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# Hexahelix-Based Creative Economy Ecosystem Activation Model for MSMEs

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## Abstract

**Purpose:** This study formulates a hexahelix-based model for activating the creative economy ecosystem of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in Kendari City, in support of the local people's economy.

**Research Method:** A descriptive-exploratory qualitative design with a development-research orientation was used. Data came from semi-structured interviews with 20 informants representing six actors (government, academia, business, communities, media, and funding institutions), plus observations and document reviews, and were analyzed thematically.

**Results and Discussion:** The ecosystem is fragmented, and interaction among actors is incidental and ceremonial. Four barriers stand out: weak cross-sector coordination, no financing scheme based on intangible assets, mentoring that ends with academic programs, and thin support for communities and media. Opportunities include MSME motivation, micro-credit, digital adaptation, active creative communities, and central-government regulation. The resulting model runs on three work streams: curation and mentoring, promotion and branding, and coordination and evaluation.

**Implications:** The model offers local governments and stakeholders an operational guide for developing creative potential inclusively and sustainably.

**Originality:** The study treats funding institutions as a sixth, independent actor, delivers an implementable model rather than a descriptive account, and links ecosystem activation to strengthening the people's economy.

**Keywords:** Hexahelix; Creative Economy; MSMEs; Activation Model; Actor Capacity Strengthening.

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## *1)* Introduction

Creativity, knowledge, innovation, and local wisdom are among the key resources of the creative economy. Since Howkins (2001) introduced the concept, the creative economy has increasingly been viewed as a contributor to sustainable and inclusive development. International reports have also highlighted its contributions to economic growth, employment, and the development of local communities (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], 2013). In Indonesia, the government established the Creative Economy Agency (Badan Ekonomi Kreatif [BEKRAF]) in 2015 as part of its national strategy for developing the sector. BEKRAF's functions were later integrated into the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy (Presiden Republik Indonesia, 2015). These policies aimed to support the structured and competitive development of creative micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and increase their contribution to national gross domestic product (Kementerian Pariwisata dan Ekonomi Kreatif Republik Indonesia, 2020). Despite these efforts, regional studies and reports continue to identify barriers, including limited access to finance, weak institutional capacity among MSMEs, and insufficient collaboration among stakeholders (Organisation

for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2019; Prasetyo & Kistanti, 2020; United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], 2019). Kendari City illustrates these challenges. The city has diverse creative potential, particularly in culinary products, performing arts, and design based on local culture. However, creative MSMEs continue to face limited access to finance, weak institutional support, insufficient knowledge-based mentoring, and limited involvement of communities and media in building networks and strengthening product brands (Badan Pusat Statistik [BPS], 2025). As a result, the city's creative potential has yet to make its full contribution to the local economy. Previous studies on creative MSMEs in Indonesia have generally examined particular aspects of the sector. Some have investigated digitalization as a means of helping small and medium-sized enterprises access export markets, while others have developed creative economy models based on local wisdom or applied local and pentahelix approaches to specific MSME groups (Budiman et al., 2026; Insiatiningsih & Widyayanti, 2023; Murtiana et al., 2025). Although these studies offer useful insights, their focus remains limited to particular subsectors or approaches. They do not fully examine how the roles of different actors can be integrated within a multi-stakeholder ecosystem.

