

CRAFT-BASED EXPERIENCES TO REVITALIZE TOURISTIC URBAN CENTERS: THE VENETIAN CASE STUDY

STEFANO MICELLI AND SOFIA MIZZAN

Ca' Foscari University of Venice, Italy

ABSTRACT

Craft enterprises can play a crucial role in revitalizing urban centers generating positive externalities for local communities and territorial ecosystems from both economic and social perspectives. Their impact can benefit from the increasing interest among tourists in search of authentic interactions with local SMEs. This paper introduces a literature review framing culture-based regeneration projects as initiatives aimed at promoting territorial heritage, local know-how, working practices, and overall local attractiveness. Craft businesses can indeed play a pivotal role in this context, especially when their offerings combine educational features and tailored services that respond to the curiosity of an increasingly sophisticated tourist demand. The analysis of three case studies involving craft enterprises in Venice's historic center illustrates the links between craftsmanship, territorial economic growth, social benefits, and enhanced city attractiveness. The chapter aims to demonstrate that through strategic management consulting and

effective ecosystem integration, it is possible to foster urban and social regeneration, leveraging local and mindful touristic demand.

Keywords: Craft enterprises; new technologies; strategic management; experiential tourism; sustainability; urban regeneration

INTRODUCTION

Craft enterprises have been considered for a long time incapable of growth and technology adoption. A number of studies have highlighted the limits of such a stereotype. Not only are these firms now utilizing digital technologies in different realms (production, administration, and communication), but when guided by strategic management and anchored in a robust territorial ecosystem, they emerge as catalysts of culture-based urban regeneration. Traditionally bounded by distribution constraints, these firms are increasingly discovering new communication and distribution channels related to tourism. By translating traditional know-how into authentic and immersive experiences, these firms are indeed able to meet a sophisticated tourist demand. When properly guided, these firms benefit from these emerging opportunities while safeguarding intangible heritage and strengthening place identity. The success of these online and offline experiences depends not only on appropriate managerial decisions but also on a variety of actors, resources, and relationships provided by the local community.

This chapter takes into consideration critical success factors, analyzing three case studies in the problematic context of Venice. The paper also evaluates the role of public institutions and other enabling territorial actors that shaped and amplified firms' economic, cultural, and social trajectory.

In conclusion, the chapter identifies guidelines to develop local companies, to connect small craft firms to technology providers, and to foster local policies to favor a positive business environment.

CULTURE-BASED URBAN REGENERATION

Culture-based urban regeneration involves comprehensive approaches targeting both infrastructural and intangible urban elements. This regeneration type emphasizes creative and cultural interventions aimed at revitalizing neglected urban spaces, such as abandoned buildings or deteriorated areas. By reactivating these underutilized assets, culture-led regeneration transforms them into

vibrant, multifunctional spaces that enhance urban livability and accessibility (Cancellieri & Ostanel, 2014).

Research emphasizes the potential of culture-based regeneration to activate local community resources, thereby fostering new socio-cultural dynamics that extend beyond traditional economic outcomes. Hybrid cultural spaces emerge as pivotal points within these initiatives, offering platforms for innovation, social interaction, and cultural engagement. Such spaces contribute significantly to the urban landscape, functioning as centers for communal activities, cultural promotion, and sustainable economic practices, thus increasing the overall attractiveness and the livability of the urban area (Lusiani & Panozzo, 2016).

Craft enterprises significantly influence urban regeneration, offering crucial economic contributions to communities (Li et al., 2020). These businesses generate employment opportunities, particularly enhancing the economic well-being of the middle-class segment. They strengthen the competitiveness of local economies by integrating specialized skills into global value chains and by providing distinctive products and tailored services that appeal to both residents and tourists (Bettiol & Micelli, 2014; Micelli, 2011).

Furthermore, craft enterprises help maintain traditional practices and expertise, creating a valuable repository of knowledge that supports specific sectors, notably luxury markets and experiential tourism. This preservation not only enhances economic opportunities but also positions cities as unique destinations attracting high-value visitors, thus sustaining economic vibrancy and growth.

