine that prevents the market dynamic from proceeding any closer to completion. The entrepreneur's imagination will always bring continual change in tastes, resources and technological possibilities. This change, in turn, does not determine a mere redistribution of the income on the market, as assumed by the neoclassical approach. Rather, the change that entrepreneurs foster brings the discovery of a brand new source of income:

“A discovered income is one gained not by earning or otherwise receiving a share of any given pie, but one gained by discovering the existence of something valuable, the very existence of which was hitherto wholly unknown” (Kirzner, 1997, p. 75).

As Kirzner (1997) concludes, studying entrepreneurship means moving from the market as a system to the participants that act in it as individuals. Approaching entrepreneurship means understanding how market participants contend with the uncertainty of the future.

The study of entrepreneurship has followed several approaches. The main phases and perspectives are discussed in the next paragraph.

2.3 Approaches to the Study of Entrepreneurship

The literature about entrepreneurship has been organized through different categories (Wortman, 1987; Landstrom, Harirchi & Astrom, 2012; Busenitz et al., 2003; Minniti & Lévesque, 2008; Davidsson & Wiklund, 2001). Wortman (1987) aggregates the main empirical studies according to scopes and methodology. Landstrom (Landstrom et al., 2012) conducts a bibliographic analysis to identify the main contributors to the field of entrepreneurship, their career pathways, their research interests and their founding works. Busenitz (Busenitz et al., 2003) investigates the main articles published in leading management journals from 1985 to 1999, pinpointing recurrent themes and scopes of the analysis. Minniti and Lévesque (2008) distinguish among approaches following the classical economic paradigm and recent developments linked to the emergence of behavioral economy. Finally, Davidsson and Wiklund (2001) categorize the literature according to the level of analysis (micro, meso and macro).

All these reviews tend to organize the literature on entrepreneurship into three main phases, differentiated by the main goal of the analysis. (1) A start-up phase concentrated on the personal traits of the entrepreneurs. (2) A second phase focused on the establishment of new organizations.

(3) A third phase attentive to the process of opportunity exploitation.

2.3.1 The Personal Trait Approach to Entrepreneurship

In the sixties, the research on entrepreneurship was dominated by the personal trait approach. “Who is an entrepreneur?” was the research question supporting cross sectional design surveys aimed at identifying the psychological features of the entrepreneur (Gartner, 1988). The personality tests aimed at distinguishing the traits of entrepreneurs from the traits of non-entrepreneurs. The tests investigated traits such as the need for achievement, the locus of control, the propensity to risk taking, recurrent personal values and the relationships among these categories and demographic factors, such as age, gender, nationality, education. The studies failed to agree on remarkable differences: “Most of the attempts to distinguish between entrepreneurs and small business owners or managers have discovered no significant differentiating features” (Brockhaus & Horwitz, 1985, p. 42-43).

When the personal trait approach revealed its inconclusiveness, the attention shifted to the organizational level. The focus was either on the creation of a new organization or on the managerial procedures more supportive of an entrepreneurial attitude.

2.3.2 The Behavioral Approach and Corporate Entrepreneurship

The study of entrepreneurship focused on the organizational level during the 80s and 90s emerging as a branch of management (Zahra, 1991). This second phase of the research on entrepreneurship has its initiator in Gartner. Gartner (1988) challenges the notion of entrepreneurship as a personal state of being and depicts entrepreneurship as a set of behaviors that entrepreneurs must undertake to set up a new organization. According to Gartner (1988), therefore, the research on entrepreneurship is the study of these behaviors and their relationship with the competitive environment.

Diverging from this initial focus on the establishment of new organizations, the literature actually concentrated on the management of existing organizations. When entrepreneurship met management, many labels appeared: corporate entrepreneurship, intrapreneurship, internal corporate entrepreneurship, corporate venture and internal corporate venture (Zahra, 1991). All the labels, however, share a common interest for the “process of creating new business within established firms to improve organizational profitability” (Zahra, 1991, p. 260).

In this framework, different aspects were stressed. Zahra (1991) interprets corporate entrepreneurship as an administrative process, a set of managerial procedures that help the company to seize new opportunities in its competitive environment. Widening the scope, Antoncic and Hisrisch (2003) claim that intrapreneurship is any activity that stretches the organizational

boundaries to new directions.

According to these definitions, the empirical research on entrepreneurship fostered studies on the impact of managerial procedures (Holt, Rutherford, Clohessy, 2007; Kuratko, Montagno & Hornsby, 1990; Zahra, 1991) and search behavior (Lant & Mezas, 1990) on the economic performances of the organizations. Surveys were submitted to managers and employees by Zara (1991) and Holt (2007), while quasi-experimental design study and computer simulation were used respectively by Kuratko (Kuratko et al. 1990) and Lant and Mezas (1990). All the studies were based on large profit organizations, concluding that corporate entrepreneurship was linked to better financial performances and determined by adaptive strategies supporting risk-taking and discretionary decisions.

By the end of the nineties, however, the field of entrepreneurship had gone back to the classic contributions of the Austrian School of Economics, highlighting the influence of external opportunities on individuals and organizations (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). The current phase of the research on entrepreneurship had thus started.

2.3.3 Perceiving and Exploiting Opportunities. Entrepreneurship as a Process

The role of opportunities in the entrepreneurial process has been framed by the seminal works of Venkataraman (1997) and Shane and Venkataraman (2000). Shane and Venkataraman (2000) argue that the entrepreneur is neither defined by who he or she is (personal approach) nor by what he or she does (behavioral approach). Rather, the entrepreneurial phenomenon emerges out of the dynamic interaction between opportunities and who identifies, evaluates and exploits them:

“In contrast to previous research, we define the field of entrepreneurship as the scholarly examination of how, by whom, and with what effects opportunities to create future goods and services are discovered, evaluated, and exploited. Consequently, the field involves the study of sources of opportunities; the process of discovery, evaluation and exploitation of opportunities; and the set of individuals who discover, evaluate, and exploit them” (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000, p. 218-219).

The conceptual model of Shane and Venkataraman (2000) informs the definition of entrepreneurship of the OECD, which Ahmad and Seymour (2008) have formulated as follows:

“Entrepreneurship is about identifying and acting upon (enterprising human activity) opportunities that create value (be that economic, cultural or social). Typically, entrepreneurial activities require the leveraging of resources and capabilities through innovation, but the opportunities themselves always relate to the identification of

either new products, processes or markets” (Ahmad & Seymour, 2008, p. 14).

Since Shane and Venkaraman (2000) introduced their conceptual framework, the notion of entrepreneurship as a process of discovery of opportunities in a knowledge asymmetric environment has been steadily reinforced. Busenitz (Busenitz et al., 2003) suggests investigating “the nexus of entrepreneurial opportunities, enterprising individuals and teams, and mode of organizing within the overall context of dynamic environments” (Busenitz et al., 2003, p. 303). Eckhardt and Shane (2003) claim that “the basis for entrepreneurial activity is rooted in an economic system in which information is unevenly distributed across people” (Eckhardt & Shane, 2003, p. 345). According to the authors, the research on entrepreneurship is better served by studies of the entrepreneurial process rather than by studies based on normative arguments about the performances of individuals and organizations.

Recently, the nexus between entrepreneur and opportunity as introduced by Shane and Venkataraman (2000) has been elaborated in the frame of the structuration theory (Sarason et al., 2006). The structuration theory has been developed by the sociologist Anthony Giddens to explain the two-sided relationship between the actors and the social systems⁴. Giddens explains that actors are the creators of the social systems, but they are constrained by the overall system at the same time. This two-sided relationship is applied by Sarason (Sarason et al., 2006) to the nexus between the entrepreneur and the opportunity. Opportunities do not exist *per se*, but they come to be perceived and developed during the venturing process:

“When confronted with sources of opportunities, the entrepreneur draws on processes and stocks of knowledge in specifying data as ‘facts’. The *discovery* process is primarily concerned with interpretation, meaning, and communication and cannot be understood independently from the embedding socio-economic context. (...) A structuration view suggests that opportunities are not merely ‘discovered’ but are created, or instantiated, by entrepreneurial specification, interpretation, and influence” (Sarason et al., 2006, p. 296).

The iterative interaction between entrepreneurs and opportunities that Sarason (Sarason et al., 2006) theorizes brings an accent to the concept of entrepreneurship that the present research is tackling. This concept describes entrepreneurship as a heuristic process of opportunity exploitation that starts in the meaning and in the resources of information that determine how the entrepreneur frames the world.

⁴ Sarason (Sarason et al., 2006) mainly refers to Giddens (1979; 1984).

These recent contributions to the field of entrepreneurship testify, furthermore, to the increasing and multifaceted interest for the entrepreneurial processes. This interest comes from “the belief that such processes have profound effects on employment and economic growth on the societal level is one of the major reasons for the increased interest in entrepreneurship” (Davidsson & Wiklund, 2001, p. 3).

However, entrepreneurship has not always been so central to the economic theory. The belief that the level of entrepreneurship is a determinant of economic growth is the result of several evolutionary stages. The shift from management to entrepreneurship is summarized in the next section.

2.4 The Rise of Entrepreneurship

The personal traits approach, the organizational approach and the process approach discussed in the previous section represent the main phases of the economic research on entrepreneurship. These phases have evolved along with the growing popularity of entrepreneurship in the framework of urban policies and, to come to the background of the present research, cultural policy. The rise of entrepreneurship has followed three main steps. (1) First, entrepreneurship has linked its fortunes to the relevance of small businesses for economic growth. (2) Then, entrepreneurship has entered the urban policies supportive of creative clusters. (3) Finally, entrepreneurship has stepped in the domain of traditional cultural policies, such as the Cultural Plan that is analyzed in the present research. These three phases are elaborated on the following paragraphs.

2.4.1 The Evolving Relevance of Small Businesses for Economic Growth

The concept of entrepreneurship has evolved over time. Audretsch (Audretsch et al., 2002) argues that the relevance of entrepreneurship has followed the alternative fortunes of small businesses in economic and management studies.

Small businesses were the bedrock of American capitalism during the 19th century and the first decades of the 20th century. At the time, small businesses used to be the main provider of employment.

The situation changed in the second half of the 20th century. Chandler (1977) introduces the concept of “visible hand” to point out at the economic impact of large organizations. In these organizations, a new professional managerial class takes over the role of small business owners in the leading positions of the economy. Large organizations flourish on top of economy of scales and scopes.

The “machine” becomes the popular metaphor to address these corporations (Morgan, 1943). The organizations as machines rely on highly standardized procedures to increase their operational level. Internalizing access to the resources, through vertical and horizontal integrations, the large corporations gain market independence. Therefore, the visible hand of these organizations overtakes the invisible hands of the market in the relationship between the organization and its competitive environment.

In this framework, small businesses seem destined to fade away along with their inefficiencies (Audretsch et al., 2002; Audretsch, 2003). Since the Small Business Administration Act in the United States, the political sphere refers to small enterprises as social goods.

The attitude towards small businesses changes again between the 1980s and the 1990s (Audretsch et al., 2002; Audretsch, 2003). On the west coast of the US, small companies operating in

Silicon Valley led the digital revolution. Business giants such as IBM see their competitive advantage eroded by dynamic new competitors such as Microsoft. Innovation attracts the attention of the economists.

Abernathy and Utterback (Abernathy & Utterback, 1996) describe the main phases of the innovation process. According to their model, each wave of innovation follows three main phases: the *fluid phase*, the *transitional phase* and the *specific phase*. Efficiency in large scale operations emerges between the transitional phase and the specific phase, when a few successful competitors develop a competitive advantage, shaping the market as an oligopoly of hierarchically managed firms. In the fluid phase, though, small businesses are the incubators of innovation. In the fluid phase, many small organic firms, relying on general purpose equipment and highly skilled labor, compete in a turbulent market characterized by a large variety of differentiated products.

As Audretsch (Audretsch et al., 2002) reports, by the early 2000s, new econometric evidence confirms small businesses as a vital determinant of economic growth. Since this new evidence in support of small businesses was assessed, policy has developed its mandate for entrepreneurship:

“Confronted with rising concerns about unemployment, jobs, growth and international competitiveness in global markets, policy makers have responded to this new evidence with a new mandate to promote the creation of new businesses, i.e., entrepreneurship” (Audretsch et al., 2002, p. 2).

According to Audretsch (Audretsch et al., 2002), in Europe, the rise of entrepreneurship in the political sphere has followed five phases. (1) Skepticism. Administrators nurtured doubts about the sustainability of the Silicon Valley model. In the early 90s, European politicians expected to gain efficiencies out of the economies of scale of the European integration. (2) Recognition. Europe acknowledged the long-running performances of Silicon Valley in the development of software and hardware. In order to develop comparative advantages, investments were diverted to automobiles and textiles. (3) Envy. European traditions appeared as a barrier to the American entrepreneurship. Such traditions seemed to restrict the access to the dynamic competitive advantage of the US economy. (4) Consensus. The main European leaders agreed that the new entrepreneurial economy was superior to the old managerial economy. Several European cities⁵ tried to foster an entrepreneurial economy by attracting educated labor and enhancing research institutions. (5) Attainment. In the leading European economy of Germany, the venture capital tripled in just one decade, reaching the amount of € 5.4 billion by 1998.

The rise of entrepreneurship has influenced the urban governance as well. The shift from

⁵ The Dutch Randstad was among the regions starting these pilot programs in support of small business venturing.

managerialism to entrepreneurialism in the field of the creative city is discussed in the next section.

2.4.2 From Urban Management to Urban Entrepreneurialism

Long interested in the role of urbanization in social change, David Harvey (Harvey, 1989) observes that the managerial approach of the 1960s and 1970s in urban governance was slowly taken over by entrepreneurial forms of the actions in the 1980s and 1990s. In Harvey's (1989) terms, the managerial approach refers to the actions that city government used to organize to provide services and facilities, such as healthcare, education and basic infrastructures. On the contrary, the entrepreneurial approach frames a wide set of measures that local governments have gradually developed to create a favorable business climate and take in a supportive role in the creation of new enterprises.

In the framework of urban entrepreneurialism, Harvey (1989) includes all the actions that the local powers put in to shape an attractive economic environment and attract financial capital. Among local powers, Harvey (1989) lists several geographical levels and social forces concerning the geographical level, neighborhoods, communities, centers, suburbs, metropolitan regions and wider regional areas. They also concern social forces, governments, businesses, educational and religious institutions, political parties, as well as local organizations and social movements.

Harvey (1989) pinpoints three emerging characteristics of new entrepreneurial city policies: (1) public-private partnerships; (2) speculative rather than rationally planned activities; (3) focus on the place rather than on the territory. As Harvey (1989) summarizes, "the new urban entrepreneurialism typically rests on a public-private partnership focusing on investment and economic development with the speculative construction of a place rather than amelioration of conditions within a particular territory as its immediate political and economic goal" (Harvey, 1989, p. 8).

