Antecedents of Trust in Network Settings

Networks are defined as an enduring relationship between two or more organisations (Thorelli, 1986). The literature on network forms emphasises the need for a high level of trust (Miles and Snow, 1992; Creed and Miles, 1996). Trust constitutes the bedrock of networks, which ‘are by definition, embedded in personal relationships and social dynamics’ (Nassimbeni, 1998, p. 547). Trust exists when one party has confidence in an exchange partner’s reliability and integrity (Morgan and Hunt, 1994) even in the face of risk (Lewis and Weigert, 1985). Trust is one party’s willingness to be vulnerable to another party based on the belief that the latter party is competent, honest, concerned and reliable (Mishra, 1996).

Networks tend to specialise in the exchange of goods or services that are difficult to contract, such as a cultural good. Culture refers to ‘man-made artifacts or performances that move us and expand our awareness of the world and of ourselves’ (Cowan, 1998, p. 9). Cultural goods are designed to stimulate, provoke reflection, entertain and improve quality of life (Lampel et al., 2000). Cultural institutions include heritage (museums, galleries and built heritage), the performing arts as well as the film, television broadcasting and book industries (Boorsma et al., 1998). Given that trust is a key constituent of industrial networks, one would expect trust to be a major lubricant of networks engaged in the production of a cultural good. In the arts sector, there are a myriad of ways in which actors can disappoint: a sponsor may fail to honour funding commitments, artistic disagreements and rivalries may hamper performances, volunteers could disappoint by withdrawing their labour. The possible consequences of a trust deficit are poor reviews, loss of reputation, delays, cash-flow crises, and ultimately, the failure of the network. Moreover, people in the arts sector are faced with the problem of building trusting relationships under conditions that do not enable trust to flourish. Creative enterprises are characterised by commercial and artistic risk (Hirsch, 1972). Lack of funds, coupled with uncertainty about the results of artistic production (Hirsch, 1972) is often a factor that curtails innovation. Artistic productions are akin to research and development ventures and face similar challenges: under-funding, job insecurity and protection of intellectual property rights.

Studies show that a wide range of factors (including personality) influences the propensity to trust (Mayer et al., 1995). The arts sector is a small close-knit community, and studies show than in such a setting, information on reputation can be easily spread, and trust is driven by both the threat of punishment and the rewards derived from maintaining a good reputation (Shapiro, Sheppard and Cheraskin, 1992). Professional musicians devote themselves full-time to rehearsal and performance; a live performance is a creative, non-standard, ‘experience’ good and it is an example of a product or service that is difficult, if
not impossible, to enforce contractually (Uzzi, 1996; Caves, 2000). The audience for an artisitic product is the self, together with one's peers, industry professionals and the public at large (Hirsch, 1972) and academic excellence and academic recognition are the main sources of reward (Hirschman, 1983).

The sociologist Zucker (1986) views trust as being process-based, characteristic-based and institutionally-based. In the process mode, trust arises through experiences of reciprocal exchange. This argument is a variant on the concept of trust being knowledge-based (Lewicki and Bunker, 1996) where one party trusts another party because they have interacted reliably with each other in the past (Bromiley and Cummings, 1992). Characteristic-based trust is rooted in social similarity, where people tend to respond positively to similar others since behaviour can be reliably predicted (Kramer, 1991; Zucker, 1986). Trust based on common membership of a social identity group is a ‘depersonalised’ form of trust (Brewer, 1981) and it emerges quickly in temporary systems (Mayer et al., 1995). Trust is also institutionally-based (Zucker, 1986), which refers to the public’s trust in the professions, as well as civil laws and regulatory agencies which allow those wronged in commercial transactions to complain or sue (Tyler and Kramer, 1996). This argument is similar to the view that trust is deterrence-based (Shapiro et al., 1992) and to that of political scientists (Axelrod, 1984) who argue that the ‘long shadow of the future’ serves to induce cooperative behaviour. This approach reflects an essentially ‘calculative’ notion of trust (Deutsch, 1973) where the costs and benefits of acting in a distrustful way are evaluated. Social groups can exert informal control over the behaviour of individuals, such as refusing to deal with rule-breakers. Thus, three main factors: past exchange, expected future exchange and presence of third parties (Zucker et al., 1996) help engender trust. Thus:

**Proposition 1**: The possibility of future exchange is a critical ingredient in the formation of rational trust between network actors.