CRAFT ENTERPRISES AS DRIVERS OF GENERATIVE LOCAL COMMUNITIES

The influence of craft enterprises extends beyond economic aspects, profoundly impacting social and cultural dynamics. These businesses play a central role in preserving and transmitting traditional knowledge and skills cultivated within local vocational practices, actively contributing to the continuation and evolution of cultural heritage (Manfredi Latilla et al., 2019). Through their operations, craft enterprises foster cultural enrichment within communities by disseminating innovative practices, products, and technologies.

Moreover, these businesses often create communal spaces that promote social revitalization. They foster greater social cohesion, strengthen social bonds, and enhance residents' sense of belonging and identity. This social rejuvenation directly contributes to elevating community well-being and

encourages active citizen participation in local cultural initiatives (Sepe & Di Trapani, 2010).

Craft enterprises can establish and sustain competitive advantages by effectively leveraging their unique cultural and traditional assets. The strategic use of cultural heritage within business models enables these enterprises to differentiate themselves in increasingly competitive markets. This differentiation is particularly relevant in sectors such as luxury goods and creative tourism, where the uniqueness and authenticity of products and experiences are paramount (Bettiol & Micelli, 2014). An illustrative case is the recent increased focus on craft skills and local heritage, driven by a demand from sophisticated consumer segments looking for unique and personalized products and services. By aligning their offerings with these trends, craft enterprises can significantly enhance their market position and profitability, contributing directly to urban economic resilience and competitiveness.

Craft businesses serve as vital elements within the socio-economic fabric of local communities. Existing literature highlights the importance of communities as dynamic systems characterized by identity, place, and shared spaces (Smith & Robinson, 2006). The active participation of community members in cultural and economic initiatives significantly supports urban regeneration efforts, ensuring their long-term success and sustainability (Li et al., 2020; Ostanel, 2017).

In conclusion, craft enterprises often act as catalysts for innovation and social connectivity. They not only maintain existing social networks but also foster the development of new relationships within communities. This generative role is essential for enhancing social cohesion, community resilience, and local pride. Furthermore, by incorporating community-based practices, these enterprises reinforce social capital and facilitate collaborative innovation, thereby creating the conditions for a sustainable urban regeneration.

TOURISM AND CRAFT: FROM CONFLICT TO OPPORTUNITY

Tourism has a dual impact on local communities, often fueling conflict and disease while generating economic benefits. On the one hand, the surge in visitor numbers can strain urban life. Italy, for example, recorded 458.4 million tourist presences in 2024, an all-time high (Confcommercio, 2024). In many art cities, residents have lamented what experts term overtourism, described as a phenomenon that leads to alienated residents, a degraded tourist experience, overloaded infrastructure, damage to nature, or threats to culture and heritage (McKinsey & Company & World Travel & Tourism Council, 2017).

According to a study on Managing Tourism Growth in Europe (Jordan et al., 2018), overtourism can be driven by factors such as the accessibility and affordability of travel, the traditional policy focused on promoting volume, an increase in international arrivals, the urbanization pressure, the gentrification and increasing prices in city centers and new neighborhoods, the proliferation of unregulated tourist accommodations, and the concentration of large groups of tourists. These factors can indeed lead to increased congestion, pressure on infrastructure, pollution and environmental degradation, living costs for residents, damage to historical sites and monuments, and loss of identity and authenticity (Jordan et al., 2018).

To control this situation, local authorities in Italy have resorted to drastic measures which span from the turnstiles at the Trevi Fountain to the crowd control in the center of Venice. These measures have led to an increase in the negative perception that tourism wears out cities and even leads to displacement of residents (Confcommercio Firenze, 2017). Such feelings are not unique to Italy; cities like Barcelona and Berlin, other than Venice and Milan, suffer the same over tourism complaints. Social diseases associated with the phenomenon and testified by residents include noise complaints, housing cost inflation due to short-term rentals, congestion, commercialization and privatization of public spaces, and environmental deterioration, including waste, air, and water quality issues (Peeters et al., 2018), thus confirming the findings of the study conducted by Jordan et al. (2018).

These common negative perceptions of tourism frame it as a force that, if not regulated, undermines the quality of life of residents and local identity (Laudiero, 2020). However, it is necessary not to forget that tourism also creates jobs and wealth before causing malaise (Confcommercio Firenze, 2017). This paradox sets the stage for reimagining tourism not as an inevitable source of conflict, but as an opportunity for positive community development, transforming tourism into a catalyst for local benefit rather than a source of tension.