Local government actions are entrepreneurial because they imply speculation, difficulties and risks. These public interventions concentrate on new cultural centers, establish new industrial parks or reduce the tax pressure on wages. All together, these measures aim at forming physical and social infrastructures to make a region and a city an innovative and exciting place to work, live and consume.

Transport costs have reduced spatial barriers to the movement of goods and people. Inter-urban competition has increased. The cycle of innovation has become faster and faster. As a consequence, the competition among urban entrepreneurs has moved towards highly localized symbolic productions, such as design and fashion, image dominating over substance:

"Since increasing geographical mobility and rapidly changing technologies have

rendered many forms of production of goods highly suspect, so the production of those kinds of services that are (a) highly localized and (b) characterized by rapid if not instantaneous turnover time appear as the most stable basis for urban entrepreneurial endeavor. The emphasis upon tourism, the production and consumption of spectacles, the promotion of ephemeral events within a given locale, bear all the signs of being favored remedies for ailing urban economies” (Harvey, 1989, p. 12,13).

The soft factors have emerged as key determinants of the quality of life and key drivers to choice of a location. Culture has therefore entered entrepreneurial policies. As Lavanga (2004) points out:

“Within the emerging framework of urban policy, an increasingly significant role has been played by the artistic and cultural sector, reflecting a strong belief among many commentators and governmental bodies that the ‘cultural realm’ is destined to play an increasingly important part in the future evolution of the city” (Lavanga, 2004, p. 7).

Entrepreneurial cultural policies are discussed in the next paragraph.

2.4.3 Urban Entrepreneurialism and Culture

The role of culture in the creative field of the city has evolved over the last three decades. Lavanga (2004) wraps up this evolution, starting from the definition of culture. In its broadest meaning, culture refers to a shared system of values and symbols that shape the social identity of a community. In economic studies, culture has fueled two fields of analysis: on the one hand, “culture as a process” has enlightened specific forms of interaction contributing to social and economic growth; on the other hand, “culture as a product” has shifted the attention to production and consumption of cultural goods.

The economic studies of cultural industries have come to include a wide set of goods characterized by uniqueness, scarcity, low use value, high aesthetic value, low technical reproducibility. The Great London Council was the first to introduce the definition of cultural industries as “those institutions in our society which employ the characteristic modes of production and organization of industrial corporations to produce and disseminate symbols in the forms of cultural goods and services, generally, though not exclusively, as commodities” (Greater London Council, 1985). More recently, the term “creative industries” has entered the field to embrace all the industries engaged in creative and innovative production of symbolic goods, therefore including

more commercial driven branches, such as advertising, design and architecture.

The relationship between cultural industries and urban development has been extensively analyzed by economics. The conceptual model of “creativity as the active agent of an ameliorative change” (Scott, 2010, p 118) has shown an increasing complexity. Breaking down all the determinants of the creative field of the city, for example, Scott (2010) discusses a multi-layered concentric scheme that includes urban networks of interactions, local labor market, wider urban environment, institutions and governance. Any easy assumption between direct investment in leisure time and creative class clustering is challenged.

Such a complexity tends to fade away in the documents supporting urban policies (Evans, 2009). A varied set of labels - “science city”, “creative city”, “culture city” - is actually broadening the original scope of the creative core, blurring the borders between the cultural industries and the fine arts. According to Evans (2009), in the policy documents, arts, culture, creativity and knowledge have constituted a continuum embedding film/TV/animation, arts, music, media, design, architecture, fashion, publishing, ICT, tourism, crafts/jewelry and advertising. Disregarding the uniqueness of each industry or sub-sector, culture has come to be taken as the basis for economic regeneration:

“Culture is now seen as the magic substitute for all the lost factories and warehouses, and as a device that will create a new urban image, making the city more attractive to mobile capital and mobile professional workers” (Hall, 2000, p. 640).

Starting in 1999 with the publication of the British DCMS Creative Industries Mapping Document, public agencies have supported entrepreneurship in the cultural sector (Bilton, 2006).

2.4.4 Entrepreneurship and Cultural Policy

The evolution of cultural policy has been analyzed from several perspectives: impact on job market (Ellmeier, 2010), best support to cultural management (Bilton, 2006) and means and goals of politics (Gray, 2007). Gray (2007) offers the wider theoretical analysis.

Gray (2007) talks about “commodification in cultural policy” to relate the recent need for arts and cultural policy to benefit of more than over the aesthetic value of culture. Gray (2007) identifies an evolution in two phases. In the first one, cultural policy used to support culture *per se* to correct market failure, reinforce national identity or enhance social order. In the second phase, now going on, the cultural policy is concerned, *ab initio*, with the instrumental value of culture to achieve goals in non-cultural areas.

In the instrumental perspective, arts and culture must generate their operating funds, relying

more on the private sector than on the public one. Consequently, cultural organizations are invited to demonstrate their utility and prestige to donors and sponsors. In addition, cultural organizations are invited to contribute to solutions to economic and social problems:

“The commodification thesis proposes that a prime reason for this change in government perception is that the ideological shift amongst political actors from a concern with use-value towards exchange-value serves to re-focus the attention of policy makers away from the internal detail of policy itself and towards the manner in which policy as a whole contributes towards commodified forms of exchange relationship and social behavior” (Gray, 2007, p. 210).

The aims of cultural policies are discussed from a managerial perspective by Bilton (2006). Bilton (2006) documents the shift from managerial cultural policy to entrepreneurial cultural policy. Managerial policies emerged in the 90s. Along with the so called “New Public Management”, public agencies introduced a series of initiatives to improve the quality of cultural management. The aim was to make the cultural sector more accountable to markets and customers. By the end of the decade, these policies had been substituted with new forms of business support. The new policies are not meant to play a defensive role against the market forces. Rather, entrepreneurial policies are designed to support cultural players to play an aggressive role in the leisure market.

Analyzing the impact of new cultural policies on the career of cultural workers, Ellmeier (2003) summarizes some of the main characteristics of these policies, emphasizing the softening distinction between cultural industries and non-commercial subsidized culture. Private-enterprise structures have entered previously public funded areas of the welfare state so that “the traditional strict separation between a publicly subsidized non-commercial cultural sector and the cultural industry has been increasingly ‘softening’ in favor of mixed forms”. (Ellmeier, 2003, p. 7).

According to Ellmeier (2003), this is the context that has determined the rise of micro-entrepreneurs in the arts. Changing working relationships – flexibility, adaptability, self-employment, low wages and high motivation - have reshaped the role of the artists themselves. Far from being a mere creator, the artist has evolved into a trend setter, orientating consumer tastes and exploiting the opportunities arising in the cultural sector. Management vocabulary has become widely used in the cultural sector and the border between the artist and the worker has become blurred, allowing the concept of a cultural entrepreneur to enter.

2.5 The Cultural Entrepreneur. Origins and Uniqueness

The link between entrepreneurship and culture has been explored since the origin of economics. Only recently, however, the cultural entrepreneur has become a unique character in the literature. This section (1) presents the early contributions to cultural entrepreneurship and (2) discusses the distinguishing features that determine the uniqueness of the cultural entrepreneur.

2.5.1 The Cultural Entrepreneur. Early Notions

The concept of cultural entrepreneur is already addressed by the founding fathers of modern economics and sociology (Swedberg, 2006). Classical scholars, such as Weber, Durkheim, Simmel and Schumpeter, have provided the early contributions to the concept of cultural entrepreneur. Scanning the classics, Swedberg traces the idea of the artist as an entrepreneur (Schumpeter), the tension between the economic and artistic spheres (Weber), the clash between modern arts and social engagement (Durkheim), and the synthesis of art and industrial production in design (Simmel).

Swedberg (2006) concludes that two points are shared by the early contributors to the field of cultural entrepreneurship. First, Swedberg (2006) identifies the element of novelty and combination: as much as entrepreneurship, cultural entrepreneurship is about the combination of resources to create something new. Second, Swedberg (2006) points out the fact that moneymaking is of secondary concern for cultural entrepreneurs. Cultural entrepreneurs are primarily focused in culture. As a whole, cultural entrepreneurship is defined as “the carrying out of a novel combination that results in something new and appreciated in the cultural sphere” (Swedberg, 2006, p. 260).

Since the classical definitions that Swedberg (2006) reviews, the concept of cultural entrepreneurship has emerged as one of the sub-categories of entrepreneurship (Ahmad & Seymour, 2008). On the one hand, continuity with and proximity to the entrepreneur is portrayed. Referring to the most common definitions of the entrepreneur, Hausmann (2010) defines the cultural entrepreneur as the person who “discovers, evaluates and exploits an opportunity and creates an organization to seize it, (...) undertaking business activities within one of the four traditional sectors of the arts – music, fine arts, the performing arts and literature” (Hausmann, 2010, p. 18-19).

On the other hand, though, scholars have tried to pinpoint the distinguishing features of the cultural entrepreneurship phenomenon (Aageson, 2008; Bilton, 2006; Hausmann, 2010; Klamer, 2011). (1) The uniqueness of cultural management, (2) the creation of value across cultural and economic sphere and (3) the rhetoric dimension of the cultural entrepreneur are the main dimensions explored.

2.5.2 The Uniqueness of Cultural Management: the “Holistic” Value-Chain

Bilton (2006) concentrates on the uniqueness of cultural management. According to Bilton (2006), cultural industries and cultural organizations have developed an autonomous tradition of management that diverges from the best practices of business and politics. Among the specific characteristics of cultural organizations, Bilton (2006) lists size, position across the value-chain, mixed values and collaborations supporting the creative process. Cultural organizations tend to be self-managed small organizations, where operational and managerial functions overlap. They are driven by commercial goals and personal dreams. They develop unique organizational identities that often constitute structural barriers to traditional forms of business growth. The creative process is rather fueled by temporary horizontal and vertical interactions that generate a complex project environment, overtaking the borders and the sequences of the standard value-chain.

Cultural entrepreneurs extend the activities of their organizations to merge content creation, content distribution and content exploitation. Cultural entrepreneurs foster a “holistic approach” that dis-intermediates the traditional value-chain. The emphasis shifts from the cultural content itself to the total package of the cultural experience. The purchase experience and the consumption experience interact with the content production, transforming the value-chain into a “value-network”.

In the framework that the value-network creates, culturally conceived projects generate financial returns following quite unpredictable pathways. The blurring borders between economy and culture are analyzed by Aageson (2008).

2.5.3 An Economic and Cultural Vision

Cultural Entrepreneurship is defined by Aageson (2008) as the contemporary creation of cultural and economic wealth. Aageson (2008) breaks down the gap between culture and market. According to Aageson (2008), cultural entrepreneurs act as intermediaries between the talent and the market. Cultural entrepreneurs have a special affinity with the creative work of the artistic talents, but, to the same extent, they are able to judge the market and take the risk of speculating over its future orientation. Aageson (2008) defines the cultural entrepreneurs as follows:

“Cultural entrepreneurs are risk-takers, change agents and resourceful visionaries who generate revenue from innovative and sustainable cultural enterprises that enhance livelihoods and create cultural value for both creative producers and consumers of cultural services and products” (Aageson, 2008, p. 96).

Network and vision are the main concepts that Aageson (2008) introduces. While the artist is

seen as the person that creates the idea, the product, or the service, the cultural entrepreneur is the player that creates a vision to engage external stakeholders such as investors, opinion makers, market makers and creators. “What distinguishes the implacable preservationist from the entrepreneur is the vision that provides the path towards an enterprise that will create both cultural value and wealth” (Aageson, 2008, p. 99).

The vision and the network are supported by the rhetoric skills of the cultural entrepreneur. Such skills are discussed by Klamer (2011).

2.5.4 The Rhetoric Dimension of the Cultural Entrepreneur

Klamer (2011) approaches entrepreneurship from an initial economic perspective. The author acknowledges that entrepreneurship is about spotting and exploiting an opportunity and identifies a cultural entrepreneur as a person who spots opportunities to finance the arts alternative to public support.

However, the notion of opportunity that Klamer (2011) refers to is more a rhetoric construction than an objective profit opportunity. Cultural opportunity comes out of an asymmetric level of information in a non-rational decision process. Klamer (2011) takes as an example the negotiation about the value of a diamond to emphasize the role of stories, anecdotes and symbols in the creation of the cultural value. According to Klamer (2011), cultural values emerge through a conversation.

The key dimension of cultural entrepreneurship is, therefore, communication. Cultural entrepreneurship is about the creation of a vision – a set of metaphors, stories and values – that engages the audience in the co-creation of the artistic and cultural value of the cultural goods. In turns, the distinguishing skill of the cultural entrepreneur is his ability to persuade. The cultural entrepreneur is defined by his rhetoric (speaking skills), pathos (emotional engagement) and ethos (authority and credibility). Rhetoric, ethos and pathos are the three pillars to allow the cultural entrepreneur to establish a cultural value for the public. “Although entrepreneurial activity may begin with the perception of an opportunity, the critical entrepreneurial task is to convince others of that perception” (Klamer, 2011, p. 151).

To conclude, cultural entrepreneurs generate economic support and cultural independence assembling a network of stakeholders around a shared vision. Entrepreneurs can focus on different sets of stakeholders. For examples, Folsom (2003) distinguishes between market entrepreneurs and political entrepreneurs. Folsom describes market entrepreneurs as entrepreneur who try to “excel by producing a quality product at low price” (Folsom, 2003, p. 169). On the contrary, political entrepreneurs “depend on political manipulation for success (...), relying heavily on the state and

federal government for tariffs, subsidies or other political advantages” (Folsom, 2003, p. 96, 169).

This dichotomy frames the practitioners that this research is investigating. The performing arts organizations of Rotterdam are operating across government and market. Entrepreneurship to them is both an institutional incentive and a market process. On the one hand, entrepreneurship is a criterion to satisfy in order to maximize the public support. On the other hand, entrepreneurship is the search for new opportunities to create cultural and economic value.

Non-profit performing arts organizations have evolved into organizations relying on different stakeholders and revenues. When stakeholders and revenues change, performances of organizations change accordingly. The changes that derive from a variation in the revenue-scheme are discussed in the next section.

2.6 Non-Profit Art Organizations and Evolving Revenue-Schemes

Feist (1998) defines the performing arts organizations as the organizations whose scope is to give a live performance of drama, mime, puppet-theater, comedy, all forms of music and all forms of dance. In the performing arts, Towse (2010) includes all the organizations that provide “live performance at a given moment in time” (Towse, 2010, p. 200), thereby distinguishing among orchestra, opera, dance and theater.