**Proposition 2**: Past exchange is a critical ingredient in the formation of rational trust between network actors.

The rational model of trust, however, is hard to reconcile with the practice of project-based organising. Dynamic networks (see Snow et al., 1992) are often designed to facilitate the completion of projects. They are temporary in nature; in other words, they have a short- or medium-term focus; decisions about lifespan are based solely on the duration of the project and product lifecycle (Kasper-Fuehrer and Ashkanasy, 2003). Projects are very diverse, and include film, theatre, election campaigns, juries, construction, paramedics, where a team of people is assembled to carry out a task, and then disbands once the task is accomplished (see Meyerson et al., 1996, for an excellent review). Projects are defined as temporary coalitions of actors that are assembled by a project manager, via a web of social contacts, ties and actors from previous projects (Grabher, 2001a, 2002a; Ekinsmyth, 2002). All projects share common characteristics: they are goal-oriented, time-limited and contain unique or non-repetitive elements (Engwall, 1998). These characteristics are commonly found in arts organisations.

The concept of ‘swift trust’ has been developed by Meyerson, Weick and Kramer (1996) in an attempt to account for the presence of trusting behaviour in a project-oriented environment. Recent studies of virtual organisation (Jones and Bowie, 1998; Kasper-Fuehrer and Ashkanasy, 2003) and global virtual teams (Jarvenpaa et al., 1998) have posited that swift trust is applicable in these domains. In these situations, there isn’t always time for trust to emerge between members (Defillippi and Arthur, 1998) given that trust requires personal contact and bonding over time (Handy, 1995).

Projects are examples of temporary systems which exhibit behaviour that presupposes trust, yet traditional sources of trust – familiarity, shared experiences, reciprocal disclosure, threats and deterrents, fulfilled promises and demonstrations of non-exploitation of vulnerability – are not obvious in such systems (Meyerson et al., 1996, p. 167). In temporary teams, there is a strong emphasis on task performance and team members work together under tight deadlines. The members have never worked together and do not expect to work together in the future, but they act as if trust is present from the start. According to Meyerson et al. (1996, p. 180) ‘swift trust may be a by-product of a highly active, proactive, enthusi-
The presence of leaders who are goal-driven and willing to take the initiative helps engender swift trust in temporary teams (Jarvenpaa et al., 1998). Other factors reduce trust requirements. For actors in temporary systems, reputations are vulnerable and prospects for future interactions are at stake (Meyerson et al., 1996). Thus, trust flourishes in temporary systems due to the 'reputational factor', small labour pool in which word can spread, high level of interdependencies and role-based interaction. Trust is 'category-based' rather than 'personality-based' in the sense that professionals are expected to adhere to the values of their profession. A drawback of 'swift trust' is its fragile nature, and violation of trust by an individual may be highly damaging. The swift trust that exists in temporary teams is also made possible by the presence of a co-ordinator or contractor whose reputation is also at stake because he is responsible for assembling the group in the first place (Meyerson et al., 1996, p. 171). Therefore:

**Proposition 3**: The role of the network coordinator is critical in creating an atmosphere of trust.

**Proposition 4**: The presence of third parties facilitates the formation of trust.

In recent times, scholars have started to challenge the notion of the 'lonely project' (Engwall, 2003), i.e., the treatment of projects as solitary units, detached from history and context. Rather it is proposed that, over time, effective project teams are based on longstanding relationships. A study on the UK television industry (Starkey et al., 2000) found that freelance workers develop social and reputation ties, which carry them from project to project. Thus trust has a historical dimension, it is rational, and it emerges between project members due to shared experience. These writers use the term 'latent organisation' to describe an entity that is not developed, manifest or visible, but it awaits developing. A 'latent network' can be re-activated quickly, at short notice, when the need arises. According to Grabher (2001b), projects are 'embedded in layers of networks, localities and institutions'. Likewise, Goldman et al. (1995) argue that virtual enterprises are based on an underlying stable network, i.e., a pool of firms, from which members can be recruited when a specific business opportunity arises. A study on the German television sector (Sydow and Staber, 2002) found that project networks are 'institutionally embedded', which implies the presence of institutions such as training institutes, state agencies, sponsors, banks, and so forth, that provide resources but also implies high levels of interaction among interdependent actors. Thus,

**Proposition 5**: In dynamic systems, trust is latent, but trust also emerges swiftly and it enables network members to perform clearly defined roles under tight deadlines.