The hexahelix approach has also appeared in previous research. However, existing studies have largely been descriptive and have not produced a structured, practical activation model for creative MSMEs (Anisykurlillah, 2024; Carayannis & Campbell, 2012; Carayannis et al., 2017; Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff, 2000). In addition, the relationship between creative economy ecosystem development and the strengthening of the community-based economy has received limited attention. Without a clear hexahelix-based model, creative MSME development may remain fragmented and face difficulties in achieving innovation and sustainability (Carayannis & Campbell, 2012; UNDP, 2019). This study makes three contributions. First, it applies the hexahelix approach by integrating six actors—government, academia, businesses, communities, media, and funding institutions—within one collaborative structure. This approach extends beyond triple and pentahelix models and addresses the combined needs of creative MSMEs for financing, community participation, and media-based promotion. Second, the study formulates a practical model tailored to the local characteristics of Kendari City. The model specifies implementation mechanisms, actor responsibilities, collaboration processes, and strategies for addressing the barriers faced by MSMEs. Third, it explicitly connects activation of the creative economy ecosystem with efforts to strengthen the community-based economy, providing a conceptual framework for inclusive and sustainable regional development. This study has three objectives: (1) to analyze the current condition of the creative economy ecosystem for MSMEs in Kendari City, focusing on the involvement and roles of actors within the hexahelix approach; (2) to identify the barriers and opportunities involved in activating the ecosystem to support the community-based economy; and (3) to formulate a hexahelix-based conceptual activation model suited to Kendari's local characteristics and needs. The study adopts a model development approach grounded in a hexahelix ecosystem perspective. It focuses on formulating a conceptual model as a foundation for further policy development and research (OECD, 2020). Section 2 reviews the literature, Section 3 describes the research method, Section 4 presents and discusses the findings, and Section 5 concludes the study.

## *2)* Literature Review and Research Objectives

The literature review positions this study within research on creative economy development and collaborative ecosystems. It outlines the theoretical perspective guiding the inquiry, reviews the role of the hexahelix actors, and identifies gaps in the implementation of collaboration for creative MSMEs, particularly in Eastern Indonesia. Because this study is exploratory and qualitative, it does not test hypotheses. The analysis is instead guided by the research objectives stated in Section 1. Creative economy development involves interconnected activities and stakeholders, so it cannot be addressed effectively through isolated sectoral efforts. An ecosystem approach emphasizes collaboration among actors who contribute different resources, knowledge, and capabilities (Isenberg, 2011). This perspective is relevant to creative MSMEs, whose development may depend on coordinated support for policy, innovation, business growth, community participation, promotion, and access to finance.

Helix models describe collaboration among key actors in innovation and development. The Triple Helix focuses on government, academia, and industry (Etzkowitz & Leydesdorff, 2000). Broader models, including the Pentahelix and Hexahelix, extend this collaboration to include communities, media, and funding institutions (Arnkil et al., 2010; Carayannis & Campbell, 2012). The hexahelix is especially relevant to the complex needs of creative MSMEs because it brings these six actors into one framework: government, academia, business, communities, media, and funding institutions. Within this framework, each actor can contribute distinct but complementary support. Government can establish policies and provide an enabling environment; academia can contribute knowledge, research, and training; businesses can strengthen products and value chains; communities can provide local knowledge and participation; media can increase visibility and promotion; and funding institutions can support access to capital. The ecosystem perspective therefore assumes that stronger coordination among these actors can support more integrated creative economy development. This perspective is consistent with Indonesian policy, which encourages hexahelix collaboration in regional creative economy development. The policy aims to strengthen value chains, expand access to markets and financing, and support inclusive local economies (Kementerian Pariwisata dan Ekonomi Kreatif RI, 2020). However, the implementation of this collaboration remains uneven. In many regions, particularly in Eastern Indonesia, cooperation among actors is weak, creative MSME initiatives often operate independently, and structured activation models that reflect local conditions are limited (Anisykurlillah, 2024; Prasetyo & Kistanti, 2020). These implementation gaps indicate the need to examine how hexahelix collaboration can be activated in a locally relevant and structured way. This study therefore applies the hexahelix perspective to understand the roles and relationships of the six actors in the creative MSME ecosystem. In line with its exploratory qualitative approach, the study is guided by the following research objectives rather than testable hypotheses:

**RO1:** To examine the roles of government, academia, business, communities, media, and funding institutions in supporting creative MSMEs.

