

## Enhancing Legal Readiness of Creative Economy Actors Through Intellectual Property Facilitation: Evidence from Manado City

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### Abstract

Limited legal readiness remains a critical issue for creative economy actors, particularly regarding intellectual property protection as a foundation for business sustainability. Many creative enterprises operate without adequate legal awareness or registered intellectual property rights, leaving them vulnerable to market risks and unfair competition. This community service program aimed to enhance the legal readiness of creative economy actors through structured intellectual property facilitation in Manado City. The program employed a participatory and practice-oriented approach, encompassing intellectual property socialization, individual consultations, technical assistance, document curation, and facilitation of intellectual property registration with the Directorate General of Intellectual Property. A total of 100 creative economy actors from various subsectors participated in the program. Quantitative evaluation results indicate a substantial improvement in participants' understanding, as reflected by an increase in the average score from 76 in the pre-test to 89 in the post-test, along with a rise in the proportion of participants achieving adequate comprehension levels from 73% to 90%. Furthermore, the program successfully facilitated 86 intellectual property applications, consisting primarily of trademark registrations (87.2%) and copyright registrations (12.8%). These findings demonstrate that intellectual property facilitation serves not only as a legal education mechanism but also as an effective intervention to strengthen the legal protection and market readiness of creative economy actors at the local level.

**Keywords:** creative economy; creativity; intellectual property; legal readiness; Manado

### *Peningkatan Kesiapan Hukum Pelaku Ekonomi Kreatif melalui Fasilitasi Kekayaan Intelektual di Kota Manado*

### Abstrak

Rendahnya tingkat kesiapan hukum pelaku ekonomi kreatif masih menjadi tantangan dalam pengembangan usaha berbasis kreativitas di daerah. Kondisi ini ditandai oleh minimnya pemahaman mengenai kekayaan intelektual serta rendahnya kepemilikan hak kekayaan intelektual sebagai instrumen perlindungan usaha. Kegiatan pengabdian kepada masyarakat ini bertujuan untuk meningkatkan kesiapan hukum pelaku ekonomi kreatif melalui fasilitasi kekayaan intelektual di Kota Manado. Metode pelaksanaan kegiatan dirancang secara partisipatif dan aplikatif, meliputi sosialisasi kekayaan intelektual, konsultasi individual, pendampingan teknis, kurasi dokumen, serta fasilitasi

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*pendaftaran kekayaan intelektual ke Direktorat Jenderal Kekayaan Intelektual. Kegiatan ini diikuti oleh 100 pelaku ekonomi kreatif dari berbagai subsektor. Hasil evaluasi menunjukkan adanya peningkatan pemahaman peserta yang ditunjukkan oleh kenaikan nilai rata-rata pre-test dari 76 menjadi 89 pada post-test, serta peningkatan persentase peserta dengan nilai di atas ambang batas pemahaman dari 73% menjadi 90%. Selain itu, kegiatan ini berhasil memfasilitasi 86 permohonan kekayaan intelektual, yang didominasi oleh pendaftaran merek (87,2%) dan selebihnya hak cipta (12,8%). Temuan ini menunjukkan bahwa fasilitasi kekayaan intelektual tidak hanya berkontribusi pada peningkatan literasi hukum, tetapi juga menghasilkan luaran konkret berupa penguatan perlindungan hukum usaha ekonomi kreatif di tingkat daerah.*

**Kata kunci:** ekonomi kreatif; kekayaan intelektual; kesiapan hukum; kreativitas; Manado

## INTRODUCTION

The creative economy in developing countries does not grow evenly; rather, it tends to be concentrated in regions with advantages in market access, infrastructure, networks, and agglomeration of economic activity. In the Indonesian context, the location of creative industries shows a clustering pattern influenced by regional characteristics and local ecosystem capacity, so that opportunities for creative business growth are largely determined by spatial factors and the regional business environment (Fahmi et al., 2016). However, the dynamics of this growth go hand in hand with the structural vulnerability of creative actors, especially when they operate in conditions that lack adequate institutional and regulatory protection. This vulnerability shows that the development of the creative economy is not only related to the potential and concentration of economic activity but also to local systems' ability to provide certainty and protection for creative entrepreneurs (Comunian & England, 2020).

This situation places legal readiness as a crucial element in the development of the creative economy. Legal readiness refers to the capacity of business actors to understand, access, and utilize available legal instruments to support economic activities safely and sustainably. From an institutional perspective, law functions not only as a set of formal rules but also as a means for economic actors to manage risks, protect business interests, and ensure the sustainability of economic activities (Hadfield & Weingast, 2013). In the context of a creative economy that relies on intangible assets, legal readiness becomes even more crucial because it determines the extent to which creativity and innovation can be converted into protected economic value.

