

WHAT IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE FOR THE CREATIVE INDUSTRY IN YOUR REGION?

The biggest challenge for the creative industry in Eastern Slovakia is still its full recognition as a driver of innovation and economic development. While the sector has strong talent and growing infrastructure, it is often underestimated in policy-making and investment decisions. Another critical issue is retaining and attracting skilled professionals, who are frequently drawn to larger European hubs. At Creative Industry Košice, n. o., we address this through a systemic approach – strengthening the ecosystem, connecting stakeholders, and, importantly, building evidence. With the establishment of our research and development institute, CXI (Citizens Experience Institute), we are actively contributing to data-driven policymaking and demonstrating the measurable impact of the creative economy on urban and regional development.

WHAT ACHIEVEMENT FROM 2025 ARE YOU THE MOST PROUD OF AND WHY?

In 2025, one of our most significant milestones was becoming an officially recognized research and development organisation. This step fundamentally strengthened our position, allowing us to move beyond project implementation into generating knowledge, research, and innovation with broader societal impact. Through CXI, we have deepened our focus on topics such as urban innovation, cultural and creative industries, and sustainable development. I am equally proud of our involvement in international projects like SAM-SUD, which focuses on sustainable urban development. This project allows us to bring innovative solutions to Košice while positioning the city within a strong European network. It reflects our ambition to not only follow trends but actively shape them.

WHAT ARE THE MOST SIGNIFICANT QUALITIES THAT YOUR ORGANISATION CAN OFFER?

Our uniqueness lies in the combination of three pillars: practice, strategy, and research. We are not only implementers of projects but also strategic partners and now a research institution through CXI. This allows us to understand challenges from multiple perspectives and propose comprehensive solutions. We have the ability to translate creative potential into concrete development strategies for cities and regions. At the same time, we are deeply embedded in the local environment of Košice, which enables us to design interventions that are both relevant and impactful. This combination makes us a distinctive organisation in the Central European context.

HOW DO YOU FOSTER INNOVATION WITHIN YOUR ORGANISATION, WHETHER THROUGH TECHNOLOGY, PEOPLE, OR BUSINESS MODELS?

Innovation is embedded in everything we do. Through CXI, we actively develop research-driven approaches and experiment with new methodologies in urban and creative sector development. We support interdisciplinary collaboration, bringing together experts from creative industries, technology, academia, and public administration. Internally, we cultivate a culture of openness, where new ideas are encouraged and tested. From a business perspective, we continuously explore new partnership models – especially cross-sector collaborations that allow us to scale our impact. Projects like SAM-SUD are a good example of how we combine innovation in technology, policy, and community engagement.

WHAT ARE YOUR ORGANISATION'S KEY STRENGTHS THAT MAKE IT A VALUABLE LOCAL OR INTERNATIONAL PARTNER?

One of our key strengths is our ability to act as a bridge between sectors, local and international environments, and practice and research. Our transformation into a research and development organisation significantly enhanced our credibility and capacity to engage in high-level international collaborations. Through CXI, we bring analytical depth and evidence-based insights, while our long-standing experience ensures practical implementation. We are also strongly rooted in Košice, which allows us to test and pilot solutions directly in an urban context. This makes us not just a partner, but a living lab for innovation in city development.

WHAT PART OF YOUR WORK MOTIVATES YOU TO LEAD THE ORGANISATION?

What motivates me most is the tangible impact of our work on the city and its people. Seeing how our initiatives contribute to making Košice a more innovative, inclusive, and forward-looking city is incredibly rewarding. Whether it is through supporting creative professionals, shaping public policies, or implementing projects like SAM-SUD, our work has visible outcomes. I am also deeply motivated by our team and the broader community we collaborate with – people who are passionate about creating meaningful change. Leading an organisation that is both locally grounded and internationally connected, and now also contributing to research and development through CXI, gives me a strong sense of purpose and responsibility.

Creative Industry Košice, n. o. today represents a unique model in the region – an organisation that integrates creativity, innovation, and research to actively shape the future of Košice.

IVANA HANUŠOVSKÁ

DIRECTOR
CREATIVE INDUSTRY KOŠICE,
N. O.



Ivana Hanušovská is the Director of Creative Industry Košice, n. o. (CIKE), where she has worked since 2015. Over time, she has held key roles including Project Manager and CFO before becoming CEO, gaining a comprehensive understanding of both strategic management and project implementation. Her work focuses on developing the creative ecosystem, supporting talent, and connecting cultural and creative sectors with innovation, technology, and urban development. Under her leadership, CIKE has transformed into a research and development organisation delivering data-driven solutions in the fields of creative economy, urbanism, and sustainability. She promotes interdisciplinary collaboration and international partnerships. Her vision is to shape Košice as an innovative, inclusive city that fully harnesses the potential of creativity for sustainable urban development.