**RO2:** To explore the forms and challenges of collaboration among the six hexahelix actors in the study context.

**RO3:** To develop a locally contextualized hexahelix activation model for supporting creative MSME development.

## *3)* Research Method

This study uses a development research approach with a hexahelix-based ecosystem perspective. The goal is to formulate an applicable, contextual activation model for Kendari City, not to measure economic impact quantitatively (McKenney & Reeves, 2018; Richey & Klein, 2014). A descriptive-exploratory qualitative approach was chosen because collaboration among actors is contextual and multidimensional, and quantitative methods alone cannot fully explain it (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The research took place in Kendari City and focused on creative economy MSMEs in the region's leading sub-sectors. Informants came from the six hexahelix actors: local government, academia, creative MSME actors, creative communities, local media, and funding institutions. They were selected purposively for their involvement and strategic roles in regional creative economy development, and recruitment continued until data saturation, which gave 20 informants (Table 1). Semi-structured interviews were held from May to June 2026.

**Table 1. Characteristics of Research Informants**

| Code | Actor | Institution/Business/Community |
|---|---|---|
| P1–P3 | Government | Tourism & Creative Economy Office; Trade, Cooperatives & SMEs Office |
| A1–A3 | Academics | Halu Oleo University (UHO), IAIN Kendari, a local college of economics |

| Code | Actor | Institution/Business/Community |
|---|---|---|
| U1–U7 | MSME Actors | Culinary (traditional cuisine, processed satay, processed fish products); Crafts (woven fabrics, woven crafts, ecoprint, batik) |
| K1–K3 | Community | Crafter Sultra, Kendari Kreatif, Ekraft Kendari |
| M1–M2 | Media | Online Media |
| L1–L2 | Funding Institutions | BPD Sultra, BRI |

Source: Primary data (2026)

The study ran in three sequential stages. The first mapped the ecosystem: key actors, their roles and degree of involvement, and existing programs and policies. Data came from the semi-structured interviews, limited observations, and reviews of policy documents and official reports, guided by an innovation ecosystem analysis framework (OECD, 2019). The second stage identified problems and collaboration opportunities, with attention to coordination gaps, access to financing, mentoring, and the role of communities and media. Thematic analysis (data reduction, coding, grouping of categories, and extraction of themes) kept the problem statements grounded in the field data (UNESCO, 2021). The third stage formulated the activation model by synthesizing the field findings with the literature and adjusting them to the socio-economic characteristics of Kendari, drawing on the helix innovation system concept in a contextual and inclusive form (Carayannis & Campbell, 2012). The output is a conceptual model offered as a reference for regional policy.

## *4)* Results and Discussion

### *a) Results*

**Research setting**

Kendari is the capital of Southeast Sulawesi Province and the province's main center of economic activity and services. Its creative potential draws on coastal resources and Tolaki cultural heritage, most visibly in local culinary products, crafts, and performing arts. Yet the sector's contribution to gross regional domestic product (GRDP) stays below its potential, because activity is scattered and poorly integrated. Informal, micro-scale businesses dominate, and many owners still mix household and business finances. Kendari now has more than 20,000 MSMEs, roughly 35% of them in the creative sector. Growth since the pandemic has been fast, but institutional capacity and access to financing have not kept pace.

**Phase I: Ecosystem mapping**

The mapping shows an ecosystem in fragments. Each actor does its own work, and no shared framework connects them. The local government concentrates on regulation, licensing support, and ceremonial promotion. It does run programs such as communal intellectual property rights (IPR) registration, halal certification, and mass issuance of Business Identification Numbers (NIB). Budget limits and ego-sectoral rivalry between agencies hold these programs back. There is also no legal umbrella, such as a Regional Regulation (Perda) or a Mayor's Regulation (Perwali), for multi-stakeholder collaboration, so efforts to bring sectors together lack formal legitimacy and a secure budget.

Academics contribute through research and community service, but the work is fragmented and incidental. Mentoring often ends when the Community Service Program (PkM) ends, and research tends to stop at journal publication instead of becoming a commercial product or a usable policy recommendation. Universities therefore act only weakly as a lasting knowledge bridge.