Figure 1 proposes a conceptual framework of the factors influencing trust in the performing arts, which is based on the five research propositions outlined in the literature review.

### Motivations for Entry into Networks in the Cultural Sector

The resource dependence theory of organisations (Aldrich and Pfeffer, 1976; Pfeffer and Salancik, 1978) calls attention to resource constraints that explain the rise of networks. The resources exchanged between actors include capital, informa-
tion, advice, emotional support and legitimacy signals (Hoang and Antoncic, 2002). Research shows that all kinds of relationships develop between arts organisations and other entities out of necessity (McCarthy and Torres, 2005). For most artists, a primary concern is employment or performance opportunities. Studies show that artists’ careers are dependent on their position in networks and their relationships with other artists, galleries and cultural institutions (Giuffre, 1999; Holmlund and Törnroos, 1997). Studies in creative realms such as advertising (Grabher, 2002b) and film (DeFillippi and Arthur, 1998) show the cumulative impact of social networks on career progression.

Network legitimacy leads to network persistence because it helps actors attract resources (Holmlund and Törnroos, 1997). Legitimacy (Suchman, 1995, p. 574) is ‘a generalised perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper or appropriate within some socially constructed system of norms, values, beliefs and definitions’. Legitimacy refers to the need to appear to conform to the prevailing norms, beliefs or expectations of external constituents (DiMaggio, 1992). In a general sense, legitimacy comes to the fore in debates about ‘what is art’, and ‘does art merit public subsidy?’ and it reflects the level of socio-political support afforded to the arts. Gatekeepers have the power to confer legitimacy on art or an artistic organisation. Hirsch (2000) has emphasised the critical roles played by a gatekeeper – the art critic – in connecting the creators/artists to a mass audience. Cowan (1998) defines gatekeepers more broadly, as individuals who make judgements about aesthetic quality and have the latitude to educate audiences, refine and develop sophisticated and specialised tastes. Thus the artistic director can play the role of gatekeeper in the sense that they guard access to the network and can open or close the door to the producers of an artistic product. Thus,

**Proposition 6**: Legitimacy is a key resource in networks and needs to be leveraged by the network coordinator.

### Research Objectives and Questions

The research questions of this study are as follows:

- What are the factors that facilitate the formation of trust in cultural networks?
- What role does the artistic director play in shaping trust in the performing arts domain and influencing network members’ perceptions?
- How does swift trust unfold during the life of an artistic project?

### Research Methods

A decision was taken to focus on the performing arts, since this sector represents temporary systems and specific settings in which a set of diversely skilled people work together on a complex task over a limited period of time (Goodman and Goodman, 1976, p. 494). The performing arts include theatre, dance, opera, symphony music, and choral music, and are distinct from other art forms (Bensman, 1983). The performing arts are characterised by live performances and the finality of performance. As the most directly social of all the arts, the performing arts place a premium on the performer’s star quality, personality and presence. Moreover, the musicians are professionally trained, and intense occupational commitment and interpretation are typically associated with the performing arts. Another trait linked with the performing arts is dependency on external support, such as orchestras and grants, to subsidise the rehearsal and performance of new works. The performing arts are distinct from other art forms which may have implications for network theory, e.g., the social and quasi-commercial nature of ventures, the presence of mainstream, well-established organisations in a national context, but also young art organisations, which should provide good contrast. Finally, research into the construct of trust in a particular type of network has been very limited.

A qualitative methodological approach was chosen on the grounds that it would best explain the process of network formation, types of relationships formed and the reasoning behind trusting behaviour. According to Huggins (2000), qualitative approaches are best suited to exploring the motivations to network and characteristics of networks. This study was exploratory and its purpose was to gain experience and raise issues for further research.

Methodologically, the paper is based on ten semi-structured interviews with experts and founders of arts organisations. The interviews lasted for one to two hours and were conducted between June 2003
and June 2005. The sample was drawn from the music and theatre sectors. While all of the subjects were well-established organisations (and therefore enjoyed the trust and support of key actors), one organisation that launched an innovative theatre project was chosen to help illuminate the notion of ‘swift trust’. Experts were as follows: a member of the Arts Council, a professor of music, director of music from a TV broadcasting station, and director of the Music Board of Ireland. Secondary data sources included arts programmes, government reports, newspaper articles, books and websites.