Counterbalancing these issues can be significantly addressed by the rising trend in tourist preferences demanding authentic and immersive experiences. Many travelers today seek to “live like a local” and engage meaningfully with the places they visit, rather than just consume superficial sights (Paulauskaite et al., 2017). This trend has been conceptualized as creative tourism, defined by Richards and Wilson (2006) as tourism that emphasizes active learning and participation in the host culture. Tourists increasingly crave activities that allow personal connection, self-development, and cultural exchange, be it learning a traditional craft, cooking a regional recipe, or participating in local festivals (Hsia, 2020).

Importantly, authenticity-seeking tourists often explicitly value crafts and folk culture. In a bibliometric review of crafts and development, Bellver et al. (2023) found that “craft itself, most of the time, [is] a motivation for tourism development.” Visitors are drawn to destinations where they can witness and even partake in traditional craftsmanship, for example, observing a master potter at work or taking a ceramics workshop. Such activities provide a richer narrative than passive sightseeing; they cater to the desire for experiential travel where memories are formed through doing and learning.

The convergence of overtourism challenges and the quest for authenticity points to a potential opportunity: craft-based heritage experiences as a bridge between visitors and locals. Crafts, encompassing artisan skills, handmade products, and traditional know-how, embody local identity and offer exactly the kind of genuine encounter many travelers seek. When tourism and crafts are deliberately linked, a win-win scenario can emerge, fostering sustainable local development while satisfying tourist expectations. Recent literature affirms that tourists’ interest in “local traditional crafts” not only generates income for artisans but also “promot[e]s heritage conservation... and employment creation” in the community (Bellver et al., 2023, p. 4). In other words, an influx of visitors specifically drawn by crafts can help keep those very traditions alive, both culturally and economically. This intersection can create a virtuous cycle as it enables crafts to be more economically sustainable, to strengthen identity and pride, and tighten social cohesion. When tourism is built around these principles, it becomes an opportunity for growth for everyone.

EXPERIENTIAL TOURISM: A CRITICAL OVERVIEW OF EXISTING INITIATIVES

A number of successful projects have been launched in the recent past to provide tourists with unique and culturally sophisticated experiences. A prominent example of a top-down approach to experiential tourism is Airbnb Experiences, launched by the globally dominant home-sharing platform Airbnb. This service, introduced in 2016, allows hosts to offer curated activities to visitors, effectively leveraging Airbnb’s vast user base to market local experiences. The offerings span many categories: an Italian guide in Airbnb Experiences highlights traditional culinary experiences, historic and cultural tours, and creative and artisanal workshops among the options. The concept has undoubted merits. It officially launched the idea of immersive travel on a large scale, leveraging on the growing interest toward creative tourism, and

provided a platform for local enterprises (including craft practitioners and SMEs) to connect with a paying audience. By 2017, as Airbnb Experiences rolled out in cities like Milan and Rome, commentators noted that the platform was tapping into travelers' curiosity and desire to find a complicity with locals. Airbnb's massive reach and brand recognition gave experiential tourism a boost on a scale that few grassroots projects could achieve alone.

However, significant limitations accompany this top-down, platform-mediated model. The first limitation is the potential for standardization and commodification of experiences. While marketed as "unique" and "handcrafted" activities, many Airbnb Experiences tend to gravitate toward a narrow band of popular themes (e.g., food and wine tours, generic craft classes that appeal to a broad audience). The emphasis on scalable experiences that earn high ratings can lead to a degree of formulaic repetition across destinations.

A second limitation concerns the visibility and accessibility for local artisans. Despite Airbnb's global reach, the process of becoming an Experience host requires digital literacy, language skills (the ability to present the experience in English or other major languages), and meeting Airbnb's guidelines for host quality. Many small craft entrepreneurs or masters, especially older artisans, may lack these capacities, often leading many local artisans to remain invisible on the platforms.

Another critique is the question of genuine community benefit. Airbnb Experiences is a for-profit service that charges a fee to hosts; its priority is the satisfaction of paying customers (tourists), which may not always align with community priorities. The impact on craftspeople's income is also unclear. Hosts might earn extra revenue, but a significant cut goes to the platform. Moreover, there is no built-in mechanism to channel any of the profits into broader community projects or craft preservation funds.