MSME actors produce individually and are not yet part of a structured value chain. They report simple financial management, limited legality, difficulty obtaining capital, low packaging technology, and little regeneration among artisans. Creative communities are the most dynamic actors, running peer learning, independent exhibitions, design clinics, and digital mentoring. They are held back by the lack of permanent physical space, minimal operating funds, and insufficient government support.

Local media have created special creative economy rubrics and often serve as media partners for events. Their obstacles are the scarcity of MSME narratives and storytelling, inadequate product photography, and low digital literacy among MSMEs, which keeps promotion from turning into sales.

Funding institutions say they support MSMEs through People's Business Credit (KUR) products. Most creative MSMEs cannot meet the requirements: their financial records are disorganized, their legality is incomplete, they are reluctant to approach banks ("bank phobia"), and lenders rate the sector as high-risk because its value rests largely on intangible assets. Banks remain reactive and transactional and offer no proactive pre-credit mentoring. Table 2 summarizes the actual roles, constraints, and needs of each actor.

**Table 2. Mapping of Roles, Constraints, and Needs of Hexahelix Actors**

| Actor | Actual Role | Main Constraints | Strategic Needs |
|---|---|---|---|
| Government | Regulator, licensing facilitator, exhibition organizer | Limited budget, ego-sectoral coordination, absence of legal umbrella | Mayor's Regulation on Creative Economy, Regional Creative Economy Committee, data integration, sustainable budget |
| Academics | Researchers, incidental community service implementers, certification providers | Discontinued mentoring, non-applicable research, passive synergy | Integrated incubation, management clinics, collaborative research, analytic hub |
| MSME Actors | Individual producers | Simple financial management, limited legality, difficult access to capital | Technical mentoring, soft financing, digital & storytelling training |
| Community | Peer learning forum, initial curator, innovation driver | No permanent basecamp, minimal operational funds, insufficient government support | Permanent Creative Hub, operational funds, recognition as strategic partner |
| Media | Media partner, special rubric, information disseminator | Lack of MSME narratives, MSMEs not digitally ready | Narrative consortium, storytelling training, group advertising subsidies |
| Funding Institutions | Provider of KUR & capital credit | MSMEs not bankable, bank phobia, high risk in creative economy | Joint business clinics, guarantee schemes, digital financing, seasonal installment schemes |

Source: Primary data (2026)

Interactions among actors are sectoral and incidental. The interviews show that relationships depend on functional proximity and short-term interests, with no permanent mechanism binding the parties. The government–MSME relationship is top-down and ceremonial. Academic–MSME contact is one-off and follows the academic calendar. Community–MSME ties are the most intensive but cannot be sustained because resources are short. Banking–MSME relations are transactional, and media–MSME interaction is passive and one-sided. No permanent forum brings all six actors together on a regular basis, which produces overlapping programs, duplicated assistance, and ineffective mentoring.