In the performing arts, profit and non-profit organizations operate, yet non-profit forms of organization are more common (Hansmann, 1986). Brooks (2006) suggests that the non-profit status is functional for arts organizations because it helps to attract donations and it supports the mission-driven vocation of organization's members. (Brooks, 2006). Consistent with such expectations, the performing arts organizations of Rotterdam that applied for the Cultural Plan 2013-2016 are all no-profit.

The present section discusses the relationship between the non-profit organization and their revenue-schemes. The aim is to understand the implications for the organizations under analysis of the current and expected cuts in public funds. In order to achieve this aim, the section (1) presents non-profit arts organizations as multiple-stakeholder organizations, (2) evaluates the impact of revenue-schemes on organizational performances, (3) and sheds lights on the effect of the revenue-schemes on artistic programs.

2.6.1 Stakeholders and Decisions in Non-Profit Arts Organizations

Non-profit cultural organizations have been recognized as multiple-stakeholder organizations (Hsieh, Curtis & Smith, 2008; Hsieh, 2010). They rely on multiple-streams of resources and their success – both in terms of mission achievement and financial sustainability – depends on their ability to align with shifting concerns of government, donors and customers. “Strategic choices are often motivated and/or restrained by negotiations with interest groups rather than managers' autonomous decisions” (Hsieh et al., 2008, p. 2). The relationship between the financial dependence on specific stakeholders and organizational performances has been investigated in different countries and revenue-schemes.

2.6.2 Revenue-Schemes: Alternatives, Threats and Opportunities

A general framework for the resource-dependence theory is provided by Froelich (1999), who examines threats and opportunities of major revenue strategies in the non-profit art sector. Froelich (1999) conducts a literature review to analyze the effect of individual contributions, corporate contributions, foundation grants, government funding and commercial activity on goal

displacement, managerial procedures and organizational structures.

Individual contributions are described as highly unpredictable and unstable. Acquiring individual donations is time consuming and absorbs staff, board and volunteers efforts, diverting energies from main organizational aims. Furthermore, individual donors seem to trigger relevant goal displacement. Both quantitative surveys and qualitative analysis on major patrons confirm that non-profits arts organizations largely dependent on individual donations, tend to orientate their programs into areas that have appeal to donors.

Corporate partnerships follow the same pattern of individual donations in terms of volatility, goal displacement and impact on organizational structure. The organizational structure seems to be even more affected than by individual donors. Private sponsors and foundations tend to determine the establishment of ad-hoc boards and formalized procedures with a direct impact on the organizational structure of non-profit organizations.

Such an impact on administrative procedure is linked to government support as well. Government agencies require standardized procedures, documentation, evaluation and accountability. As a drawback, bureaucratization overstates procedures at the expense of the results. In the worst scenario, the excessive focus on aggregated data and government expectations compromises the service nature of the non-profits organizations, diverting their attention from the public they want to address. However, government funds are the most stable source of revenue – sometimes portrayed as “money in the bank” - and the source that determines the lower level of goal displacement. Froelich (1999) notes, for example, that the government is the main stakeholder supporting the most innovative artistic groups.

Finally, Froelich (1999) investigates the impact of commercial activities. The evidence on their effect appears two-sided. On the one hand, the risk of an identity crisis in the non-profit sector has been pinpointed. The business mindset seems to undermine the social mission of non-profit organizations eliciting doubts on the legitimacy of special privileges that non-profit organizations have enjoyed due to the social relevance of their services. On the other hand, however, commercial activities enhance greater autonomy and flexibility. Although the commercial activities come along with larger marketing and financing departments or brand new profit branches, the revenues generated appear stable and the level of goal displacement low.

2.6.3 Government Support, Market Orientation and Financial Health

Additional clues to the effect of decreased public funding are provided by Kirchner (Kirchner, Markowsky & Ford, 2007), who concentrates on the relationship among public funding, marketing

activities and the financial health of non-profit performing arts organizations. First, Kirchner (Kirchner et al., 2007) conducts a literature review, discussing 24 articles investigating the relationship among government support, financial performances and marketing orientation.

Elaborating on previous contributions, Kirchner (Kirchner et al., 2007) comes up with three main hypotheses: (1) a negative relationship between level of marketing activities and the level of government support; (2) a positive relationship between level of government support and financial health of performing arts organizations; (3) a positive relationship between financial health of performing arts organizations and level of marketing activity. These hypotheses are tested, analyzing secondary data concerning level of government support, level of marketing investment and level of financial health (the accrued operating surplus/deficit) of 66 American symphony orchestras.

The correlation analysis undertaken does not prove any of the hypothesized casual relationships. Nonetheless, the data demonstrate that the concepts are related and outline three counter intuitive implications. (1) The higher the level of government support, the higher the level of marketing activities; (2) the higher the level of government support, the poorer the level of financial performances; (3) the lower the level of marketing activities, the better the financial performances.

The author (Kirchner et al., 2007) argues that the results may be due to the need of the organizations to legitimize their public support with extensive public visibility, therefore investing in marketing even when investments do not have a clear financial rationale. In addition, according to Kirchner (Kirchner et al., 2007), the results indicate that performing arts organizations may have not yet optimized their marketing investments, not having understood the real constituents of their artistic productions.

As a consequence, Kirchner (Kirchner et al., 2007) suggests that further research investigating performances of performing arts organizations should extend to non-financial data in order to assess factors, such as governance, management and artistic vibrancy and excellence. Kirchner (Kirchner et al., 2007) points at surveys and interviews as tools to gather primary data for empirical analysis.

2.6.4 Commercial Ventures and Spending Patterns

The effect of commercialization on the non-profit arts sector is finally addressed by Hughes and Luksetich (2004), with a focus on the influence of commercial ventures on spending patterns of museums, performing arts organizations and media. Hughes and Luksetich (2004) attempt to understand whether increased revenues from commercial ventures determine higher expenditure in

marketing or fund-raising or if revenues contribute to the main service of organizations.

Concerning the performing arts, Hughes and Luksetich (2004) conduct a regression analysis, covering the 57 performing arts organizations that filled the income form of the Urban Institute's Center for Charitable Statistics each year from 1989 to 1996. In their model, the two scholars analyze the relationship between the sources of income and the expenditure patterns in program service, management, fund-raising and excess revenue (current revenue minus current expenditure).

For performing arts organizations, the empirical results show that increased revenues flow into an excess, increasing net-asset balance. In turn, extra budget is spread mainly over the program service and, to a decreasing extent, to management and fund-raising. “Overall, given the variations in funding across organizations and over time, greater reliance on private support does not significantly affect the level of spending on program services” (Hughes & Luksetich, 2004, p. 214).

Nonetheless, the authors claim that their results are based on large established organizations. New and smaller organizations may in fact have greater difficulties in substituting government support. Therefore, changes in the revenue-scheme may push small organizations towards changes in their main service. For performing arts organizations, influences on their artistic programs may be expected.

2.6.5 Revenue-Schemes and Theater Programming

The effect of budget and income-scheme on theater program choices has been studied in different countries and methodologies (Austin-Smith, 1980; Di Maggio & Stenberg, 1985; O'Hagan and Neligan, 2005; Werck, Grinwis Plaat Stultjes & Heyndels, 2008). One of the seminal studies was carried out by Di Maggio and Stenberg (1985) to estimate the influence of market, environment and organizational structures on the level of conventionality of the repertoire of US resident non-profit theaters. Di Maggio and Stenberg (1985) measure innovation in terms of “non-conformity”, defining an index to assess the extent to which a theater's repertoire is different from the repertoire of other theaters. Then, through statistical regression, the two authors quantify the impact on the “conventionality/non conventionality” index of the following factors: demand characteristics of communities; rate of dependence on the market for financial sustenance; and the level of institutionalization (standardized management and marketing procedures).

Concerning the present research, Di Maggio and Stenberg (1985) bring strong evidence about the impact of market dependence on program conventionality. Access to highly educated patrons, grants or contributions appear to make theaters' repertoire more innovative, while dependence on the market triggers a higher level of conformity.

In relation to the British performing arts sector, the conclusions of Di Maggio and Stenberg (1985) are reinforced by Austin-Smith (1980) and, more recently, by the econometric analysis carried out by O'Hagan and Neligan (2005). O'Hagan and Neligan (2005) define a conventionality index similar to the one introduced by Di Maggio and Stenberg (1985) and investigate the relationship between state subsidies and repertoire conventionality in 40 English subsidized theaters during the 1996-1999 seasons. Using a multiple regression analysis, O'Hagan and Neligan (2005) note that, when “subsidies as a proportion of the total income increase by 1%, the conventionality index decreases by 0.04%”⁶.

The impact of budget constraints on program choices is finally analyzed by Werck (Werck et al., 2008). Werck (Werck et al., 2008) conducts a simultaneous equation analysis to identify the factors that interdependently affected the programmatic choices of subsidized Flemish theaters in the period 1980-2000. Conducting the analysis in a panel of 59 theaters, Werck (Werck et al., 2008) estimates the correlations among (1) quantity of output, (2) output characteristics, (3) prices, (4) government subsidies and (5) consumer demand. The analysis reveals that, when subsidies contribute to bigger budgets, theaters tend to increase number and size of the shows they put on. As a result, when budgetary constraints are lowered, theater managers stage larger productions that run for shorter periods.

2.6.6 Evolving Revenue-Schemes and the Decision Process of the Entrepreneur

Combining the insights discussed in the previous paragraphs, the main effects of revenue-scheme on non-profit cultural organizations and theater programming can be summarized as follows:

Table 1 - The Effect of the Revenue-Scheme on Performing Arts Organizations

Research	Determinant	Effect on organizational behavior/programming
Froelich, 1999	Increased commercial income	Autonomy, flexibility, cost-benefit mentality, little goal displacement
Kirchner et al., 2007	Higher level of subsidies	Higher level of marketing and lower level of financial health
Hughes and Luksetich, 2004	Higher level of commercial income	Higher level of investment in organizational mission
Di Maggio, Stenberg, 1985	Higher level of market dependence	Lower level of program innovation
O'Hagan and	Higher level of subsidies	Lower level of conventional programming

6 It is worth observing, however, that O'Hagan and Neligan (2005) refer to Pierce (2000) to highlight contrasting evidence about the relationship between subsidies and conventionality in the repertoire. According to Pierce (2000), only federal subsidies seem to determine unconventional programming.

Neligan , 2005		
Werck et al., 2008	Lower level of budget constraints	Quality maximization (bigger productions staged for shorter periods)

(source: own elaboration)

This chart suggests that cultural entrepreneurs in the performing arts, facing a shift in revenue-scheme, may adapt their organizations to the new financial environment and stakeholder network operating on four main levels. They may shift the main form to account for their output, shifting attention from artistic quality to the audience and the revenues generated. They may make decisions that determine a reduction in costs or a variation in spending patterns. They may shift attention from old to new stakeholders and introduce strategies and tools to enhance their market orientation. As a result, they may intervene in their programming.

These appear to be key points in the decision-making process that cultural entrepreneurs must face, while a change in the revenue-scheme of their organizations is taking place. In order to elicit information about the decision process of the entrepreneurs analyzed by the present research, the following topics will inform the design of the empirical research: output maximization, spending patterns, plans for cost reduction, programming, strategies for market orientation and stakeholder management.

2.7 Conclusions

The economic literature about entrepreneurship is wide and varied. Nonetheless, some constants emerge among the definitions and approaches discussed in the literature review. Since its origin, entrepreneurship testifies to an interest in understanding how an opportunity comes to be perceived in the market. While standard economics has focused on rationality and optimal behavior, the economic literature on entrepreneurship has re-evaluated the role of opinions and individual perceptions. Entrepreneurship is knowledge asymmetry, uncertainty, risk-taking as well as perceived discrepancy between what it is and what could be. Although entrepreneurship attracts attention as a source of profit, efficiency and economic growth, entrepreneurship is in itself the heuristic process through which the decision is taken. This decision can concern new products, new markets, new resources, as well as effective reactions to institutional incentives. This decision can be influenced by personal features, organizational structures, competitive environment and cultural background. This decision can produce economic, cultural, or social values.

In the cultural sector, decisions appear to be even more speculative and risk-taking. In the cultural sector, the rational and profit oriented behavior of players is weaker than in traditional business environments. Extra economic incentives and cultural aims frame entrepreneurship in the cultural sector. The cultural mission orientates the cultural entrepreneur more than the vocation for profit and the cultural worker frames his mission in spiritual terms.

This mission contribute to form a vision, that is one of the distinguishing features of the cultural entrepreneur, along its rhetoric ability to make this vision engaging for customers, sponsors and donors. Entrepreneurship in the cultural sector has been defined as a holistic phenomenon.

This heuristic and holistic process of decision making is the focus of the present research. This research attempts to take the standpoint of the cultural entrepreneur and explore how entrepreneurship is put into practice. This means investigating the sources of information of the entrepreneur, the opportunities that he/she spots, the strategies he/she undertakes and the vision he/she has of the competitive environment. Rotterdam provides the framework for the analysis.

Following a wider trend in the cultural policy, entrepreneurship has been introduced as a criterion for the allocation of public funds in the Cultural Plan 2013-2016 of the city of Rotterdam. Therefore, for the cultural sector of Rotterdam, entrepreneurship represents an institutional incentive that cultural organizations must prove to be isomorphic to.

Such incentive, however, is in fact an invitation to explore financial alternatives to public support and to engage new partners through innovative economic and artistic synergies with the private sector. In addition, the criterion of entrepreneurship comes with a reduction in the amount of

subsidies. The Cultural Plan thus implies a change in the revenue-scheme of the cultural organizations.

Overall, the current cultural policies of Rotterdam stimulate an open reflection in several aspects of entrepreneurship. How do practitioners react to an institutional incentive? How do they adjust to a new financial environment? What opportunities do they perceive in adapting to the evolving competitive environment? What vision do they have of the future cultural sector? The cultural policies of Rotterdam unlock the heuristic process that the present research wishes to investigate.

According to the evaluation of the *Raad voor Kunst en Cultuur* (2011), the organizations operating in the performing arts have produced the most uninspiring reports. In addition, the performing arts organizations in the Netherlands have a long tradition of dependence on public subsidies. Therefore, this is the sector the present research concentrates on.

In-depth interviews attempt to elicit information about how practitioners put into practice the concept of entrepreneurship, how they perceive and react to their competitive environment and what their vision is of the future. The next chapter defines the research questions, the sample and the methods that drive the empirical analysis.