These last limitations are strongly related to the nature of the platform itself. Airbnb, indeed, like the other sharing economy platforms, such as Uber, tends to concentrate economic and political power, disrupting both local policies and financial flows (Peeters et al., 2018). Additionally, although this initiative can lead tourists to choose non-conventional travel experiences, it may nudge them toward already-crowded sites, given their ability to quickly check and navigate reviews, and to contribute to the overtourism of the most popular places (McKinsey & Company & World Travel & Tourism Council, 2017). In this sense, the virtuousness of the collaboration can be limited by the corporate framework. Without community governance or profit-sharing, Airbnb's model remains transactional.

At the other end of the spectrum, there are bottom-up initiatives driven by local communities, artisan networks, and small enterprises. Throughout the

world, there are numerous examples of grassroots efforts to link crafts and tourism: from local craft markets and open-studio trails to community-run workshops for visitors, to cooperative galleries featuring handmade goods. Often, cultural associations and third-sector organizations spearhead these initiatives, recognizing crafts as a vehicle for local development (Laudiero, 2020). Such bottom-up approaches have clear strengths. They are usually embedded in the local context, which means they can draw upon genuine community participation and ensure that benefits stay localized. Moreover, these initiatives can highlight very specific heritage skills that outsiders might overlook, and participants (both hosts and visitors) often report a high degree of satisfaction due to the personal, authentic, and intimate nature of the interactions.

However, bottom-up initiatives face significant visibility and scalability challenges. The very fact that they are local and independent means they often struggle to reach potential tourists who are not already on-site. This acknowledgment encapsulates the visibility gap: even when rich opportunities exist for tourists to experience crafts, the lack of a unifying promotion or easy discovery mechanism means demand doesn't fully meet supply. In Italy, a similar pattern exists. Small artisans in places off the main tourist circuit often rely on serendipity or word-of-mouth, but attracting international visitors is difficult without digital exposure.

Another challenge is that grassroots initiatives may lack professionalization or consistency, which can limit tourist satisfaction or trust. Some local initiatives have overcome this by forming networks or labels to assure visitors of a certain standard. For example, in the UK and Italy, "open studios" events create a circuit of trusted artisan visits. But without broader recognition, these remain niche (European Training Foundation, 2024). Even when bottom-up projects succeed in drawing visitors, they often depend on supportive policy and partnerships to survive. Without them, they risk remaining isolated experiments.

THE NEED FOR SUSTAINABLE TERRITORIAL ECOSYSTEMS

Both models in their pure version show visible limits. Platforms tend to quickly become merely extractive, while, on the other hand, bottom-up initiatives are characterized by financial and visibility constraints. To truly harness the virtuous synergy between crafts and sustainable tourism, a strategic and integrated approach is needed. This approach should combine the strengths of digital innovation with thoughtful management and governance strategies.

Digital technologies are indeed fundamental tools for scaling up craft-based tourism experiences and gaining visibility and recognition. However, their presence alone does not ensure the success of the experiences promoted. They must be accompanied by a strategic management guide that ensures quality, genuine buy-in from local stakeholders, continuous monitoring of outcomes and support, able to guarantee positive and sustainable impact on the territory and community engagement.

A clear example of the effectiveness of this model is well represented by *Entreprise et Découverte*, a national association that has been fully committed to promoting cultural heritage and local know-how. They have been able to not only provide tours among trustworthy craft artisans for tourists but also support in designing and managing these experiences for craftsmen. In this way, the association allows all the member artisans and entrepreneurs to be recognized as excellent and quality product and experiences providers and tourists to be easily guided among the authentic and creative experiences they are looking for, generating positive externalities both for the social and entrepreneurial fabric of the territory and for the overall satisfaction of the tourist demand. These achievements have been possible thanks to the creation of a well-managed ecosystem that combined digital presence with a strong brand identity and an on-the-ground and capillary network.

AN EMERGING MODEL IN THE VENETIAN CONTEXT

The venetian context represents an interesting case study to evaluate and measure the key features of an increasingly integrated territorial ecosystem, intended as a multi-level system of actors, resources, and relationships, in which coordination and value co-creation support sustainable development and competitiveness within a specific territory (Troisi et al., 2019).