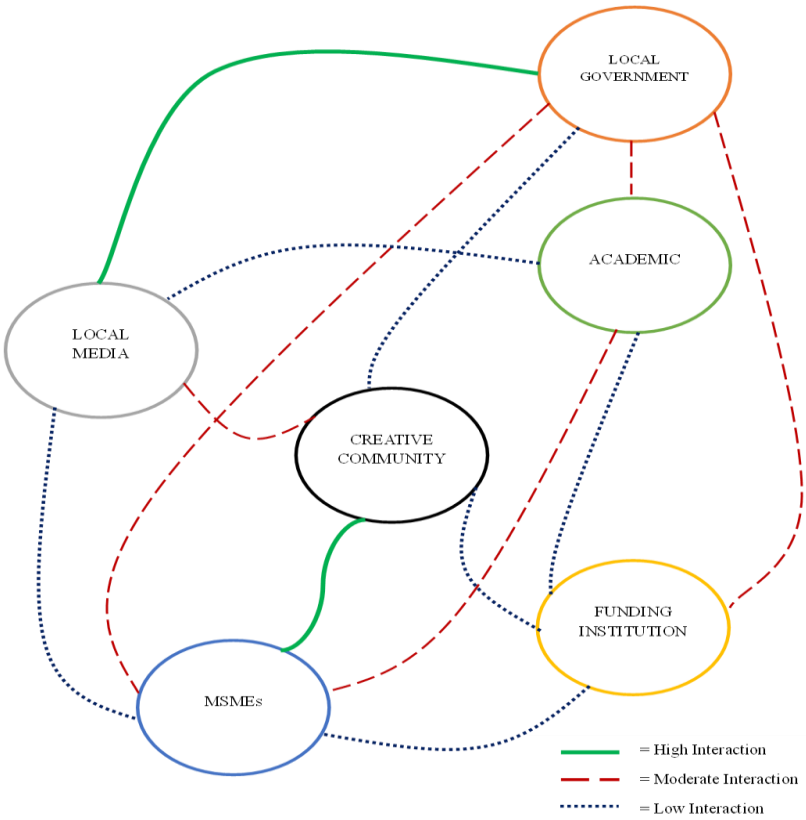



**Figure 1. S**cheme of Actual Actor Interactions in the Creative Economy Ecosystem of Kendari City

Source: Processed data (2026)

Figure 1 maps these interactions. Weak bilateral ties dominate, and the strongest links are government–media and community–MSMEs, while academics and funding institutions sit at the edge, poorly connected to the rest. All six actors required for hexahelix collaboration are present in Kendari and playing roles, but they are not yet joined in a coordinated network. As a result, the energy and resources each actor holds do not move together toward the shared goal of strengthening the people's economy through inclusive, sustainable creative economy development.

**Phase II: Barriers and opportunities**

Phase II looked for the structural and operational factors that keep the ecosystem from being activated, and for openings that could strengthen collaboration. Thematic analysis of the twenty interviews produced four connected clusters of barriers. The first is cross-sector coordination. There is no structured, lasting coordination mechanism, and the actors work to different targets and rhythms: banks follow strict regulation, academics follow the academic calendar, and the government follows the regional budget (APBD) cycle. Aligning these interests is hard. Without a legal umbrella the government cannot allocate flexible budgets, and private actors have no legal certainty for joining an integrated scheme.

The second is access to financing. All MSMEs described difficulty raising capital because of heavy collateral requirements and monthly installments that do not match seasonal income. Conventional banks still rely on physical collateral, whereas the added value of creative businesses comes mostly from intangible assets. The shortage of independent assessment institutions and low legal literacy make the situation worse.

The third is thin knowledge-based mentoring. Community service is short-term and not sustained, and training from government agencies is often too theoretical and not specific enough. MSMEs need continuous technical help with packaging technology, supply chain improvement, and certification.

The fourth is the weak role of media and communities. Media have not become sustained promotion partners, partly because MSMEs tell their stories poorly. Communities lack permanent space and operating funds, and the government does not yet recognize them as strategic partners, even though they bridge the gap between business actors and other stakeholders.

The analysis also found five opportunities: strong enthusiasm and willingness to learn among MSMEs; readiness of banking programs and corporate social responsibility (CSR) schemes for integrated collaboration; central-government support through the Ministry of Creative Economy and the Creative Economy Development Roadmap (Rindekraf) 2026–2045 (Presiden Republik Indonesia, 2026); active, innovative community initiatives; and the potential of digital technology for record-keeping, promotion, and access to financing. These opportunities became the empirical base for the activation model.

**Phase III: The activation model**

Phase III combined the mapping from Phase I with the barriers and opportunities from Phase II into a model for Kendari City. The model is not merely descriptive. It sets out implementation mechanisms, how roles are divided among actors, how collaboration flows, and how specific barriers are addressed.