3 Aims and Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This thesis defines entrepreneurship as a heuristic decision process, in which opportunities are co-created by entrepreneurs' perceptions. In order to investigate entrepreneurship in the performing arts in Rotterdam, this research adopts a constructionist approach to take the practitioners' standpoint and investigate how the ideas that entrepreneurs have about themselves, their stakeholders and their products shape the opportunities and the visions they perceive and act on. The approach comes close to that of action research to the extent that the research aims at eliciting the information that the practitioners of the performing arts in Rotterdam omitted in the applications for the Cultural Plan 2013-2016⁷.

This chapter introduces methodology, research questions, research methods, samples, data collection and data analysis.

3.2 Methodology

Qualitative research is increasingly being applied in economics (Starr, 2014). Topics such as innovation, research and development have been tackled with a qualitative approach in order to evaluate the origin and typology of the information guiding the entrepreneurs. Starr (2014) reviews 34 empirical studies, whose aim is to provide “a full picture of the factors and processes (e.g. cognitive, social, informational) at work at respondent's thinking, as well as the opportunities and constraints present in the environment that shaped his perceptions, beliefs and behaviors” (Starr, 2014, p. 240).

In the field of entrepreneurship, the qualitative methods were first structurally addressed by the special issue of the *Journal of Business Venturing* in 2002 (Gartner & Birley, 2002). According to Gartner and Birley (2002), since the study of entrepreneurship means understanding the behavior of people in the business community, “many of the important questions in entrepreneurship can only be asked through qualitative methods and approaches” (Gartner & Birley, 2002, p. 387).

The qualitative approach for the study of entrepreneurship has been advocated in respect to cultural policy (Hesmondhalgh, 2005), urban entrepreneurialism (Evans, 2009) and art marketing (Hausmann, 2010). The qualitative approach has been specifically advocated to address

⁷ A short pre-research was conducted on the applications for the Cultural Plan 2013-16. Consistent with the evaluation of the *Raad voor Kunst en Cultuur* (2011), the documents often turned out to be unsatisfactory units of analysis for the study of entrepreneurship, thus discouraging the previously planned content analysis on them. In the Appendices (section 6.2.3) the pre-research is described in deeper detail in the framework of the cultural policy of Rotterdam.

entrepreneurship as a process, as the present research aims at doing. The following chart reports some of the contributions that the qualitative approach can bring to the understanding of entrepreneurship:

Table 2 - The Qualitative Approach to Entrepreneurship

Research / Scholar	Contribution
(Davidsson & Wiklund, 2001, p. 25)	“Acknowledging the risk of over extension, we would suggest that researchers regard entrepreneurship as a broad research domain concerned with novelty and value creation in the economy”.
(Busenitz et al., 2003, p. 303)	“We suggest that entrepreneurship scholars focus effort on the nexus of entrepreneurial opportunities, enterprising individuals or teams, and mode of organizing within the overall context of dynamic environment”.
(Bygrave, 2007, p. 17)	“Entrepreneurship is holistic and tends to decompose when the researchers try to break it into its components parts”.
(Neergaard & Ulhoi, 2007, p. 1, 4)	“Entrepreneurship is a phenomenon in constant flux, shaped by the behavior of entrepreneurs. (...) [Research must] develop concepts that enhance the understanding of social phenomena in natural settings, with natural emphasis on the meanings, experiences and views of all participants”.
(Minniti & Lévesque, 2008, p. 611)	“How changes in institutions and public policy influence entrepreneurial activity and the way people perceive their individual prospects”.

(Source: own elaboration)

Following these contributions, the present research tackles entrepreneurship by means of a constructionist approach to analyze entrepreneurship in the performing arts. Getting close to an action research approach (Leitch, 2007), the research is also expected to contribute to organize the knowledge that the practitioners have about entrepreneurship, so to improve the self-assessment of entrepreneurship that practitioners must sometimes perform, such as in the application for the Cultural Plan 2013-2016 of Rotterdam.

3.3 The Research Questions

The main research question steering the present research can be formulated as such:

RQ: “How is entrepreneurship, as a heuristic decision process, put into practice by the

practitioners in performing arts?”.

Consistent with the holistic approach outlined, this research attempts to tackle entrepreneurship as a process influenced by personal perceptions on any level – micro, meso, macro. However, in order to account for some of the recurrent levels of analysis of the literature of entrepreneurship, the heuristic process of entrepreneurship in the present research is broken down into the following sub-categories:

- 1) Entrepreneurship as an institutional incentive;
- 2) Entrepreneurship as an opportunity;
- 3) Entrepreneurship as a strategy;
- 4) Entrepreneurship as vision;

Operating these concepts for the performing arts in Rotterdam, the following set of sub-research questions guide the present research:

RQ 1: How did the practitioners in the cultural organizations in Rotterdam interpret the section about entrepreneurship in the applications for the Cultural Plan 2013-2016, merging personal perspective and official sources of information?

RQ 2: What opportunities for creating new cultural or economic value are practitioners in the performing arts perceiving and exploiting?

RQ 3: What are the organizational strategies that practitioners are undertaking to adjust to the lower level of subsidies and the opportunities they have perceived?

RQ 4: What is the vision of the cultural sector that practitioners see, based on their perceptions of the on-going trends?

In order to answer these questions, semi-structured interviews are individuated as the best research method. The contribution that in-depth interviews can give to the understanding of economic processes is discussed in the next paragraph.

3.4 Research Methods

Interviewing is the most commonly employed method in qualitative research (Bryman, 2008). Qualitative interviews can vary in flexibility – from unstructured to semi-structured –, but they both tend to foster a conversation, including “rambling” over one or more topics of interests to elicit how the interviewee elaborates on the topics. Qualitative interviews are very common when the research concerns the practitioners’ points of view:

“Open-ended and flexible questions are likely to get a more considered response than closed questions and therefore provide better access to interviewees’ views, interpretations of events, understandings, experiences and opinions. Therefore, this

approach tends to be used by those who come to an ontological position which values people's knowledge, values and experiences as meaningful and worthy of exploration" (Byrne, 2012, p. 182).

Interviews have become common research methods in economics since the 1960s, when the research recognized the relevance of information and uncertainty in explaining the behavior of economic players (Piore, 1979). Economics has become more and more interested in how actors acquire their knowledge. In this respect, open-ended interviews "are ways of discovering how economic participants think about the world. They are means, in other words, of identifying the model of the portion of the socioeconomic world which the participants themselves use in making decisions" (Piore, 1979, p. 566).

Interviews have been defined by Bewley (2002) as a means to explore the heart of economics, i.e. the process of decision making. "The most fundamental elements of economic life are the decisions made by its participants, and the basic components of these decisions are people's motives, the constraints they face, and how they go about achieving their objectives, given the constraints. (...) An obvious way to learn about motives, constraints, and the decision making process is to ask decision makers about them" (Bewley, 2002, p. 343). Since knowledge, information and perceptions are at the core of entrepreneurship, as it has been defined in the literature review, this research investigates entrepreneurship through in-depth interviews.

Semi-structured interviews are adopted in order to guide the interviewee through all the topics highlighted by the research questions. A semi-structured interview implies questions guided by pre-defined themes "to be covered during the interview to help direct the conversation towards the topics and issues about which the interviewers want to learn" (Qu & Dumay, 2011, p. 246). The topics of the semi-structured interviews in this research are commented on in the next paragraph.

3.5 The Design of the Interview

Following the four research questions of the present research, four topics structure the semi-structured interviews. Each topic matches the corresponding research question in the previous paragraph. All the topics were discussed with Marc Fonville, expert of the *Raad voor Kunst en Cultuur*, in order to evaluate their relevance for the performing arts organizations of Rotterdam.

Topic 1 – Entrepreneurship as an incentive. The interpretation of the application for the Cultural Plan 2013-2016.

This topic is the starting point of the interview. Practitioners are asked to go back to the time when they filled in the applications for the Cultural Plan 2013-2016. Questions address the sources

of information that the entrepreneurs adopted to complete the application (experts from the *Raad voor Kunst en Cultuur*, professional associations, peer community, personal background). The topic pertains the aims that practitioners attribute to entrepreneurship. In addition, practitioners are asked to reflect on entrepreneurship as a criterion in the Cultural Plan 2013-16. Questions investigate whether the concept of cultural entrepreneurship applies to the cultural sector, what entrepreneurship highlights and what it hides of common cultural practices.

Practitioners are left free to explain their concept of entrepreneurship.

Topic 2 – Entrepreneurship as an opportunity

This topic investigates the opportunities, if any, that practitioners perceive. The questions address the sources of economic and cultural values that practitioners exploit or plan to exploit in a near future. The process that practitioners undertake to access the opportunity is also investigated.

Practitioners are again free to explain the opportunities on their own.

Topic 3 – Entrepreneurship as a strategy

This topic tries to investigate the management strategies that organizations are applying or reflecting on. The conversation aims at enlightening how practitioners tackle management decisions and which aims and stakeholders drive their strategic decisions.

In this topic, practitioners are initially asked to comment on a chart. The chart is based on the economic literature concerning the impact of changes in the revenue-scheme for performing arts organizations (See section 2.6). Each line of the chart deals with one of the topics discussed in the literature, together with some related points that appear particularly relevant for performing arts organizations. These points are inspired by the literature and by the course on Economics of the Performing Arts given by professor Cees Langeveld, director of the Chasse Theatre in Breda.

This is the chart fostering the conversation:

Table 3 - Entrepreneurship as a Strategy

Subject	Points to be discussed
Output maximization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audience • Revenues • Quality • Number of Shows
Variation in spending patterns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None • Programming • Marketing

ELICITING VISIONS OF THE PERFORMING ARTS

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fund-raising • Human Resources
Cost reduction and organizational structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online media • Volunteer program • Shared services – collaborations with other theaters • Organizational Changes • Personnel Reduction
Programming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No variation • More experimental • More conventional • Specific niche productions (which? and why?)
Pricing, marketing, fund-raising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dynamic Pricing • Customer Relationship Management • Friends Scheme • Corporate Sponsorship • Merchandising • Ancillary Products? (Which ones?) • Stakeholder Management
Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers (increasing number or loyalty?) • Government (level?) • Foundations • Corporate Sponsors • Major Incumbents in the Performing Arts • Donors

(source: own elaboration)

Practitioners are free to extend the list and to consider some strategies irrelevant for their organizations. In both cases, questions investigate the cause of the phenomenon.

Topic 4 – Entrepreneurship as a vision

This topic invites the practitioners to outline their vision of the future. Reflecting on the previous part of the conversations, practitioners are asked about their “feelings” about future trends in the performing arts and the role of their organizations within these trends.

The semi-structured interviews defined by the present interview-guide were administrated to the performing arts practitioners of Rotterdam. The sample of the research is further discussed in the next section.

3.6 The Sample

This research analyzes entrepreneurship, focusing on the performing arts organizations that applied for the Cultural Plan 2013-2016 of the City Council of Rotterdam. The *Raad voor Kunst en Cultuur* (2011) labels the performing arts as “Dance, Theater and Stage” organizations. Including producing companies and organizations managing theater venues, the *Raad voor Kunst en Cultuur* includes the following list of 29 organizations⁸ in the category.

Among the companies managing theater venues are the following 14 organizations⁹:

- De Doelen Concert en Congresgebouw
- Gouvernestraat
- Jazzpodium Rotterdam Bird
- Lantaren Venster
- Laurenskerk
- Luxor Theater
- Rotown
- Rotterdam Wijktheater
- Theater Maatwerk
- Ro Theater (application in the coalition of Theater Rotterdam)
- Rotterdamse Scouwburg (application in the coalition of Theater Rotterdam)
- Theater Walhalla
- Theater Zuidplein
- Theater Netwerk Rotterdam (TNR)

The following 15 organizations among the producing companies:

- Bonheur Theaterbedrijf Rotterdam

⁸ The list of organizations was discussed with Marc Fonville, expert of the *Raad voor Kunst en Cultuur* in March 2014.

⁹ Several of the companies managing theatre venues are actually engaged in the production side as well.

- Circus Rotjeknor
- Conny Janssen Danst
- Danseateliers¹⁰
- Doelen Ensemble
- Hotel Modern
- Maas (coalition of the former organizations: Max, Meekers, Siberia)
- Nieuw Rotterdams Jazz Orkest
- Onafhankelijk Toneel / Opera OT
- Productiehuis Rotterdam (application in the coalition of Theater Rotterdam)
- Rotterdams Jeugd Symphonie Orkest
- Rotterdams Philharmonisch Orkest
- Scapino Ballet Rotterdam
- Sinfonia Rotterdam
- Wunderbaum (application in the coalition of Theater Rotterdam)

Bonheur Theaterbedrijf Rotterdam closed down in 2012. In addition, Circus Rotjeknor, Jazzpodium Rotterdam Bird, Lantaren Venster, Laurenskerk and Rotown have been taken out of the sample. Although subsidized as stages, these organizations appear not to have their core-business in the production and in the showing of live performances. One organization is a circus, one organization is affiliated to a religious institution, and the other companies are closer to disco-pubs and movie theaters.

As a result, in the sample relevant to the present research enters the following set of 23 organizations, are included. The following 10 organizations are among the companies managing theater venues:

- De Doelen Concert en Congresgebouw
- Gouvernestraat

¹⁰ Danseateliers is mainly focused on educational programs. The production house was dismissed at the beginning of the cultural plan. However, the organization aims at producing new talent.

- Luxor Theater
- Rotterdam Wijktheater
- Theater Maatwerk
- Ro Theater (application in the coalition of Theater Rotterdam)
- Rotterdamse Scouwburg (application in the coalition of Theater Rotterdam)
- Theater Netwerk Rotterdam (TNR)
- Theater Walhalla
- Theater Zuidplein

The following 13 organizations are among the producing companies:

- Conny Janssen Danst
- Danseateliers¹¹
- Doelen Ensemble
- Hotel Modern
- Maas (coalition of the former organizations: Max, Meekers, Siberia)
- Nieuw Rotterdams Jazz Orkest
- Onafhankelijk Toneel / Opera OT
- Productiehuis Rotterdam (application in the coalition of Theater Rotterdam)
- Rotterdams Jeugd Symphonie Orkest
- Rotterdams Philharmonisch Orkest
- Scapino Ballet Rotterdam
- Sinfonia Rotterdam
- Wunderbaum (application in the coalition of Theater Rotterdam)

In April 2014, the organizations on the lists were contacted and invited to collaborate in the research about entrepreneurship in the performing arts. First, an email was sent to all the

¹¹ Danseateliers is mainly focused in educational programs. The production house was dismissed at the beginning of the cultural plan. However, the organization aims at producing new talents.

organizations, including the general address and the general manager's address if available¹². The email stated (1) the affiliation to the Erasmus University and the master's in Cultural Economics and Entrepreneurship (the name and the email contact of the supervisor Mariangela Lavanga were provided); (2) the topic of the research, outlining the relevance of the practitioners' perspective; (3) the collaboration with the *Raad voor Kunst en Cultuur* (the name and the contacts of Marc Fonville were provided); (4) and the expected utility to improve the interaction between city council and practitioners in the assessment of entrepreneurship within the Cultural Plan.