In the historical center of Venice analysts observed an improved entrepreneurial attitude by local craft in shaping innovative experiences. At the same time, social entrepreneurs have been able to launch network projects that increased connectivity and promoted knowledge sharing. As regards these relevant craft initiatives to promote unique experiences, a selective process was applied to identify those most representative of the city's evolving relationship between craftsmanship and tourism. Martina Vidal Venezia, Orsoni 1888, and Lunardelli Venezia emerged from this process as emblematic case studies. These enterprises were chosen for their consolidated presence in the territory, their historical significance, and the national and international recognition they have received for their cultural and creative contributions (Comune di

Venezia, 2021; Fondazione Cologni Mestieri d'Arte, Foreman, 2017; Homo Faber Guide; ITP Italian Travel Press, 2024; Moledini, 2022; Molteni, 2023; Wallpaper magazine, 2019).

Each of them demonstrates a sustained capacity for renewal and innovation while remaining firmly embedded in the local context. In addition, particular attention was given to ensuring sectoral diversity, ranging from fashion to furniture, in order to highlight varied approaches to the integration of immersive and experiential practices within artisanal spaces. This selection thus reflects a deliberate effort to focus on those actors who best exemplify the potential of craft enterprises to reimagine tradition through contemporary engagement strategies.

The results clearly underline the transformative impact of framing experiences, combining digital technologies with strategic management. In conclusion of this paragraph, active network projects uniting dispersed local actors will be described, emphasizing the synergies of new technologies and traditional management tools to support local communities of practice.

MARTINA VIDAL VENEZIA

Martina Vidal Venezia is a family-run craft enterprise based on the island of Burano, Venice, that has upheld the renowned tradition of Burano lace-making through four generations, specializing in luxury home linens, personalized embroidery, lace, lingerie, and accessories such as cashmere scarves. Recognizing the growing importance of experiential tourism, Martina Vidal Venezia has proactively developed an immersive visitor experience grounded in storytelling that emphasizes the company's historical linkage and commitment to traditional craftsmanship.

The firm has indeed established a family-operated museum within their atelier, showcasing antique lacework dating from the 17th to the 20th centuries, thereby reinforcing the narrative of cultural authenticity and heritage. Additionally, the firm offers educational courses at multiple proficiency levels, complementing the activities the museum offers and actively involving visitors and locals alike, thus fostering cultural transmission and community engagement.

The integration of advanced digital technologies for the effective promotion of the events and the workshops held on-site has significantly amplified visibility and accessibility of the company to an international audience. Additionally, Martina Vidal has recently integrated virtual reality technology into its offerings to enrich visitor experiences, allowing tourists and visitors

to digitally engage with traditional lace-making processes both on-site and remotely.

Further enhancing its commitment to cultural sustainability and transmission of traditional skills, Martina Vidal Venezia has actively participated in the “Mano a Mano” project, an initiative realized in collaboration with the Fondazione “The Place of Wonder” and the Londra Palace Hotel in Venice aimed at preserving and promoting Venetian craftsmanship through dedicated training and mentorship for emerging artisans. Through this involvement, the company not only contributes to safeguarding the legacy of Burano lace-making but also actively supports the continuity and revitalization of Venice’s artisanal heritage.

These strategic efforts in digital innovation and community engagement align with contemporary scholarly insights (Richards, 2021), which advocate for adapting traditional crafts to appeal to new generations, thereby ensuring cultural and economic sustainability.

ORSONI VENEZIA 1888

Orsoni Venezia 1888 is the only furnace that maintains the traditional art of handcrafting mosaic tesserae within the island of Venice. It is renowned globally for its exceptional quality and vast palette, exceeding 3,500 colors and including 24-carat gold leaf mosaics. Orsoni’s legacy dates to 1888 when the founder, Angelo Orsoni, exhibited mosaic techniques at the Universal Exhibition in Paris, and continued subsequently with the contribution of Orsoni to monumental artistic works such as Gaudí’s Sagrada Familia in Spain and San Marco’s Basilica in Venice.

To enhance visitor engagement, Orsoni offers regular complimentary guided tours known as “The Wednesday Cultural Visits,” enabling visitors to witness artisans at work and explore the “Library of Colours,” a comprehensive archive showcasing the range of mosaic hues produced. Collaborations, such as the one with D20 Art Lab at Ca’ Foscari University, have resulted in innovative, immersive installations like “Sounds from the Color Library,” which employs Hyper Sonic Sound technology to narrate poetic interpretations of colors, significantly enhancing the sensory and emotional visitor experience.