One of the most concrete manifestations of legal readiness in the creative economy is the management and protection of intellectual property. Intellectual property serves as a legal mechanism that connects creativity to the market system, allowing ideas, works, and business identities to be recognized as legitimate and protectable economic assets. Without intellectual property protection, creative entrepreneurs face the risk of imitation, unauthorized use, and a weak bargaining position in business relationships, thus preventing the economic value of creativity from being optimally converted (Towse & Handke, 2013). Therefore, intellectual property cannot be viewed merely as an administrative matter but rather as an integral part of legal readiness that determines the competitiveness and sustainability of creative businesses.

Despite the national intellectual property legal framework, gaps in the legal preparedness of creative economy actors remain prevalent at the regional level. This gap is not solely due to a lack of regulation but rather to business actors' limited ability to understand and effectively use the existing legal system. At the local level, limited access to information, minimal mentoring, and weak integration between central policies and field practices mean that legal instruments are not yet fully functional as business protection tools, resulting in intellectual assets often being managed informally and without adequate protection (Feldman & Kogler, 2010; Comunian & England, 2020).

Based on this description, a gap can be identified between the creative potential of creative economy actors and their legal readiness to utilize available protection systems. This gap indicates that business actors require not only greater knowledge of intellectual property but also practical support to access and utilize legal instruments effectively. In the context of Manado City, this legal readiness gap has the potential to hinder the strengthening of the competitiveness and sustainability of creative businesses based on local potential if not addressed appropriately. Therefore, this community service activity aims to bridge the legal-readiness gap among creative economy actors through structured, participatory intellectual property facilitation and to support the use of legal protection as part of a business development strategy at the regional level.

## METHOD

This community service activity was conducted in Manado City on 14–15 August 2024 at Aryaduta Hotel Manado. The program targeted tourism and creative economy actors from various subsectors who had active businesses but had not yet registered their intellectual property or were still in the early stages of registering it. The activity was implemented as a collaborative initiative between Universitas Sebelas Maret, through the Center for Rural Research and Regional Development, and the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy.

The approach adopted in this activity was participatory and application-oriented, positioning business actors as the primary subjects in enhancing legal readiness. A participatory approach is considered appropriate in community service programs because it enables two-way learning processes and encourages active involvement of partners at every stage of the activity, ensuring that the intervention is contextual and aligned with local needs (Chambers, 2017). The application-oriented approach ensured that participants not only gained conceptual understanding but also practical experience in accessing and using intellectual property protection mechanisms.

The implementation stages were carried out in an integrated and sequential manner. The preparatory stage involved intensive coordination between the implementation team, the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy, and local stakeholders. This stage also included participant recruitment through an open call mechanism, followed by an initial curation process to assess administrative completeness and the suitability of business types with tourism and creative economy subsectors.

The implementation stage began with socialization sessions covering fundamental concepts of intellectual property, the types relevant to creative enterprises, the benefits of intellectual property protection for business actors, and an overview of the intellectual property registration process. These sessions were followed by individual consultations and technical assistance, during which participants received direct guidance from facilitators on determining the most appropriate type of intellectual property to register, refining brand identities or creative works, and completing the required documentation in accordance with the regulations of the Directorate General of Intellectual Property.

As part of the facilitation process, a final curation of all registration documents was conducted to minimize the risk of rejection due to administrative or substantive errors. Applications that were deemed complete and compliant were subsequently submitted to the Directorate General of Intellectual Property through the official registration mechanism. This process emphasized that the facilitation was not only focused on increasing understanding but also on producing tangible outputs in the form of legally processable intellectual property applications.

Evaluation was conducted using both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Quantitative evaluation involved comparing pre-test and post-test results to measure changes in participants' levels of understanding and legal readiness. Meanwhile, qualitative evaluation was carried out through discussions and participant feedback to capture perceptions, challenges, and perceived benefits of the facilitation process. The combination of quantitative and qualitative evaluation is considered effective for comprehensively assessing the outcomes and quality of community service programs (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

## RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Intellectual property is an intangible asset with strategic value for business actors, as it directly relates to the protection of creativity, innovation, and business identity (WIPO, 2001). The registration of intellectual property provides legal certainty regarding ownership and utilization, thereby enabling business actors to safeguard their products from imitation and unfair competition. In the context of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs), registered intellectual property also plays an important role in increasing legal awareness and encouraging more professional business management practices. Several community service initiatives have demonstrated that intellectual property facilitation and education are effective in enhancing MSMEs' legal understanding while strengthening legal protection for the products they generate (Mulyani et al., 2025).