The local government acts as regulator and policy facilitator. Its tasks are to issue a Mayor's Regulation on Creative Economy (Perwali Ekraf), set up a Regional Creative Economy Committee, provide a Risk Guarantee Fund, allocate fiscal incentives, facilitate the Creative Hub, and integrate data across agencies. This fits the mandate of the Ministry of Creative Economy to strengthen creative economy ecosystems through the hexahelix approach across regions. Academics are the knowledge provider and analytic hub. They supply empirical data, design evidence-based evaluation instruments, run multi-stage incubation mentoring, and develop collaborative applied research, so that findings do not stop at journal publication but become commercial products or applicable policy recommendations.

Creative communities are the curation bridge and activator. They verify MSME eligibility, provide peer learning spaces, manage public creative spaces, produce digital assets, and develop product narratives. Because they are closest to MSMEs, they can connect business actors with the other stakeholders. Local media are branding partners and promoters of a collective narrative. They offer sustained promotional space, package inspirational narratives, form a Creative Narrative Consortium, and educate the public. They act as strategic partners in building brand reputation and public awareness, not just as channels for information.

Funding institutions provide community-based soft credit with flexible installments, join Joint Business Clinics, use digital assets for portfolio assessment, and make better use of guarantee schemes. MSME actors are the main producers and innovators. They improve production capacity, strengthen financial recording, meet legal requirements, adopt digital technology, and take part in collaboration forums. They are active participants who help set the direction of the ecosystem according to their real needs, not passive recipients of programs. Figure 2 shows the overall design of the model.




**Figure 2.** Design of the Hexahelix-Based Creative Economy Ecosystem Activation Model for MSMEs

Source: Processed data (2026)

The model runs on three integrated flows (Figure 3), designed to answer all the barriers from Phase II while using the opportunities identified there. The first is the Curation and Mentoring Flow. MSMEs register through a community or the Integrated Business Service Center (PLUT), and the community curates them first. It then recommends them at the same time to academics for technical mentoring of at least six months and to banks for credit assessment. Mentoring is expected to improve governance, legal compliance, and administrative readiness, which become the basis for financing with flexible installments. The second is the Promotion and Branding Flow. Media, communities, and academics build collective narratives through the Creative Narrative Consortium. The government sets the city branding theme and the annual calendar, and MSMEs contribute products and digital readiness. Media broadcast content continuously under subsidized group advertising and run storytelling and product photography training. The third is the Coordination and Evaluation Flow. The Regional Creative Economy Committee meets quarterly, supported by a Joint Secretariat that coordinates programs, updates data, and prevents duplicated assistance. The government supplies the budget, academics supply evaluation data, and communities pass on feedback from the field. Media publicize achievements, and banks report how much financing was actually disbursed.