Additionally, to further underline its intimate connection with art and culture, Orsoni actively engage in strategic collaborations and hosts an artist residency thanks to which the company has given life to various cultural and exhibition projects, such as “Phototaxis” by Paolo Pretolani, “Becoming with” by Luisa Eugeni and “La Joie de Vivre,” created in collaboration with

the School of Decorative Arts in Paris. All these projects are designed to allow visitors to experience mosaics in an innovative and contemporary way and to strengthen Orsoni's reputation as a leading cultural and artisanal heritage ambassador.

LUNARDELLI VENEZIA

Lunardelli Venezia, originating from Lunardelli est. 1967, is renowned for its mastery in woodworking, creating bespoke design pieces that encapsulate the multifaceted essence of Venice through the innovative combination of wood and other noble, traditional materials. A distinctive sustainable practice involves utilizing recycled wood from Venetian *bricole*, the iconic poles marking water routes in the lagoon, thus enhancing product authenticity while addressing environmental concerns.

Beyond its artisanal excellence, this company has evolved into a pivotal cultural hub within Venice, hosting, organizing, and participating in many artistic and cultural events that enrich the local community and promote public engagement. The company in fact participates prominently in high-profile cultural events like Venice Fashion Week and Homo Faber and organizes atelier exhibitions, conducts press tours to effectively communicate its narrative and processes, participates as panelist in conferences on the relationship between craft and tourism, participates in projects with students from Ca' Foscari University of Venice, and collaborates with both established and emerging local and international designers such as Jacopo Ascari, Alberto Lago, and Marco Zito, to reinterpret the historical knowledge of the island, enhance its potential by adopting a contemporary perspective, and encourage a dialogue with an international perspective.

Additionally, in collaboration with the Fondazione "The Place of Wonders" and the "Londra Palace Hotel" in Venice, Lunardelli contributed to the "Mano a Mano" project, aimed at preserving and promoting Venetian high craftsmanship. By participating as a "Wonder" artisan, Lunardelli engaged in training young artisans, thereby ensuring the transmission of invaluable woodworking skills to future generations.

Even though many of the events are organized within programs not necessarily run by Lunardelli, year after year the site venue has become a meeting point for the Venetian citizens and passionate alike. Through these multifaceted initiatives, Lunardelli Venezia exemplifies the role of a cultural mediator, bridging historical craftsmanship with contemporary design and societal engagement and reinforcing its status within Venice's prestigious artisan community.

UNIFYING PROJECTS: VENEZIADAVIVERE.COM, HOMO FABER ECONOMY, AND UPSKILL VENEZIA

The activities described in the previous paragraph illustrate the transformative impact of immersive experiences and their positive business outcomes. The three case studies, and others that deserve research attention, shed light on an interconnected community and a vibrant territorial ecosystem. The relevance of these initiatives helps craft enterprises differentiate themselves by effectively leveraging cultural heritage and artisanal know-how to foster creative and innovative experiences.

The visibility and the coherence of these experimentations largely rely on a number of well-structured and managed networks that contributed to innovation and knowledge sharing at a local level. Among these, Venezia da Vivere operates prominently as a media enterprise dedicated to unifying, representing, and enhancing Venice's living cultural and creative initiatives. Its strategic effort amplifies the visibility of local artisans through carefully curated events such as the Venice Fashion Week and Venice Biennale Experience. Additionally, Venezia da Vivere contributed to the promotion and transmission of traditional know-how thanks to the design and the implementation of the *Mano a Mano* project. All together, these initiatives effectively facilitate the dialogue between artisans, designers, and broader audiences, enhancing public engagement, strengthening local cultural identity and giving rise to a vibrant and active community.

Another important project, Upskill Venezia, developed in collaboration with Fondazione di Venezia, aimed at increasing the competitiveness of Venetian craft enterprises by encouraging technological innovation and digitalization. Through the managerial support of Upskill 4.0, a spin-off of Ca' Foscari University of Venice, companies have been guided in rethinking their strategic positioning, branding, and communication strategies to reach a broader and more diverse international audience effectively. The process has implied an intense cooperation with the University students in order to foster digital innovation while preserving the authenticity of Venetian heritage.