Research Findings
Role of network coordinator: building trust and leveraging personal assets
The role of the artistic director is central to the success of the network. In the words of one expert:

A good director in a resource organisation can do an immense amount of good … can energise an entire region for a year by virtue of the people he/she brings in, by bringing in major international figures, local and national artists … he/she can make all sorts of interesting combinations and possibilities that spark in people’s minds, can give people a sense of being valued, of being on the map, socially as well as professionally, a good charismatic director of a festival can do that … First and foremost, the arts organisation has to captivate the imagination of the public it serves and it also has to satisfy the sponsors that it is doing that on the basis of prudent financial management … Without that committed, charismatic, passionate individual, the best designed support systems in the world won’t work.

Thus, the personal attributes and skills of the artistic director – charisma, personal contacts, friendships, knowledge of music – are all assets that are leveraged in order to develop a successful artistic programme. The network was designed for the exchange of an intangible resource, a live performance, that draws an emotional response from the audience. In the words of one respondent (company D):

For us, the music is the most important thing. We are not going to get caught up in selling a product to people who don’t know what it is they are getting. It is very important that when they come they have as much information as possible … it’s important that they begin to develop some involvement with music itself and don’t come for social reasons.

The study shows that the commitment of the founders/directors enabled them to create an atmosphere of trust. In the words of one respondent (company A):

The two people running it are the two people who started it … it’s our baby and that puts a whole different focus on it. It’s not really a job where you get paid for it at the end of the month … our strengths lie in the closeness of the people that are actually running the competition. We built up the competition because of the trust and enthusiasm of the people.

Another respondent remarked that the major strength of the orchestra was the ‘commitment’ and ‘belief’ of everyone to the organisation. These quotations suggest that trust is personality-based and it was the sheer force of the artistic director’s personality that generated support from network members.

Role of the network coordinator: establishing legitimacy
The case study data suggests that legitimacy is a key resource in the network, and it contributed to the longevity of the network. One chief executive (company E) remarked that:

The legitimacy of the product, of what we are, that is of paramount importance. Public perception is very important, it is important that the public knows about this orchestra …

In the quest for legitimacy, the artistic directors acted as gatekeepers and screened and selected suitable performers. They went to conferences, attended live performances, and regularly received curricula vitae and sound recordings from musicians.

The artistic directors were pioneers: in the words of one respondent (company C), he ‘belonged to a different era’. In relation to company A, the mission was to ‘raise awareness and standards of musical education, most specifically piano’. The
competition was founded at a time when Irish students had to go abroad to attend competitions and experience the standards of their peers. The founders needed to attract the support of legitimate actors and institutions, and they measured success in terms of scholarship awards, performing opportunities for competition winners, and enrolment of competition winners at prestigious music schools. In the early pre-network stage, the founders forged connections with business leaders in order to establish legitimacy. Former Presidents of Ireland were patrons of three events. One respondent (company B) noted that the people on the board were 'very, very important'. Another respondent claimed:

You need a high-profile board if you are going to go places. We are a very ambitious organisation and for us to succeed, we would need three things: the best board, the best musicians and the best venues.

One respondent remarked that when he was appointed to the board in 1993, there was no real infrastructure for music and he had to build up this infrastructure from scratch:

Not only were we developing an orchestra, we were developing an infrastructure for concerts. We became promoters, publicists, everything that we had to become.

In the quest for legitimacy, respondents were keen to dispel the myths and stereotypes surrounding arts organisations; they stressed that they operated in a commercial arena and that financial constraints dictated the artistic programme. By acting in a pragmatic manner, the artistic directors were able to rely on continued support from network members. According to one respondent:

It was run like a very tough art business … it’s run like a business … and that is why it has been successful, that is why we have hung onto the sponsorship.

For the respondents, legitimacy was equated with having a strong reputation. One organisation employed both a public relations officer in Ireland and a publicist in New York, and it was believed that national television coverage enabled them to attract and keep a sponsor. The respondent noted that being well established and having 'a fairly decent reputation' helped them attract a sponsor, talented musicians, jury members and an audience. Another respondent believed that the high profile nature of the event, together with its economic impact and tourist potential, assured them of continued support from the Arts Council. Another remarked that: 'the reputation of the orchestra is critical from a marketing perspective.' One respondent (company B) noted that it was essential to build up a reputation both locally and internationally, and garner the respect of the local business community. It is hypothesised that trust was ‘rational’ in the sense that these organisations had a track record and network members were aware of the coordinator’s standing in the arts community.