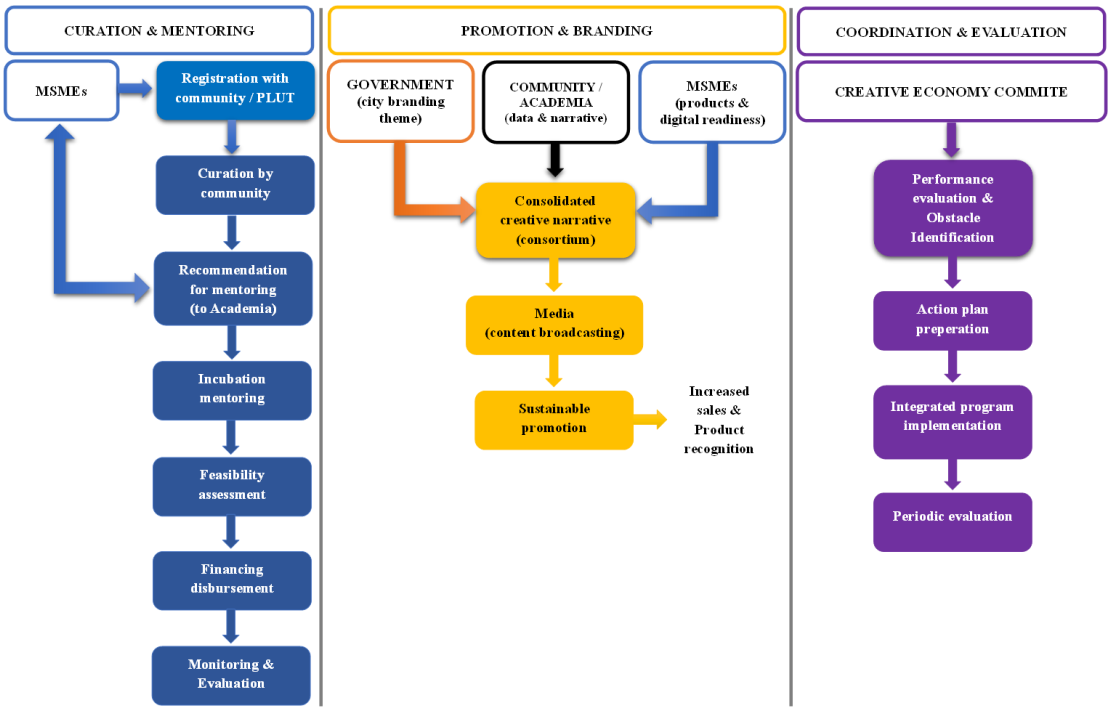



**Figure 3.** Collaboration Flow of the Hexahelix Creative Economy Ecosystem Activation Model

Source: Processed data (2026)

Two supporting mechanisms are needed before full collaboration can happen, in line with studies of adaptive hexahelix model development: joint financial literacy training for academics, banks, and MSMEs, and stronger institutional capacity for communities as the bridge between MSMEs and other actors. Both are built into the curation-and-mentoring and coordination-and-evaluation flows.

**Implementation of the model**

The model is meant to be implemented in three stages, so that programs stay realistic and measurable and have a direct effect on the people's economy. Stage I is the institutional and regulatory foundation: issuing the Perwali Ekraf, establishing the Regional Creative Economy Committee, and forming the Joint Secretariat to support mass legalization (NIB, halal certification, the Home Industry Food Production Certificate or P-IRT, and IPR). Stage II is capacity strengthening and access expansion. It covers an integrated Creative Hub (photo studio, packaging laboratory, co-working space), credit

lines without physical collateral backed by guarantee institutions, and a policy requiring modern retail, hotels, and restaurants to take at least 10% of their products from local MSMEs.

Stage III is sustainability and impact expansion. It includes special budget allocations institutionalized within the APBD, stronger local raw-material supply chains, support for entry into export markets, and regular evaluation of ecosystem performance against national standard indicators. Success depends heavily on the political commitment and budget allocation of the local government, and on the willingness of all actors to move past sectoral egos and build shared interests within an inclusive, sustainable people's economy.

*b)* **Discussion**

The fragmentation found in Kendari matches what Naibaho and Sihombing (2026) and Anisykurlillah (2024) report for other regions: weak inter-institutional coordination and uneven synergy hold back regional creative economies. In Kendari the problem has a particular shape. All six actors are present and active, yet they relate through linear, bilateral ties that follow proximity and short-term interest. Etzkowitz and Leydesdorff (2000) argue that innovation systems must move from hierarchical to overlapping relationships, and Carayannis and Campbell (2012) and Carayannis et al. (2017) carry that idea into the Quadruple/Quintuple Helix, which places knowledge, media, community, and financing in one interactive ecosystem. Kendari has the actors but not yet the overlap. This is why the model puts so much weight on permanent coordination, through the Committee and the Joint Secretariat, rather than on adding more programs.