Lastly, Homo Faber Economy, funded by the Veneto Region and realized by Ca' Foscari University in collaboration with several private foundations, firms, and public entities, specifically addresses the regeneration of Venice entrepreneurial and social fabric. This ambitious initiative focuses on nurturing new digital capabilities and managerial competencies among artisans, aligning their practices with contemporary market dynamics. Core objectives include the promotion of skills development to adapt to evolving consumer preferences and the establishment of a cohesive artisan community positioned as a distinctive strategic asset for Venice.

Collectively, these unifying projects represent critical facilitators of dynamic, generative communities and meaningful exchanges. They set the foundations for coherent and sustainable innovation, providing strategic managerial support, fostering cultural dialogue, and enabling positive impact measurement to drive effective long-term development and cultural sustainability in the Venetian context.

CONCLUSIONS

The analysis presented underscores the essential role of craft enterprises as catalysts for urban regeneration, highlighting their capacity to generate significant economic, social, and cultural benefits within urban communities. Through strategic management, community engagement, and the integration of digital technologies, craft enterprises can effectively leverage tourism to meet the growing global demand for authentic, immersive cultural experiences. Additionally, the analysis highlights the importance of combining two complementary trajectories: on the one hand, the impulse of bottom-up craft-based projects empowered by digital and managerial skills; on the other hand, the impact of top-down communication and coordination initiatives focused on the promotion of a consistent and authentic narrative of Venice.

The successful examples of Martina Vidal Venezia, Orsoni Venezia 1888, and Lunardelli Venezia demonstrate how artisanal tradition, when thoughtfully modernized and effectively communicated, can serve as a powerful driver for local development and cultural and heritage promotion. Unifying communication projects such as Venezia da Vivere, and managerial initiatives, such as Upskill Venezia or Homo Faber Economy, helped Venetian craft to develop a more distinctive international visibility by amplifying individual firms' efforts. The result is a robust, interconnected ecosystem that fosters ongoing innovation and competitive distinction. Ultimately, this comprehensive approach to cultural preservation and economic revitalization offers a replicable model for other historical urban contexts aiming to balance heritage conservation with contemporary market demands.

REFERENCES

- Bellver, D. F., Prados-Peña, M. B., García-López, A. M., & Molina-Moreno, V. (2023). Crafts as a key factor in local development: A bibliometric analysis. *Heliyon*, 9(1), e13039.

Bettiol, M., Di Maria, E., & Micelli, S. (2020). *Knowledge management and Industry 4.0: New paradigms for value creation*. Springer.

Bettiol, M., & Micelli, S. (2014). The hidden side of design: The relevance of artisanship. *Design Issues*, 30(1), 7–18.

Cancellieri, A., & Ostanel, E. (2014). Ri-pubblicizzare la città: Pratiche spaziali, culture e istituzioni. *Territorio*, 46–49.

Comune di Venezia. (2021, December 15). *25 Marzo 2021: 1600 anni di Venezia – Progetto scuole, ludoteche e mosaico*. <https://live.comune.venezia.it/it/2021/12/25-marzo-2021-1600-anni-di-venezias-progetto-scuole-ludoteche-e-mosaico-conferenza-stampa-di>

Confcommercio. (2024). *Indagini, dati e informazioni sul settore del turismo in Italia*. <https://www.confcommercio.it/-/turismo-in-italia>

Confcommercio Firenze. (2017, July 20). *Il turismo uccide le città? Forum su overtourism a Firenze*. <https://www.confcommercio.firenze.it/news/eventi-progetti/il-turismo-uccide-le-citt%C3%A0-firenze-il-20-luglio-forum-su-over-tourism-e>

Fondazione Cologni Mestieri d'Arte. (n.d.). *Martina Vidal: Dove la tradizione del merletto di Burano diventa esperienza da vivere*. <https://www.fondazionecologni.it/it/interviste/ar/martina-vidal>

Foreman, L. (2017, November 30). *When Venetian luxury ruled the world of fashion*. BBC Culture. https://www.bbc.com/culture/article/20171130-venetian-luxury-once-ruled-the-world-of-fashion?utm_source=chatgpt.com

Homo Faber Guide. (n.d.). *Lunardelli Venezia*. <https://www.homofaber.com/it/discover/lunardelli-venezias-woodwork-italy>

Homo Faber Guide. (n.d.). *Martina Vidal*. <https://www.homofaber.com/en/discover/martina-vidal-lacemaking-italy>