About one week after the email was sent, the organizations that had not replied were followed-up by phone and sometimes the original mail was forwarded to the personal assistant of the general manager. Following the invitation, 10 organizations – 5 organizations managing theater venues and five producing companies – made themselves available to participate in an interview within a time frame compatible with the deadlines of the present research. Among the organizations, the companies managing theater venues were:

- De Doelen Concert en Congresgebouw
- Rotterdam Wijktheater
- Ro Theater
- Theater Netwerk Rotterdam (TNR)
- Theater Zuidplein

And the producing companies were:

- Conny Janssen Danst
- Danseateliers
- Doelen Ensemble
- Sinfonia Rotterdam
- Wunderbaum

Together, they include major halls of national relevance, such as De Doelen Concert en Congresgebouw; volunteer-based organizations focusing on amateur development, such as Theater Maatwerk; educational institutions centered around talent development, such as Danseateliers; venues focusing on an underserved public, such as Theater Zuidplein; small ensembles specializing

¹² An example of the email is in the Appendices (section 6.3.1)

in niche productions, such as De Doelen Ensemble; orchestras operating on an international level, such as Sinfonia Rotterdam; and medium-size organizations experimenting with new forms of collaboration, such as Ro Theater, Wunderbaum and Schouwburg, sharing several functions under the banner of Theater Rotterdam.

The sample expresses a high level of variety. However, according to Bewley (2002) variety highlights the connections between the responses and the various circumstances framing the respondents. In addition, this variety is the outcome of the purpose sampling (Bryman, 2008) designed to capture the variety intrinsic to the organizations applying for the Cultural Plan 2013-2016 of Rotterdam.

In qualitative research, informants must be people who are as knowledgeable as possible about the topic of the research (Bernard, 2002; Bewley, 2002; Bryman, 2008; Piore, 1979). Since entrepreneurship is a process encompassing the strategic decisions of the organizations, general managers were identified as the best respondents. As Helper (2000) points out, “high-level people will provide an overview of the firm’s intended strategy” (Helper, 2000, p. 230). As a result, the interviews were carried out with the general managers of the organizations. The only exception is Theater Netwerk. In this case the theater consultant fulfilled the task.

The next section deals with how the interviews were administered and the data collected.

3.7 Data Collecting

The interviews were carried out between April, the 11th and May the 21st 2014¹³. Before the interview, each manager had been sent an email outlining the topics to be discussed¹⁴. The email slightly varied in format, depending on the organization and the level of formality of the interaction. However, the main core of text invited them to make a personal contribution to the four topics outlined in the section concerning the design of the interview.

In addition, before the interview, extra information about the organization had been collected by the evaluation that the *Raad voor Kunst en Cultuur* (2011) had given about the application submitted for the Cultural Plan 2013-2016. The evaluation reports the number of visitors, the turnover, the share of earned income, the subsidies (local and national). Finally, before the interview, the data about the level of subsidies received by the organizations during the last two Cultural Plans had been collected in order to see the direct impact on the sample of budget cuts. The

¹³ A chart with date and location of the interview is set out in the Appendices (section 6.4).

¹⁴ An example of the email sent to the interviewee is set out in the Appendices (section 6.3.26.3.2).

overall variation for the sample of the present research is -13.71%¹⁵.

This set of information was used to customize the questions and make them relevant to the interviewees (Bryman, 2008). “It is wise to keep the discussion as concrete as possible, by requesting specific examples and by confining the discussion to the realm of the informant's experience” (Bewley, 2002, p. 346).

All the interviews were carried out in person at the headquarters of each organization¹⁶. The conversations lasted from forty seven minutes to one hour and forty minutes. The sequence of the topics discussed in the interview-guide was preserved as much as possible. Mostly, the respondents were left free to follow his stream of ideas. Only when the example was too detailed or out of focus, the subject was postponed to a following part of the interview.

Hand notes were taken along the interview to keep track of the main points that were elaborated by the interviewee. However, all the interviews were digitally recorded to make possible a full transcription of the conversation.

The interviews were carried out in English. Although the shift from the mother tongue to a foreign idiom may have eliminated some nuances, English is a familiar language throughout the Netherlands. Moreover, as several respondents explained, framing entrepreneurship in English allowed them to reflect more critically on strategic decisions and processes that, in Dutch, tend to be automatic and therefore remain in the managers' subconscious.

3.8 Data Analysis

The transcriptions of the qualitative interviews have been coded. Coding is a common procedure of data analysis in qualitative research. “Coding is the process of organizing the material into chunks or segments of text before bringing meaning to information (Rossman & Rallis, 1998, p. 171). Coding allows data to be “segregated, grouped, regrouped and relinked in order to consolidate meanings and explanation” (Grbich, 2012, p. 17). Coding “leads you from the data to the idea, and from the idea to the all the data pertaining to that idea” (Richards & Morse, 2007, p. 137). Coding is frequently used in qualitative research, because it emphasizes uniformity or an interesting diversion from the pattern for the researcher:

“My experience has been that there is a surprising amount of uniformity among the explanations of informants in similar circumstances. It is impossible to say whether

¹⁵ The chart reporting the variation for each organization is in the Appendices (section 6.2.4)

¹⁶ The only exception is the interview with De Doelen Ensemble, which was carried out at the Manhattan Hotel.

the uniformity is due to the logics of the circumstances or to the culture of the business community or of particular industries, but the uniformity is real. Disagreement does exist, however, and it usually reflects the ambiguity as to what correct decisions are. Because the economic world is full of imponderables, it is not always clear how to maximize profits or best to protect the interests of businesses” (Bewley, 2002, p. 348).

According to Seale (2012), coding points out the uniformity of the respondents following three main steps that interact with each other: (1) the analysis of the original data to individuate the portions of text referring to the main themes; (2) the analysis of the themes to identify the main narratives; (3) and an interpretation of themes and narratives in relation to the literature.

The data analysis in the present research followed these steps. First, for each section-topic of the interview, the main chunks of text were individuated and selected¹⁷. Then, the segments of text were aggregated into themes. Themes for each section were defined, reflecting on keywords of the participants¹⁸ and on the main points discussed in the literature. Then, all the themes were finally analyzed to define the main narratives.

The data analysis was carried out with Nvivo, a computer-software for assisted qualitative data analysis. The software allows the defining of a hierarchical structures of nodes (themes) and sub-nodes (sub-themes) and to copy and paste the selected segments of text into one or more relevant nodes-themes.

As main nodes in Nvivo, the following four topics of the research were used:

- entrepreneurship as an institutional incentive;
- entrepreneurship as an opportunity,
- entrepreneurship as a strategy;
- entrepreneurship as a vision;

Then, within each main node, a hierarchy of sub-nodes was defined to reflect the themes discussed. The chunks of text were aggregated within the sub-nodes.

¹⁷ The segments of text were aggregated in relation to the section of the interview in which they were provided. However, when a segment appeared particularly relevant to a topic, it was included among the segments relevant to that topic even if it belonged to another section of the interview.

¹⁸ The keywords were individuated by running word-frequency analysis. On average, the research was narrowed down to the ten most recurring words of at least 5 or 6 characters in length.

Analyzing the segments of coded text, the software automatically indicates how many respondents and references are clustered in the nodes, thus showing the most representative ones. Moreover, word-frequency analysis was carried out in the nodes to identify the keywords relevant to the theme. Finally, carrying out a word proximity analysis, the nodes-themes were organized into a three-diagram. This diagram was used to reflect on the main narratives discussed by the respondents.

3.9 Limitations and Expectations

Two main criteria assess the quality of qualitative research: reliability and validity (Silverman, 1993; Seale, 2012). Reliability indicates the consistency with which the instances of one phenomenon have been aggregated within the same category. Validity indicates the accuracy with which the data account for the phenomena they describe.

Reliability and validity are tackled by triangulating the data (gathering data from different sources) or by verifying the results with an external advisor (Silverman, 1993). The time span given for the present research did not allow for these procedures. However, some steps were undertaken to tackle the limitations of the qualitative methods.

The use of Nvivo helps to improve the level of reliability. The word frequency analysis and the word proximity analysis help to support the aggregation of the data with statistical overview. Moreover, in order to guarantee the “fairness” of the coding (Wigren, 2007), minor themes were even aggregated, therefore expressing the variety of the responses about a topic.

Furthermore, the validity of qualitative research is threatened by biases affecting respondents and interviewer (Bryman, 2001). Respondents may suffer political biases (Qu & Dumay, 2011). In the present study, for example, the respondents may have answered strategically, due to the collaboration of the interviewee with the *Raad voor Kunst en Cultuur*. The collaboration with the city council was presented in the introduction, along with the professional and educational background of the interviewer. Moreover, the first topic of the interview was related to the application for the Cultural Plan 2013-16. However, the interviews evolved into long conversations and examples and comments about on-going projects were encouraged to increase the validity of the data. To the same extent, the respondents were given the freedom to explore, criticize or expand on the topics of the interview in an effort to minimize any form of bias on the part of the interviewer.

Despite these limitations, the qualitative approach has been selected to generate a “holistic account” of entrepreneurship (Seale, 2012, p. 176) that the applications for the Cultural Plan 2013-

16 do not contain. The interaction that the interview generates may indeed contribute in eliciting the knowledge that formal procedures could limit.

3.10 Academic and Societal Relevance

The expected results are relevant both for entrepreneurship, as a field of research, and for stakeholders engaged in entrepreneurial policy. From an academic perspective, the literature on cultural entrepreneurship has stressed the relevance of the visions that entrepreneurs create. The qualitative approach of the present research can substantiate the aim of this vision and its role in the creation of value.

Moreover, the results may help to improve the interaction among administrators, experts and practitioners, when entrepreneurship is used as a criterion for the allocation of structural funds. On the one hand, along the interview, practitioners may organize their knowledge about entrepreneurship. On the other hand, knowing the strategic priorities of practitioners, cultural policy experts can better customize criteria, procedures and parameters to the dynamics of the cultural sector.

3.11 Conclusions

This research deals with entrepreneurship as a heuristic decision-making process. The qualitative approach is undertaken to capture the phenomenon of entrepreneurship from a holistic perspective and to elicit from practitioners in the performing arts the information that formal procedures failed to achieve. The literature review indicated four main topics to be analyzed: entrepreneurship as an institutional incentive; entrepreneurship as an opportunity, entrepreneurship as a strategy; and entrepreneurship as a vision. These four topics informed the semi-structured interviews with the practitioners in the performing arts organizations of Rotterdam that applied for the Cultural Plan 2013-16.

Ten interviews with the general managers of the organizations were carried out between April and May 2014. The interviews were fully transcribed and coded with the help of Nvivo, a qualitative analysis computer-software. Through the coding, the main themes and the main narratives outlined by the respondents were investigated.

The next chapter discusses the results of the data analysis.

4 Results

4.1 Introduction

This section presents the results of the empirical research on entrepreneurship conducted among practitioners of the performing arts in Rotterdam. First, the chapter comments on the themes that the respondents have discussed concerning each section of the in-depth interviews. Each section corresponds to one of the sub-research questions guiding the research. The themes are then organized in the main narratives. Elaborating on these narratives, the final section provides some hints to understand how the respondents dealt with the criterion of entrepreneurship in the Cultural Plan 2013-16 of Rotterdam.

The number of respondents aggregated in each theme is reported in the text or as a number in parenthesis. The reported keywords are extracted out of the ten most frequent words used in the nodes (words of 5 or 6 characters lengths in length, depending on the node). The quotations supporting the main themes have been slightly modified grammatically and orthographically to make the verbal language easier for the reader. The original transcripts can be viewed in the attached CD-ROM.

4.2 Entrepreneurship as an Institutional Incentive

The practitioners were initially asked to frame the sources of information that they had adopted for filling in the section about entrepreneurship in the application for the Cultural Plan 2013-2016. The respondents were invited to reflect on their personal perspective on entrepreneurship and to comment on entrepreneurship as a criterion for the allocation of the public funds. The present section reports the themes highlighted in these two respects.

4.2.1 Entrepreneurship: a Personal Perspective

“Market”, “Audience”, “People”, “Society”, “Knowledge” are the recurrent keywords that the practitioners adopt when they describe themselves as cultural entrepreneurs. Consistently with Aageson (2008) and Klamer (2011), the respondents describe entrepreneurship as the creation of a vision to engage investors, donors, customers, administrators. On the one hand, the engagement is expressed as a direct “Audience-Market Orientation” (7). Through words, such as “Market” and “Audience”, the interviewees discuss product differentiation, positioning on the market and customer driven productions:

- “I always think that you make theater for an audience. Whom am I making this for? Where can I reach these people?”. Saying that you were taking care of an audience while making your production was almost a dirty word”

(Heleen Hemeete).

- “He's always thinking about “How can I interest my sponsors?”, “How can I keep my business club happy?”. So he's an entrepreneur” (Carola Heeremans).

However, most of the respondents (7) express the concept in a broader perspective. As Gray (2007) observes, in the contemporary political framework, the cultural organizations are invited to prove their social and economic relevance. The practitioners talk about the “Social Role” (7) of the performing arts and bring in words such as “network”, “together”, “create”, “happen”. The role of culture, in general, and the role of the single organizations are both discussed:

- “I think entrepreneurship is the outcome of the whole discussion about arts. If arts is necessary” (Mirjam Veldhuijzen van Zanten).
- “How do we reach people? How do we reach out to the community? How do we prove that we are worth the money invested in our company?” (Erik Pals).

In order to relate to the market and society, the respondents describe the entrepreneurial process (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000; Sarason et al., 2006), referring to a set of related themes: “Risk Taking” (2), “Achieve-Means to an End” (5) and “Networking-Co-creation” (4).

Two respondents explicitly mention the uncertainty about the future as elaborated by Kirzner (1997):

“I think entrepreneurship in itself is a good word, because you can show that you are interested in taking steps into unknown terrains. (...) Entrepreneurship means, I think, the will to take steps that are new with a measurable risk” (Maarten Van Veen).

Five respondents define entrepreneurship as a “Means to an end”, a set of practices that they undertake to “achieve” the main cultural goals of the organizations. “Achieve” is a recurrent word in this section of the interviews. In this respect, the practitioners stress the priority of the cultural values over the economic values, as discussed by Klamer (2011). In addition, they support Hughes and Luksetisch (2004) when they indicate that a higher entrepreneurial orientation is accompanied by a higher level of investment in the organization’s main mission:

“We are entrepreneurs in means, the way we do things, but we are not entrepreneurs in the goals that we try to achieve. The goal that we try to achieve is very much -

well, I speak for myself - driven by the values that I want to create in a city like Rotterdam” (Gabriel Oostvogel).