The financing barrier follows the same logic. Creative businesses create value mainly through intangible assets (Howkins, 2001), but conventional banks still ask for physical collateral and fixed monthly installments. This mismatch between financial products and the risk profile of creative enterprises is also reported by the OECD (2019). The model therefore works on both sides: guarantee schemes, installments that follow seasonal income, and portfolio assessment based on digital assets on the lender's side, and pre-credit mentoring, better records, and legal compliance on the MSME side. The aim is to move banks from a reactive, transactional role to a proactive one.

Mentoring shows a similar gap. Short-term community service tied to the academic calendar is far from the systematic and inclusive accumulation of local knowledge that UNESCO (2013; 2021) recommends. The model replaces one-off activity with multi-stage incubation of at least six months, entered through community curation and linked to financing decisions, so that mentoring leads somewhere concrete.

The opportunities found here echo Insiatiningsih and Widyayanti (2023) and Azizah and Muhfiatun (2017), who stress digital integration and multi-stakeholder collaboration as foundations for resilient growth. MSME motivation, community dynamism, and central-government support, including the Rindekraf 2026–2045, suggest that Kendari has enough social capital and policy backing to activate its ecosystem. What is missing is the mechanism that connects them.

Treating funding institutions as an independent sixth actor is consistent with Pauzy et al. (2026), who concluded that the hexahelix model has the potential to strengthen cross-sector collaboration and improve MSME performance. The Kendari evidence points the same way: financing was the most concrete barrier, and funding institutions sat at the periphery of the interaction map in Figure 1. The comparison has limits, since Pauzy et al. studied handicraft SMEs in another region and the Kendari model has not yet been tested in practice. More broadly, the results support the premise that creative economy development needs a collaborative ecosystem approach rather than sector-by-sector programs (Isenberg, 2011).

## *5)* Conclusion

This study asked how the creative economy ecosystem of MSMEs in Kendari City can be activated through the hexahelix approach. Using a descriptive-exploratory qualitative design and interviews with 20 informants from six actor groups, it found an ecosystem that is fragmented: the six actors are not systemically integrated, interactions are incidental and ceremonial, and the lack of a permanent coordination forum leaves empowerment programs partial and without cumulative impact. Activation is held back by weak cross-sector coordination without a regional legal umbrella, the absence of financing schemes based on intangible assets, mentoring that stops when academic programs end, and inadequate physical infrastructure and operational support for communities and

media. Five social assets offer a counterweight: the learning motivation of business actors, the availability of micro-credit, adaptation to digital payments, the dynamism of young creative communities, and regulatory support from the central government.

The study contributes a contextual Hexahelix-Based Creative Economy Ecosystem Activation Model for MSMEs, tailored to Kendari City and positioning financial institutions as the sixth independent actor. The model runs on three work streams (curation and mentoring, promotion and branding, and coordination and evaluation) and is implemented in three stages: institutional foundation, capacity strengthening, and sustainability. Academically, the findings support extending hexahelix theory to developing cities in eastern Indonesia and indicate that the effectiveness of multi-stakeholder collaboration depends on permanent coordination mechanisms, legal frameworks, and the commitment of all actors. Practically, and for policy, the model gives the Kendari City Government and stakeholders an operational guide for turning local creative potential into an independent, inclusive, and sustainable force for the people's economy.

Several limitations should be kept in mind. The study is qualitative and covers one city, with 20 informants interviewed in May and June 2026, so its findings describe Kendari and should not be generalized to other regions. The model is a conceptual formulation built from field findings and the literature, and its feasibility and effect on MSME performance have not been tested empirically. Future research could pilot and evaluate the model, compare it across other cities in eastern Indonesia, and use quantitative or mixed methods to measure its effect on MSME performance and on the people's economy.

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## Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that they do not have any conflict of interest.

## Statement on the Use of Generative AI

During the preparation of this manuscript, the author used ChatGPT and other generative AI tools to improve the clarity, readability, and language of the text. The author reviewed and revised all AI-assisted content and takes full responsibility for the accuracy, integrity, and final content of the manuscript.

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