Hsia, C. (2020). Art intervention in the community context: Community-based art practice as an inspiration for creative tourism. In P. Mura, K. K. H. Tan & C. W. Choy (Eds.), *Contemporary Asian artistic expressions and tourism* (pp. 127–146). Springer. http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-4335-7_6

ITP Italian Travel Press. (2024). *Gaudi scelse la Fornace Orsoni per rivestire la Sagrada Familia: L'azienda che a Venezia produce mosaici a foglia d'oro*. <https://www.italiantravelpress.it/audi-scelse-la-fornace-orsoni-per-rivestire-la-sagrada-familia-e-lazienda-che-a-venezias-produce-mosaici-a-foglia-doro/>

- Jordan, P., Pastras, P., & Psarros, M. (2018). *Managing tourism growth in Europe: The ECM toolbox*. <https://www.ucm.es/data/cont/media/www/pag-107272/2018-Managing%20Tourism%20Growth%20in%20Europe%20The%20ECM%20Toolbox>
- Laudiero, A. (2020). Cultural third sector organizations and local development: New actors and tools for urban regeneration in deprived contexts. *Journal of Entrepreneurial and Organizational Diversity*, 9(2), 1–22.
- Li, J., Krishnamurthy, S., Pereira Roders, A., & van Wesemael, P. (2020). Community participation in cultural heritage management: A systematic literature review comparing Chinese and international practices. *Cities*, 96, 102476. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cities.2019.102476>
- Lusiani, M., & Panozzo, F. (2016). Culture on top: Beyond museification and culture-led regeneration of industrial heritage. *SSRN Electronic Journal*.
- Manfredi Latilla, V., Frattini, F., Messeni Petruzzelli, A., & Berner, M. (2019). Knowledge management and knowledge transfer in arts and crafts organizations: Evidence from an exploratory multiple case-study analysis. *Journal of Knowledge Management*, 23(7), 1335–1354.
- McKinsey & Company, & World Travel & Tourism Council. (2017). *Coping with success: Managing overcrowding in tourism destinations*. <https://wtcc.org/Research/Insights/Coping-with-Success-Managing-Overcrowding-in-Tourism-Destinations>
- Micelli, S. (2011). *Futuro artigiano: L'innovazione nelle mani degli italiani*. Marsilio Editori.
- Moledini, R. F. (2022). Lunardelli: Gli arredi che raccontano Venezia. *The Ducker Magazine*. <https://www.theducker.com/maestri-e-mestieri-d-arte/lunardelli-gli-arredi-che-raccontano-venezia/>
- Molteni&C. (2023). *Orsoni Venezia 1888: Art meets design*. <https://www.molteni.it/us/news/event-at-fornace-orsoni-venezia-1888>
- Ostanel, E. (2017). Urban regeneration and social innovation: The role of community-based organisations in the railway station area in Padua, Italy. *Journal of Urban Regeneration and Renewal*, 11(1), 79–91.
- Paulauskaite, D., Powell, R., Coca-Stefaniak, J. A., & Morrison, A. M. (2017). Living like a local: Authentic tourism experiences and the sharing economy. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 19(6), 619–628.

- Peeters, P. M., et al. (2018). *Overtourism: Impact and possible policy responses*. European Parliament. [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/629184/IPOL_STU\(2018\)629184_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/629184/IPOL_STU(2018)629184_EN.pdf)
- Richards, G. (2021). Developing craft as a creative industry through tourism. *Brazilian Creative Industries Journal*, 1, 03-22. 10.25112/bcij.v1i1.2671.
- Richards, G., & Wilson, J. (2006). Developing creativity in tourist experiences: A solution to the serial reproduction of culture? *Tourism Management*, 27(6), 1209–1223.
- Sepe, M., & Di Trapani, G. (2010). Cultural tourism and creative regeneration: Two case studies. *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 4(3), 214–227.
- Smith, M. K., & Robinson, M. (2006). *Cultural tourism in a changing world: Politics, participation and (re)presentation*. Channel View Publications.
- Troisi, O., et al. (2019). Meta-management for sustainability in territorial ecosystems: The case of Libera's social reuse of territory. *Land Use Policy*, 84, 138–153.
- Wallpaper Magazine. (2019). *A walking tour of Venice through art and design*. <https://www.wallpaper.com/design/venice-art-design-tour>