Four respondents stress the uniqueness of cultural management, a creation through a “Value network” rather than a value chain (Bilton, 2006). Respondents talk about “Networking and Co-creation”, saying words such as “network”, “together”, “discussion”. Although entrepreneurship is accused of having squeezed out free transactions in the cultural sector (1), entrepreneurship is generally well accepted as a label and networking is reported as the core of cultural entrepreneurship:

“A few years ago, Conny and I said to each other that we had to invest in our network in the city of Rotterdam. That was our political network, a network within the city council, a business network in our art sector, our colleagues. It wasn't that we hadn't a good network before, but we realized that it could be better” (Thomas Smit).

Summing up, the respondents consider entrepreneurship as a dynamic process, aimed at engaging audiences and positioning culture and cultural organizations in society. Such a process evolves with measurable risks and interest-based collaborations.

This social dimension seems the one missing on entrepreneurship as a criterion. Confirming what Bilton (2006) points out, entrepreneurship, as a criterion in the Cultural Plan 2013-16 of Rotterdam, is perceived by the interviewees as a restrictive managerial set of indicators.

4.2.2 Entrepreneurship as a Criterion

Commenting on entrepreneurship as a criterion in the policy of the local City Council, most of the respondents (6) agree that entrepreneurship has a “Narrow financial scope”. Despite the advice on entrepreneurship released by the *Raad voor Kunst en Cultuur* (2010) invites to explore the concept of entrepreneurship as a business and artistic creativity, the practitioners in the performing arts tend to interpret the criterion only as the ability to gather private revenues:

- “Sadly, in the cultural sector, it's mainly seen as trying to develop income outside of subsidies. That's a very narrow interpretation of the term entrepreneurship” (Gabriel Oostvogel).
- “Well, I think that, at the time, cultural entrepreneurship was only taken as a business model. If I am a good entrepreneur, it means that I have a good business model. It means that I know how to earn, how to generate income other than through the usual funding bodies and by having a successful piece

that I can sell” (Kristin de Groot).

Two main aspects appear to be problematic from the respondents’ perspective. On the one hand, the invitation to collaborate solicited by the government is perceived to be too close to standard business practices, thus overemphasizing shared back-office services over creative dynamics (Bilton, 2006; Scott, 2010). Four respondents complain about “Collaboration as management”:

“What the government sometimes wants you to do is for you to merge with another organization and you share one marketing employee. There’s more. You feel that that company is good - they have a technician and we have some money from marketing - so you join and you have a production together. That is the way we deal with it” (Heleen Hemeete).

On the other hand, the criterion for entrepreneurship triggers a feeling of redundancy. The respondents feel as if they had “always been entrepreneurs” (4) in the sense of acting for financial independence. Entrepreneurship is reported as a fashion that has made popular the struggle for financial independence that used to be hidden:

“There's a remark I'd love to make. We are an entrepreneurial orchestra, we have always been. In the beginning, people were looking down on that. Our classic and wine concept, people thought lowly of that” (Carola Heeremans).

To sum up, entrepreneurship as a criterion means financial independence from subsidies and sharing back office services, with little concern for cultural goals and organizational identities. Taking the assessment of entrepreneurship as redundant, the respondents tended to comment on it by reporting on previous achievements of the organization. This may contribute to the explanation as to why, in the applications for the Cultural Plan 2013-16, the section about entrepreneurship presented little vision of the future (*Raad voor Kunst en Cultuur*, 2011).

Reflection on the future seems to be stimulated more by the concept of opportunity. The themes highlighted by the respondents talking about opportunities are discussed in the next section.

4.3 Entrepreneurship as an Opportunity

As a second step in the interview, the practitioners were asked to reflect on the perceived opportunities to create economic and/or cultural values (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000). According to Hughes and Luksetisch (2004), when organizations address higher commercial incomes, they tend to work harder in the definition of the main mission. The respondents confirm this expectation.

The interviewees deal with the perceived opportunities, reflecting on the *raison d'être* of the performing arts.

In term of themes, all the respondents (9) refer to “Community building”. The top ten words used by the respondents to highlight this concept include “people”, “public”, “friends”, “audience”, “community”, “connection”, “family”, “members”. Several networks are discussed. Business networks that can lead to future sponsorships or in-kind donations. Opinion leaders that can introduce to new segments of audiences. Family networks that can expand existing audiences. Social artistic creations that can bring in the public from the early steps of a production. At the core of each network, there is the construction of a trustworthy relationship to favor future spin-offs. A few examples of this central concept are as follows:

- “We perform in strange locations, at strange moments. We can reach new a new public thanks to it. That might be dancing at a dinner for the all the people working in the harbor, the opening of the new station of Rotterdam, but also the opening of a new apartment building or a kind of special night for students. It's very broad” (Thomas Smit).
- “Eighty percent of our public are made of friends and family. That is where we are trying to find an extra public. For example, if you are working in a company, you can ask your colleagues to come to the theater. That happens more and more” (Mirjam Veldhuijzen van Zanten).
- “The fact that those 12 women from all over the world came together in Holland created a very special theater production. For us, that was a perfect way to reach their families, their friends, their communities” (Erik Pals).
- “It's matter of building relationships and getting to know each other very well. They have to trust us as well. They have to learn that our productions are really for them” (Heleen Heemete).
- “Kris, I feel so enclosed in the studio, I want to be of use to the community again, I want to engage the community in my work, because I'm convinced that that process can also nourish my artwork” (Kristin de Groot).

In order to enhance this relationship with society, four respondents see an opportunity in the extra information that can be provided about the event extending it over the traditional live show on the stage. According to the interviewees, the extras are mainly aimed at breaking down the barrier between producers and consumers. The composers as well as the performers are invited to close the gap between the stage and the audience. Referring to Bilton (2006), the practitioners seem to

operate holistically through the value-chain, shifting the emphasis from the content to the overall experience:

“We want to enhance the musical experience of the visitor. That will eventually turn into our second business. The live concert is one, but the musical information and the musical experience will be the second. (...) That is a marketing concept, but it's also a business concept and, in the end, an artistic concept” (Gabriel Oostvogel).

Summing up, entrepreneurship as an opportunity is put into practice in terms of social networking. The practitioners describe themselves as people enhancing the social relevance of the performing arts. The extra information appears to be one of the sources to activate such a relationship with society.

This attention to the whole production process emerges as well, when the respondents comment on entrepreneurship as a strategy. This is the topic of the following section.

4.4 Entrepreneurship as a Strategy

In this section of the interview, the practitioners were provided with a chart containing a list of the organizational aspects and strategies that are normally affected when nonprofit art organizations cope with a change in the revenue-scheme. The following topics were discussed: output maximization, spending patterns, organizational structure, programming, pricing, marketing, fund-raising and stakeholders.

The respondents express a variety of orientations, respecting the variety in size and mission of the organizations in the research sample. What is interesting, however, is that, when commenting on the on-going organizational dynamics, the interviewees confirm the main themes expressed reflecting on entrepreneurship in terms of personal perspective and opportunities. The respondents restate the “Audience-orientation” (8), the focus on “Networking and connections” (6) and the relevance of the “Overall production process” (4). The ten most recurring words in this section of the interview include “people”, “audience”, “marketing”, “experimental”, “location” and “connected”. Finally, the majority of the practitioners outline the cost-benefit mentality that is fostered by an increased relevance of commercial income (Froelich, 1999; Kirchner et al. 2007).

Froelich (1999) and Kirchner (Kirchner et al., 2007) suggest that higher level of commercial income in the non-profit arts organizations come along with autonomy, flexibility, financial health and cost-benefit mentality. The interviewees confirm this expectation. Dealing with topics such as collaborations (1), human resources (1), programming (1), volunteering (2), merchandising (3) and, above all, fund-raising (6), most of the respondents (7) elaborate cost-benefit analysis referring to

the operating costs and the competitive environment:

- “A friend-scheme. Well, we have friends, but we think there is more investment on our side than a gain. So we have no focus on that” (Carola Hereemans).
- “All the cultural organizations, they are all competing, and it's not only culture, it's also education, like schools, universities and also healthcare, like hospitals. Companies go crazy with all the requests for sponsorship they receive” (Erik Pals).

Selecting the strategies to undertake that the budget allows, most of the respondents (8) save the investments that promise to be more effective in audience generation. In this respect, the trends tend to diverge from the literature. Kirchner (Kirchner et al., 2007) affirms that a higher level of subsidies determines a higher level of marketing investment to increase the visibility of the organization. On the contrary, in the sample of the present research, the investment on marketing accompanies a decrease in public support. Six respondents indicate that the expenditure in marketing has been kept at the same level or even increased, despite the budget cuts.

The trend can probably be explained by the need to generate the attention and the word of mouth that the social networking requires in order to be fueled. The topic of social networking, already discussed in the previous paragraph, emerges again when the interviewees comment on their organizational strategies. Six respondents point at “Networking and connections”:

“Not business companies specifically, it's broader. I think that's again the main thing of this company. We want to build a network that we hope - but we almost know for sure - that from that network there will be some results. That can be financially, but also in barter or relations or whatever” (Thomas Smit).

In order to enhance the networking, four respondents talk about “Inviting people to the process”:

- “We already programmed an event in a little theater, where we invited people to talk with us. We are going to make a documentary film and we are going to look for a location to make it. We asked them to brainstorm with us about the location” (Maartje van Doodewaard).
- “I think that the workshop format is nice because people feel so engaged in the work and they understand from an experience level, from a sensorial level, what the eventual product is about. It's not only about seeing those two

people on stage, but also understanding what they are doing on stage”
(Kristin de Groot).

Discussing entrepreneurship as a strategy, the respondents seem to diverge from the general expectations of the literature, also in terms of programming orientation. According to Di Maggio and Stenberg (1985) and O’Hagan and Neligan (2005), lower level of subsidies and a higher level of market dependence favor conventional programming. The authors describe conventionality as the adoption of the mainstream classic repertoire. A couple of respondents indicate this outcome throughout the interviews¹⁹, but four respondents seem in fact to investigate new repertoire for targeting different niches of the public. The need to engage the audience determines “Customized programming” rather than program conventionality:

“We are trying to stimulate the artists to work multidisciplinary and to work on a theme, not all the time Romeo and Juliet, but something that is more experimental or something that is really thought for an audience. You can also make a theater play for a special group, and then you can sell it. A play for the school or a play for elderly people and that helps” (Mirjam Veldhuijzen van Zanten).

Summing up, the practitioners put entrepreneurship as a strategy into practice in terms of cost-benefit analysis and audience orientation. The audience orientation is expressed as a direct marketing investment and as customized programming.

The influence of the competitive environment on programming is also the main topic discussed when the practitioners elaborate on their vision. The vision of the future is analyzed in the next paragraph.

4.5 Entrepreneurship as a Vision

In this section of the interview, the respondents were asked to reflect on their previous contributions of the interview in order to provide a vision of the future. In this vision, they were invited to reflect on the evolution of the performing arts.

Some respondents talk about “Market competition” (3). Consistent with the conclusions of Werk (Werk et al. 2008), the interviewees foresee a sector with fewer organizations and smaller productions. However, the main topic discussed by the respondents is programming.

In relation to the future of programming, European collaborations (3) and total integration

¹⁹ Concern about the future of programming is expressed by six respondents talking about the function of “talent development”.

between marketing (2) are mentioned as strategic opportunities. However, in line with the previous paragraphs, the most recurring theme concerning the future of programming is “Networking” (7). “Available” and “network” appear among the top ten words of the topic, along with “people”, “audience” and “marketing”. The theater as a building is successful when it turns into an “arena of knowledge” (Gabriel Oostvogel) and the production is successful when it succeeds in “building up a relationship” (Erik Pals):

- “I think that the way people go to the theater may change as a result of how this new generation of makers engages with the audience. It's so different from before. They want to have a dialogue. They want to have an exchange of thoughts, ideas, impressions and experiences” (Kristin de Groot).
- “You have to relate to society. I think that the companies, the producing companies but also the venues, they have to relate to society” (Heleen Heemete).
- “What we want to be is the musical guide for everybody. We want to be the center of excellence, and knowledge, and guidance, and pleasure, and happiness, and fun, to establish bonds with people” (Gabriel Oostvogel).
- It is because he lives there, it is personal work. That's why it works so well. He is what he's doing. That is where the future is going to. That is where the people who really want to make arts are going to” (Mirjam Veldhuijzen van Zanten).

The respondents enhance the concept of creation through the value-chain already discussed in the previous section (Bilton, 2006). In the vision of the practitioners, the consumer experience and the content production merge down into a shared production process.

Summing up, the practitioners put entrepreneurship as a vision into practice in terms of market selection and new ways of producing. The market pressure as a threat and the networking as an opportunity are the forces driving the performing arts towards a higher level of social engagement.

Social engagement is the main topic throughout the entire data set as well. The main narratives are discussed in the next section.

4.6 The Main Narrative: Entrepreneurship as Social Accountability

The previous paragraphs have shown the main themes for each section of the interview. Throughout the four topics of the semi-structured interviews, the information has been clustered

under 17 themes. Each of these themes represents a node in Nvivo, the software used for the data analysis. The software allows the organization of the nodes according to the word-proximity of the text they contain. Carrying out such an analysis across all the nodes defined by the present research, thus the following diagram emerges:

Figure 1 - Themes organized for word proximity



(source: own elaboration)

Focusing on the routes where two main branches of the diagram converge, the graph outlines three central nodes. Each node defines a main narrative.

The top node clusters the themes dealing with the social engagement within the production process. The themes derive from the conversations about vision and opportunities. They portray the production process as a source for the producers to cluster the attention of the audience from the early stages of the artistic work. As a result of the market-social orientation, the relevance of the artistic production results as a dependent variable of the ability of the topic and the producer to engage a community. This node can be labelled as the narrative of “Social Production”.

The bottom node clusters the themes dealing with the personal perspectives on entrepreneurship. The practitioners indicate their main mission in the enhancement of the social role of their organizations. In this framework, the peer-to-peer collaborations are reported as a support to networking if they come from the need to co-create, while the result is problematic if they are based on pure managerial goals. This node can be labelled as the narrative of “Role in Society”.

The central node aggregates the themes describing entrepreneurship as a set of financial and managerial practices. The themes put entrepreneurship in the framework of market competition and

cost-benefit mentality. In this framework, entrepreneurship expresses good business practices supporting the strategic goals of the organizations. This node can be labelled as the narrative of “Management”.