Role of third parties in sustaining trust
According to the literature review, trust in networks is made possible by the presence of third parties who monitor network performance. In this study, the Arts Council and the Board of Management fulfilled this function. The survival of the network, and perhaps the reputation of the network co-ordinator, was at stake if these third parties withdrew their support.

Professionalism was a key value espoused by the network coordinators and it was critical to ensuring the continued trust of the Arts Council. Formal guidelines or rules existed in relation to grant money, and respondents were clearly aware of the importance of accountability. In the words of one respondent: ‘This is taxpayers’ money we are talking about, so everyone has a responsibility to be good stewards.’ According to one informant, the Arts Council did not tolerate mismanagement of funds and the recipients of grant-aid were expected to achieve their stated objectives. However, it was stated that an event could be a success in an artistic sense and not in commercial terms (that is, mass audience appeal) and this was not a problem for the Arts Council. Thus, reviews from art critics were important.

The Board of Management also monitored performance. One respondent (company B) stressed the professionalism of the organisation and stated that the artistic values and business values were fairly equally balanced. According to one respondent (company A):

Success comes from hard work not funding. Total 100 per cent commitment. You work full-time. We
don’t look on it as a half on, half hearted event that is sponsored. This is a statement that comes from the board. There are very tough people on that board and very eminent people on that board. There is no possibility that you don’t do it properly, no leeway to go into deficit, no leeway not to be better than the last time, that doesn’t enter the philosophy at all …

One chief executive (company E) remarked that the board held the power ultimately, they were responsible for the orchestra, and that it was very much a ‘business structure’.

**Trust: swift, latent, rational**

In contrast to industrial networks, the exchange process in the performing arts concerns an experience, a live performance, an emotional bond, rather than a simple material transaction. The musicians, be they professional or amateur, were seen to possess a great love of music and were intrinsically interested in doing their best work; this labour was creative and emotional in nature, which helped foster ‘swift trust’. For example:

Trust can happen quickly within the room … musicians making music together … it’s a different working environment, there’s something about creating synchronised sound together, music is a form of non-verbal communication, it’s pure sound and of course music is a language of emotion – how does that affect your relationship with other people in the room? They are playing it with you remember …

The desire to create music is not something that can be written into a contract and easily enforced, thus trust becomes an important issue. The form of trust that emerges between musicians can be labelled ‘swift’ in the sense that it emerges between parties who have no prior relationship with each other:

Musicians [traditional] come together without rehearsal but yet they can play for 2 to 4 hours, they don’t have to know each other’s names, they can come late, leave early, they needn’t come at all, no money changes hands neither with the person who owns the public house nor with the people who come to listen to you … you don’t have a contract with them …

In the words of another respondent:

You can’t pay someone to be free with their emotions, to create, you can’t force someone into that creative space …

The study revealed that personality conflicts and ‘people issues’ were a problem which needed to be resolved if the artistic project was to be delivered on time. The timing of the event was fixed and the show had to open on time regardless of the state of preparation. The coordinator of the network had to organise and control activities in an efficient way, yet also allow for experimentation, and resolve conflict if the deadlines were to be met. This was a challenging task:

If conflict comes out at rehearsal it can ruin a whole morning’s work, people need creative space to do what they want to do … Even in the arts, experimentation makes artists feel unsure, they don’t know if they are doing the right thing and need to be nurtured … in multi-disciplinary projects, first there are the visual artists, very different personalities, they speak a very different language, they have different ways of dealing with problems … people from the outside work in a close way with the internal politics of the organisation and it is quite difficult; the artistic process was very successful but very draining on an emotional level … Through hard experience, we have had to develop formal procedures for dealing with grievances … (company F).

The literature conceptualises swift trust as fragile, thus the network coordinator played a key role in nurturing ‘swift trust’ among performers. Trust between the artistic partners also has a rational basis. All of the artistic directors were practitioners and had a high degree of affinity with the musicians. They had a deep understanding of the basic needs of musicians and had a genuine interest in their welfare. One respondent claimed that the ability to know and trust the people and the music was ‘sacrosanct’. Another remarked:

When you are working in a creative environment, people have to trust one another 100 per cent, they are coming up with ideas, they may be dancing together, it is a very physical thing as well, they have to deal with each other in a very physical, intimate way … by nature they are very emotional and can’t do their job properly if there are problems …

Another respondent remarked that:
The whole of classical music, from rehearsal to performance, is based on a highly efficient model ... In Ireland, a lot of them would know each other, but they may not have played together before, or for a long time ... in a typical scenario, there are two 3-hour rehearsals and the performance is that night. There are very definite rules of engagement, a good location for rehearsal, they have to be able to read the music, they are music readers, light is very important, temperature is also important, they don’t want to be cold when playing ...