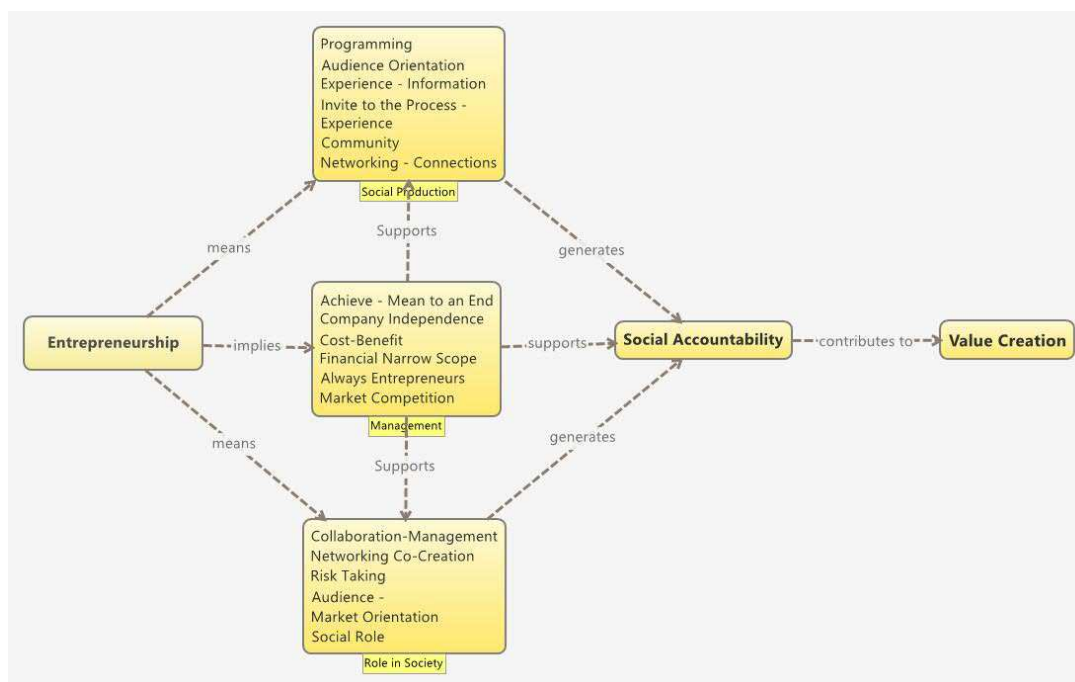
Summing up, the main narratives show how the practitioners put entrepreneurship into practice in the performing arts. Entrepreneurship implies effective management and cost-benefit analysis. However, traditional management is not at the core of cultural entrepreneurship. The practitioners perceive their main goal in the creation of new forms of social productions enhancing the social role of the performing arts organizations. The respondents open up the entire production process to generate new opportunities for engaging the audience in the live performance and account for the social value of the performing arts.

Direct revenues are hardly ever mentioned in this process of social accountability. Nonetheless, the social accountability emerges as the main source of value. No matter if the practitioners are market or political entrepreneurs (Folsom, 2003), the social accountability of the organization is the main goal. Proving that the organization is socially relevant for a group, it is the starting point for pursuing revenues from public and private sources.

The implied business model reminds the two-sided market of online distributors. In the online distribution, free content clusters the users, whose attention is then sold to the advertisers (Handke, Stepan & Towse, forthcoming). In the performing arts, the increasing number of events of activities generate the visibility that is exploited to attract donors, sponsors and major incumbents, or to legitimize the public support in term of city branding (major institutions), social cohesion (community art) and artistic creativity (niche producers).

The main narratives can be summarized as follows:

Figure 2 - Entrepreneurship as Social Accountability



(source: own elaboration)

In this framework, entrepreneurship in the Cultural Plan 2013-16 emerges as a criterion that overemphasizes the relevance of managerial practices over strategic goals. The topic is further discussed in the next paragraph.

4.7 Entrepreneurship as a Criterion: Management over Strategy

Commenting on entrepreneurship as a criterion in the Cultural Plan 2013-16, the respondents outline three main themes. First, they point at the “Financial narrow scope” of the criterion. This theme is close to the theme “Cost-benefit mentality” as expressed when commenting on the strategies. Second, they affirm the long term commitment to entrepreneurship (“Always entrepreneurs”). This theme reflects “Market Competition” as expressed when commenting on the vision. Finally, they criticize the “Collaborations as management”. This theme contrasts with the theme “Networking-Co-creation” as expressed when commenting on the personal perspective on entrepreneurship. In all, the themes cluster around the box “management” in the scheme of Figure 2.

According to the respondents, therefore, entrepreneurship as a criterion refers to managerial themes that are implied by their personal vision of entrepreneurship, but which miss the strategic aims of the performing arts. This juxtaposition reflects the issue that Bilton (2006) identifies across cultural policies in general. The logic of the policies tends to converge either on financial accountability or in pure for-profit logic. On the contrary, the cultural sector relies on specific social dynamics of creation that often evolves during random spin-offs.

Exploring alternative criteria for the allocation of public funds exceeds the scope of the present research. Nonetheless, the analysis provides some hints for improvement.

First, since social accountability emerges as the main theme throughout interviews with the practitioners, the concept should deserve a more detailed assessment. The advice on entrepreneurship published by the *Raad voor Kunst en Cultuur* (2010) frames entrepreneurship as business and artistic creativity. The financial performances, though, are the only ones assessed with the use of a parameter. Indicators of the social accountability of an organization may contribute to bringing the criterion of entrepreneurship closer to the practitioners' expectations. Among the indicators already in use, the position in the ranking of the 50 top cultural institutions accomplishes this role for the major incumbents. Similar indicators may developed to assess the social role of the organizations operating in ethnic and artistic niches.

In addition, entrepreneurship does not seem the best keyword to elicit the vision of the future that entrepreneurship as a criterion was meant to foster (*Raad voor Kunst en Cultuur*, 2010). The respondents show a propensity to begin their report on entrepreneurship through summaries of the organization's evolution. Other keywords appear more efficient to trigger future oriented reflections. According to the present research, for example, valuable alternatives could be keywords such as "opportunity" and "vision".

To sum up, entrepreneurship as a criterion in the Cultural Plan 2013-16 is put into practice in terms of management practices. This may help to explain the lack of vision of the future in the applications discussed by the report of the *Raad voor Kunst en Cultuur* (2011). The introduction of new keywords and the adoption of measurements for the social accountability of the applying organizations may help to elicit richer information and reduce the gap between the public procedures and the strategic orientations of the applicants.

4.8 Conclusions

This chapter has analyzed the themes outlined by the respondents discussing entrepreneurship as an institutional incentive, as an opportunity, as a strategy and as a vision. In the four sections of the interviews, the interviewees talk about seventeen themes. Together, the themes cluster along three main narratives: management, social production and social role. Therefore, entrepreneurship in the performing arts results as a set of traditional business procedures that support new forms of social production designed to stress the role of the performing arts in society. Overall, entrepreneurship consists in a networking process aimed at providing social accountability for the performing arts.

The relevance of social accountability triggers some questions. How is the process that

generates social accountability converted into a sustainable business model by the various types of organizations? How does this process affect the theater makers? These questions are addressed in the conclusions of the thesis.

5 Conclusions

5.1 Introduction

This thesis has investigated how entrepreneurship is put into practice in the performing arts. A qualitative approach has been undertaken in order to identify the standpoint of the practitioners and to study the opportunities that the people in field perceive and contribute for creating them. Ten in-depth interviews with managers of the performing arts organizations in Rotterdam have attempted to elicit a vision of the future of the performing arts, stimulating a reflection on entrepreneurship as a criterion for the public policy, as an opportunity and as a strategy.

The present section summarizes the main findings, comments on the limitations of the results and suggests avenues for further research.

5.2 Main Findings: Creating Value through Network and Process

The Austrian School of Economics has introduced the concept of entrepreneurship to stress the role of knowledge in economics (Kirzner, 1993). Kirzner (1997) argues that the players in the market create business opportunities by perceiving missing information and generate knowledge through interaction. Entrepreneurship is a process that is rooted in the asymmetric distribution of information among participants (Eckardt & Shane, 2003) and emerges out of the nexus between an opportunity and the people operating in a dynamic environment (Busenitz et al. 2003). In such an interaction, the participants not only spot an opportunity (Shane & Venkataraman, 2000), but actively create it (Sarason et al., 2006), dealing with market and institutional incentives (Folsom, 2003). In the cultural sector, entrepreneurs foster the creation of value operating across the value-chain (Bilton, 2006) and creating a rhetoric (Klamer, 2011) that engages people in a vision (Aageson, 2008).

The present research reveals that the network of people engaged in the vision is currently the main source of value of the performing arts. The network actually accounts for the social value of an organization and, by increasing their social accountability, the performing arts organizations increase their chances to exploit institutional and market incentives.

The relevance of social accountability determines business and artistic consequences. In business terms, networking is more important than generating revenues over a single project. The business model implied by the practitioners is similar to the two-sided business model that has so far been investigated on the internet economy (Handke et al., forthcoming). The practitioners invest in order to gather the attention of the audience and they use this attention to attract sponsors or to increase their legitimacy for receiving public funding.

In artistic terms, engaging the audience means operating extensively through the production process, extending the moments open to the public. As a result, the product of the performing arts seems to overtake the definition of a live performance in a given space and time provided by Towse (2010). The invitation to the production process, the extra information about the performance and the follow-up are as determinant as the main performance to reinforce the interaction with the audience.

Summing up, the main narrative framing entrepreneurship in the performing arts is social accountability. “Networking”, “people”, “connection”, “together” and “society” are the recurring keywords that the practitioners use when they put entrepreneurship into practice.

Such a conclusion may have been emphasized by the design of the research. Limitations and avenues for further research are discussed in the next paragraph.

5.3 Limitations and Avenues for Further Research

This research investigated entrepreneurship by analyzing the performing arts organizations that applied for the Cultural Plan 2013-2016 of Rotterdam. The social background of the city (See Appendices - section 6.2) may have influenced the conclusions. The city has suffered major social changes with social cohesion emerging as a political issue. The urge to tackle this issue may overemphasize the need of the interviewed practitioners for social accountability. On top of this, two interviewees work in the multi-ethnic south side of the city. Social inclusion is the main mission of the organizations that these people manage.

In addition, the respondents were informed that the research was carried out in collaboration with the *Raad voor Kunst en Cultuur*. Part of the investigation concerned an elaboration of the criterion of entrepreneurship as defined by the *Raad voor Kunst en Cultuur*. This certainly facilitated the contact with the organizations, but the respondents may have given strategic responses to emphasize their social commitment and the social relevance of the local government’s investment.

Furthermore, the research avoided any counter analysis of the information provided by the respondents. The evaluation of the *Raad voor Kunst en Cultuur* (2011) was used to customize the single interviews, but the information released by the respondents was not challenged by the analysis of the on-going performances of the organizations. As a result, no data support the priority that the respondents gave to the networking process over the profitability of single artistic projects.

Moreover, the sample expresses a great variety of organizations. This variety reflects the richness of the performing arts sector in Rotterdam, thus providing different perspectives on entrepreneurship. On the other hand, however, this variety has not allowed a saturation of all the

topics analyzed. This limitation particularly applies to the section of the interview about strategies, where the replies have diverged according to the size and the mission of the organizations.

Finally, the qualitative research is supported by an iterative process from the data to the literature. The deadline for the present research has not allowed the possibility of fully completing this process. In particular, the limited time has not allowed the opportunity to review the research on the two-sided business model and the marketing of attention throughout the production process.

These limitations point to avenues for further research. Further studies could indeed explore how the organizations create values out of their social accountability. In the sample, three strategies have been mentioned by respondents. Larger organizations are undertaking branding strategies. Medium size organizations are sharing data sets to increase the scale and the efficiency of marketing and customer relationship management. Organizations working with an ethnic-public are setting up consultancy companies to sell their specific know-how on the segment. Through purpose sampling, further qualitative research could elaborate on these strategies, while ethnography could shift to the audience's standpoint and enlighten the function of the extra information provided across the production process.

Finally, by concentrating attention on educational institutions, it would be interesting to follow the creative process of the younger theater makers. The description of their work indicates dynamics of social innovation. Entering those dynamics could reveal how the new theater makers merge artistic creativity and social accountability.

5.4 Conclusions

This research reveals that practitioners in the performing arts put entrepreneurship into practice, while endeavoring to increase the social accountability of their organizations. The conclusion may have been influenced by the social background of the city of Rotterdam. However, the multi-ethnic society of the city under analysis is becoming a common feature of many major urban centers across Europe. It may therefore be interesting to conduct further research to see how the process that generates social accountability influences the young producers and is converted into a sustainable business model by producing companies and organizations managing theater venues.

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6 Appendices

6.1 Introduction

Two sections compose the Appendices. The first section describes the background of the research. This section traces the evolution of the cultural policies of Rotterdam, explaining the origin of the criterion of entrepreneurship that has suggested the research. The second section reports instead the letters used to engage the organizations and the calendar with dates and location of the interviews. The full transcriptions of the interview is finally available in digital format within the attached Cd.

6.2 Rotterdam: the Origin of the Entrepreneurial Cultural Policy

This section provides an overview of the evolution of the cultural policies in Rotterdam. The first part recalls the main events that has shaped the identity of the city and the main goals of the cultural plans across time. The second part reports the role of the criterion of entrepreneurship in the Cultural Plan 2013-16. Finally, the third part summarizes the results of a short pre-research conducted on the applications submitted for the Cultural Plan 2013-16.

6.2.1 Rotterdam and the City's Cultural Plans

The identity of city of Rotterdam has evolved through some dramatic events that makes its social composition and sky line unique in the Dutch landscape (Lavanga, 2004; Russo et al., 2005). Established as the main harbor city in Europe on top of a trade vocation developed since the Middle Age, Rotterdam has attracted immigrants from all over the world, creating a variegated melting pot²⁰. Erased by the bombing of the Second World War, the city center has become the arena for architectural and urban experiments that convey its futuristic perspective still evolving through constant digging and building.

For long related to the image of an industrial town, over the last decade the city has actively promoted urban and cultural policies to reshape its identity. Various identities have been addressed: financial hub, commercial center, and cultural node.

Hitters (2000) provides an overview of the evolution of the arts and urban policy of Rotterdam. First, in the 50s and the 60s, culture was one of the service that the city council provided among his welfare services. The legitimacy for public expenditure was given by the aesthetic

20 Over a population of about 660.000 inhabitants, Rotterdam boasts 135 nationalities, with sizable minorities from Suriname, Turkey, Morocco, the Dutch Antilles and Cape Verde (Russo et al., 2005).

education of the population. Over the 70s, a second phase started. The investments were oriented to social development, therefore moving from traditional forms of arts to contemporary and amateurs' forms of expressions. Such a trend was brought to an end in the 80s, when the economic support to the arts lost its legitimacy. The cultural policy was then merged with the urban policy. Arts and culture became urban facilities to increase the quality of life and make the city attractive to the business sector. That was the time when a higher level of private contribution could be first advocated as an alternative to the public expenditure.

Since in the years 2001-2004, when the cultural plan on a four year basis was first introduced, the role the public-private partnerships has been reinforced. As Russo (Russo et al., 2005) notices:

“In the most recent cultural plan, the city seems to have changed its policy towards a larger involvement of the private sector. Since the large private actors operating in Rotterdam seem not to be interested in investing in culture (besides the odd sponsorship), the local authority tries now to promote the entrepreneurial development of individual artists and cultural managers” (Russo et al., 2005, p. 283).

The trends that Russo (Russo et al., 2005) highlights inform as well the Cultural Plan 2013-2016 that gives the starting point to the present study.

6.2.2 The Cultural Plan 2013-2016 and the Criterion of Entrepreneurship

In the Cultural Plan 2013-2016, finally approved by the City Council in November 2012, both the reduction in the operating budget and the invitation to explore artistic entrepreneurship are confirmed. On the one hand, following the general contraction of the council's budget, the operating cultural budget was finally determined in 72.43 million euros, a sum around 20% lower than the one invested in the Cultural Plan 2010-2013 (91,8 million euros). On the other hand, “Entrepreneurial Qualities”²¹ was one of the five guidelines orientating the *Rotterdam Raad voor Kunst en Cultuur* in the allocation of the public funds to 109 organizations that had applied²².

Entrepreneurship had a central status in the evaluation. Along with the specific committee for each cultural sector, indeed, in the *Raad voor Kunst en Cultuur* a specific committee was appointed

21 The other four main criteria were Artistic Quality, DNA of the City, Talent Development, and Metropolitan Area of The Hague-Rotterdam.

22 The 109 applicant organizations were categorized in the following sector: Fine Arts, Architecture, and Design; Dance, Theater, and Stage; Museums and Cultural Heritage; Movie and Media Arts; Music; and Leisure and Community Art. 33 organizations received a negative advice by the *Raad voor Kunst en Cultuur*.

to evaluate the entrepreneurial quality of the projects across all the 109 applications. The committee operated on the basis of an advice on entrepreneurship that had been published on July 2010 to define the artistic and business goals that the cultural plan wanted to achieve stimulating entrepreneurship (*Raad voor Kunst en Cultuur, 2010*).

In the advice, entrepreneurship is defined as challenging criterion pointing at innovation in business and artistic sense. Cultural entrepreneurship implies looking ahead to realize one vision (“*binden*”) and improve the organizational structure to increase the financial performances and the level of satisfaction of the stakeholders (“*bouwen*”). Cultural entrepreneurship is broken down by the *Raad voor Kunst en Cultuur* in three main categories depending on the size and phase of development of the organization. For the small organizations, the focus is in the definition of a vision. For the middle size organizations, the accent is in collaboration and in the application of business strategies derived from the profit sector. For the main institutions that constitute the infrastructure of Rotterdam, finally, the emphasis is on the enhancement of the efficiency.

Quantitative indicators are adopted for a first assessment of the level of entrepreneurship. These indicators – constituting what the *Raad voor Kunst en Cultuur* defines as “personal income standard” - capture over the years 2009, 2010, 2011, the number of visitors, the total amount of subsidies, the amount of subsidies provided by the municipality, the own income, the revenues and the position in the rank of the 50 top cultural institutions of Rotterdam (assessed by the consultancy company *Beerda*). Out of these indicators, the own income ratio (total amount of subsidy divided by number of visitors) and the own income ratio (own income divided by the total amount of subsidy) are derived.

Despite these quantitative indicators, however, the *Raad voor Kunst en Cultuur* recognizes that detailed monitoring and accountability can lead to stagnation. Therefore, the advice invites to adopt a qualitative approach to measure entrepreneurship as the ability of the organization to be aware of the changing environment and to adapt to it both artistically and commercially. The invitation is to replace a “checklist approach” with closer consultations with the organizations to understand their performances and their fit to the context. In the advice, however, this qualitative assessment is not further developed.

Despite the advice, the criterion of entrepreneurship has turned out problematic for the applicants. The next section reports the indications of a little pre-research conducted over the applications submitted for the Cultural Plan 2013-16.

6.2.3 Criterion of Entrepreneurship. A Pre-Research on the Applications

In each of the 109 applications submitted for the Cultural Plan 2013-16, the cultural organizations had elaborated their “entrepreneurial qualities”. In the early stages of the research, this large set of applications suggested to carry out a content analysis. The plan was to inform a coding scheme through the literature on entrepreneurship and analyze the applications to pinpoint the resources, the values, the stakeholders, the products and the processes that the practitioners of the cultural organizations in Rotterdam had referred to elaborating the entrepreneurial qualities of their organizations.

A first scan of the applications has suggested that the documents did not suit the analysis. The scan, undertaken with the help of a Dutch speaker, has revealed that neither the format nor the content of the documents represented a valid unit of analysis.

In terms of format, the applications stored at the *Raad voor Kunst en Cultuur* of Rotterdam present a high level of discrepancy. The entrepreneurial qualities are stated both in a national government form and in the city council applications. Sometimes the two documents link to each other and references to other sections of the applications are common as well. As a result, the entrepreneurial qualities are sometimes assessed in a couple of lines and sometimes over six pages. The discrepancy in lengths and the blurring boundaries of the section make hard any comparative analysis.

In addition, in terms of content, the applications report on entrepreneurship mainly summarizing the projects completed by the organizations. A past perspective dominates over the future perspective that the economic literature on entrepreneurship discusses. When developing strategies are mentioned, they are sometimes summarized by short general statements such as “we are going to increase our market”.

For the performing arts organizations, the content of the applications has substantiated the critical report of the *Raad voor Kunst en Cultuur* (2011). According to the outcome of the formal procedure, the practitioners in the performing arts appear to have little ability to organize their knowledge on entrepreneurship and little vision supporting their strategic decisions.

This pre-research has informed the development of the final research described in the present thesis. The performing arts organizations have been individuated as the relevant sample of the study and a qualitative approach based on semi-structured interviews has been adopted to elicit the knowledge that the formal procedures of the application had failed to generate.

6.2.4 Subsidies to the Performing Arts: Cultural Plan 2009-12 and 2013-16

This chart present the subsidies allocated by the City Council of Rotterdam to the Performing Arts Organizations over the Cultural Plan 2009-12 and the Cultural Plan 2013-16. The variation in absolute value and percentage is calculated.

Table 4 - Subsidies to the Performing Arts. Cultural Plan 2009-12 and 2013-16

Organization	Subsidy per year (Cultural Plan 2009-12)	Subsidy per year (Cultural Plan 2010-13)	Var. 2009-2012/ 2013-2016	Var. % 2009-2012/ 2013-2016
Showing Companies				
De Doelen Concert en Congresgebouw	€ 4.442.000,00	€ 428.500,00	-€ 213.500,00	-4,81
Gouvernestraat	€ 270.500,00	€ 0,00	-€ 270.500,00	-100,00
Luxor Theater	€ 3.484.000,00	€ 1.100.000,00	-€ 2.384.000,00	-68,43
Rotterdam Wijktheater	€ 403.500,00	€ 428.500,00	€ 25.000,00	6,20
Theater Maatwerk	€ 50.000,00	€ 50.000,00	€ 0,00	0,00
Ro Theater*	€ 2.737.000,00	€ 2.400.000,00	-€ 337.000,00	-12,31
Rotterdamse Scouwburg*	€ 5.992.500,00	€ 5.300.000,00	-€ 692.500,00	-11,56
Theater Walhalla	€ 175.500,00	€ 215.500,00	€ 40.000,00	22,79
Theater Zuidplein	€ 2.526.500,00	€ 2.250.000,00	-€ 276.500,00	-10,94
Theater Netwerk Rotterdam (TNR)	€ 90.500,00	€ 75.000,00	-€ 15.500,00	-17,13
Sub Total	€ 20.172.000,00	€ 16.047.500,00	-€ 4.124.500,00	-20,45
Producing Companies				
Conny Janssen Danst	€ 252.500,00	€ 450.000,00	€ 197.500,00	78,22
Danseateliers	€ 306.500,00	€ 306.500,00	€ 0,00	0,00
Doelen Ensemble	€ 95.000,00	€ 75.000,00	-€ 20.000,00	-20,5
Hotel Moderne	€ 176.500,00	€ 176.500,00	€ 0,00	0,00
Maas**	€ 1.183.000,00	€ 1.580.000,00	€ 397.000,00	33,56
Nieuw Rotterdams Jazz Orkest	€ 50.000,00	€ 0,00	-€ 50.000,00	-100,00
Onafhankelijk Toneel / Opera OT	€ 904.500,00	€ 0,00	-€ 904.500,00	-100,00
Productiehuis Rotterdam*	€ 433.000,00	€ 400.000,00	-€ 33.000,00	-7,62
Rotterdams Jeugd Symphonie Orkest	€ 50.000,00	€ 20.000,00	-€ 30.000,00	-60,00
Rotterdams Philharmonisch Orkest	€ 6.658.000,00	€ 6.59.500,00	-€ 60.500,00	-0,91
Scapino Ballet Rotterdam	€ 1.008.000,00	€ 1.115.000,00	€ 107.000,00	10,62
Sinfonia Rotterdam	€ 120.500,00	€ 119.500,00	-€ 1.000,00	-0,83
Wunderbaum*	€ 156.000,00	€ 350.000,00	€ 194.000,00	124,36
Sub Total	€ 11.393.500,00	€ 11.190.000,00	-€ 203.500,00	-1,79
Total	€ 31.565.500,00	€ 27.237.500,00	-€ 4.328.000,00	13,71
* Application in the coalition of Theater Rotterdam				
** Coalition of the former organizations: Max, Meekers, Siberia)				

(source: Rotterdamse Raad voor Kunst en Cultuur)

6.3 Research Materials

This section presents a model of the mails sent to the performing arts organizations in Rotterdam to engage them in the research. Two mails are reported. The mail introducing the research and asking for the interview and the mail introducing the topic of the research once the interview was scheduled. Finally, the last section contain the calendar of the interviews realized to carry out the present research.

6.3.1 First Introductory Mail

This is an example of the mails sent to the performing arts organizations of Rotterdam to engage them in the research. Most of the emails were sent the last week of March. A few others the second week of April following a meeting with the *Raad voor Kunst en Cultuur* pointing at some organizations that had not been included in the initial list.

Dear (name of the director),

I submit this mail to ask for an interview about entrepreneurship in the performing art sector as a part of my final research for the master's in cultural economics directed by Arjo Klamer at the Erasmus University in Rotterdam (my supervisor is professor Mariangela Lavanga. You can mail her for further details on the research at lavanga@eshcc.eur.nl). The interview should take about one hour and it is designed to help the Art and Culture Council (my contact there is Marc Fonville) to improve the next cultural plans. Entrepreneurship has indeed become one of the main guidelines for the allocation of the structural funds, but the standpoint of the practitioners in the field has not been investigated yet. The interview I'm asking for is meant to fill this gap.

I am addressing you as a general manger of the organization. The topics are better dealt indeed by a person with a broad perspective on the strategy of the organizations and on the relationships with its stakeholders. The alternative can be the employee who has oversees the application for the structural funds.

If it suits your agenda, I would kindly ask to arrange the interview over the last weeks of April or, as a second alternative, during the first days of May. In order to avoid overlapping, I include here the interviews that have already been arranged with other venues and producing companies in Rotterdam:

- list of dates for the interview
- list of dates interview

My contacts details follow for any further detail you may need about the research or the content of the interview.

Looking forwards to your reply, I thank you for the attention and the collaboration.

Kind regards,
Silvio

6.3.2 Mail Introducing the Topics of the Interview

This is an example of the mail sent to the interviewee once that the appointment had been scheduled. The email informally summarizes the topics defined in the Methodology Chapter.

Dear (name of the interviewee),

Here comes a short summary of the topics to be discussed. If any point is unclear, please, do not hesitate to ask for further details.

In general, the interview wants to be an open conversation about entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship is indeed becoming very popular, it enters cultural programs, but it does not have a clear definition. The conversation should help to step down to the real word and collect hints to improve the policies of the city council and help practitioners to deal with the criterion in formal applications.

Specifically, I want to explore four areas. All together, they trace a sort of evolution from the past to the future.

- Going back to the last application for structural funds, I'd like to know the sources of information addressed to fill in the section about entrepreneurship (colleagues, members of the councils, professional association and previous experience). The question is meant to explore the personal point of view about "cultural entrepreneurship", what the concept means, what is an opportunity and what is perceived as a threat, who talks about

entrepreneurship and why. Do you consider it as a proper label or you reject the concept. Why?

- Several organizations have suffered severe cuts and new reductions in the subsidies are expected. How is your organization coping with the change in the revenue scheme? What are the on-going consequences in the economic sphere as well as in the artistic one? How is the organization adapting to the new environment?
- I'll show some notes about the strategies that performing arts organizations normally apply when less subsidies come in. We will comment on them, the strategies that apply and the ones that do not. The list is a starting point, but it is not meant to be restrictive, so any personal contribution is welcome.
- Here we'll try to be a kind of visionaries. Out of the current changes, out of the strategies, what performing art sector do you expect, which one do you envision, what in it will be the role of your organization?

All in all, feel free in any point to create your own world of "entrepreneurship", the one that frames your decisions and the decisions of your organization.

Looking forwards to our conversation.

Kind regards,

Silvio Mini

6.4 Interviews: Date, Organizations, Interviewee

This chart reports the calendar of the ten interviews carried out for the present research:

Table 5 - Interviews: Date, Organization, Interviewee

	Date	Organization	Interviewee
1	11/04/14	De Doelen Concert en Congresgebouw	Gabriel Oostvogel
2	15/04/14	Theater Netwerk Rotterdam (Tnr)	Mirjam Veldhuijzen van Zanten
3	16/04/14	Ro Theater	Erik Pals
4	17/04/14	Theater Zuidplein	Doro Siepel
5	24/04/14	Sinfonia Rotterdam	Carola Heeremans
6	24/04/14	De Doelen Ensemble	Maarten Van Veen
7	28/04/14	Danseateliers	Kristin De Groot

8	30/04/14	Rotterdam Wijktheater	Heleen Hemeete
9	15/05/14	Wunderbaum	Maartje van Doodewaard
10	21/05/14	Conny Janssen	Thomas Smit

(source: own elaboration)