Thus, there is a strong indication that the network is highly reliant on the knowledge and skills of the network coordinator. The desire to meet the needs of the artists was shown in practical ways: a flexible expense policy, the purchase of high quality equipment, the aim to improve working conditions for performers in terms of contracts and job security, being service-oriented (for example, chartering an airplane to bring musicians to venues so that they would feel refreshed before the performance). One respondent claimed that a performer did pro-bono work in order to help them out during a financial crisis, illustrating how strong the bonds became over time.

The literature analyses the formation of trust in terms of past experience, contemporary context and future intentions. Thus study confirms that trust cannot be detached from reputation. One respondent remarked that

If the concert is sub-standard and if musicians feel bad about it, they may not particularly want to work with you again, your value, status, within your peer group goes down, so over a period of time, musicians learn to trust ...

The study showed that there was a high level of interdependencies in the network. The musicians were compelled to join networks in order to perform and earn income (for example, in the words of one respondent, ‘they want a gig’) and the artistic director required creative talent. Musicians were encouraged to perform in ensembles; talented musicians were asked back as soloists after they had become well established. Although the artistic programme had to be unique or different each year, there was an element of continuity to the programme. Thus, one can conceptualise trust in the network in terms of future intentions.

Discussion
The study suggests that the network coordinator assumes a central position in the network and is a catalyst of trust in the network (see Figure 2). In this type of network, high trust seems to be a substitute for contracts, and the network depends on traditional and non-traditional sources of trust. Trust is ‘swift’ due to the nature of live performance; it is ‘latent’ due to the network co-ordinator’s links with key actors built up over time; it is ‘rational’ since it depends on reputation, knowledge bonds, and the presence of third parties who monitor network performance. Figure 3 proposes a conceptual framework of trust which incorporates these factors.

The findings indicate that cultural projects are embedded in a complex web of societal ties, and that trust binds actors together. Many scholars have stressed the concept of ‘embeddedness’ to explain how economic activity takes place within a larger social context (Granovetter, 1985). The notion of embeddedness is closely intertwined with the notion of ‘social capital’. Social capital is generally defined as ties to resources. Granovetter’s (1973) strength of weak ties theory shows how social ties can result in access to information and assist job search. The publication of Burt’s work on 'struc-
tural holes’ (1992) has directed attention to an actor’s network and how it can lead to positive outcomes, such as promotion. Burt equates social capital with the lack of ties among actors, a condition he names ‘structural holes’. He argues that the bridging of structural holes provides an actor with benefits, thus he suggests that an actor exploits his or her network position in order to maximise gain. Putnam (2000) sees social capital as overlapping connections in society. In his famous book *Bowling Alone*, he laments the fact that even though bowling has become more popular in the US over the years, bowling in leagues has declined. Putnam argues that associations, such as organised bowling leagues, bring group members closer together, and ultimately this helps society prosper. Thus, most of these studies concentrate on the benefits of social capital, and scholars seek to explain the role that social ties play in success. In recent times, scholars are beginning to explore the ‘dark side’ of social capital. Ekinsmyth (2002, p. 235) remarks that embedded relationships can result in:

… an exploitative form of social relations between capital and labour. Under the mantle of friendship and co-operation, a ruthless business model is operated.

The accepted wisdom in the arts sector has been to keep costs, particularly labour costs, as low as possible in order to survive. Thus the cultural network is akin to the ‘lean and mean’ industrial network, and there is a need for future research to explore how trust is sustained given the possibly exploitative and sometimes temporary nature of networks. According to the literature, a negative factor associated with this type of network is over-embeddedness and lock-in (Grabher, 2001), where project teams become too stable and new talent is not introduced to the network. The idea of ‘de-activation’ (O’Toole, 1998) has been used to denote the introduction of new actors to change participant dynamics when appropriate. Thus, tensions may emerge over time in an embedded network, which are worthy of further study.

In conclusion, the contribution of this study to the literature was in elucidating the sources of trust in cultural networks. Empirical research into the construct of swift trust in cultural networks has been limited, and there remains significant scope for furthering our understanding of this construct in various settings.

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