One concrete effort to promote the legal registration of intellectual property among micro and small enterprises is through facilitation activities that integrate legal awareness with direct technical assistance for business actors. Based on this approach, the intellectual property protection facilitation program in Manado City, held on 14–15 August 2024 at Aryaduta Hotel Manado, involved 100 participants selected and curated from the total number of applicants. Participants came from various tourism and creative economy subsectors, with a predominance of culinary, craft, and arts enterprises,

as well as tourism services enterprises. The dominance of these subsectors reflects the dynamic growth of Indonesia's creative economy, in which the culinary, craft, arts, and tourism sectors have developed rapidly and play an important role in strengthening local economies based on regional potential. Nevertheless, as commonly observed in developing regions, this growth in creativity has not yet been fully matched by the legal readiness of business actors to protect the intellectual assets they produce (Flew & Cunningham, 2010).

The program began with socialization sessions covering fundamental concepts of intellectual property, the types relevant to creative enterprises, the benefits of intellectual property protection for business actors, and an overview of the intellectual property registration process (Figure 1). In terms of capacity building, quantitative evaluation results indicate a significant improvement in participants' level of understanding. The average pre-test score of 76 increased to 89 in the post-test, indicating enhanced comprehension of fundamental intellectual property concepts, types of intellectual property, and the benefits of legal protection for business sustainability. This improvement suggests that learning approaches combining conceptual explanations with practical experience are more effective in increasing MSMEs' legal literacy, particularly among adult learners who already possess real business experience (Knowles et al., 2014).



Figure 1. Socialization Sessions

The increased level of understanding was subsequently reflected in tangible outputs, namely the facilitation of 86 intellectual property applications ready for submission to the Directorate General of Intellectual Property. The distribution of subsector applicants is shown in Figure 2. The most frequently registered form of intellectual property was trademarks, followed by copyrights. The predominance of trademark registrations indicates that business actors have begun to perceive trademarks not merely as product identifiers but as strategic assets that function to build business reputation, enhance consumer trust, and strengthen bargaining positions in market competition. Registering trademarks as intellectual property provides legal certainty over business identity and protects MSMEs from imitation and unauthorized use of their marks. Several studies in Indonesia emphasize that ownership of registered

trademarks contributes to business sustainability and the professionalization of MSME management, particularly in increasingly competitive market environments (Siregar et al., 2022).

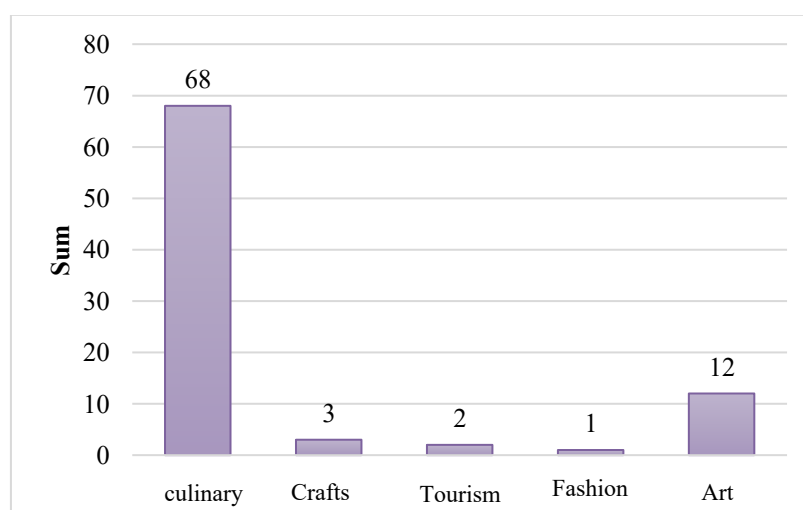


Figure 2. Distribution of Applicants by Subsector

The success of intellectual property registration facilitation cannot be separated from the role of intensive curation and technical assistance processes. Through individualized mentoring, participants were not only assisted in completing administrative documentation but were also guided to understand substantive risks in the registration process, such as trademark similarity, improper classification, or weaknesses in work descriptions. More broadly, the results of this activity demonstrate that intellectual property facilitation can serve as a strategic tool to bridge the gap between the creative potential of business actors and their legal readiness. The shift in participants' perceptions of intellectual property, from a mere administrative requirement to a strategic business asset, indicates a transformation in business behavior. These findings reinforce the view that integrated, application-oriented, and needs-based community service interventions have greater potential to generate sustainable impacts than purely normative or informational approaches (Mole et al., 2011).

## CONCLUSION

The community service activity, facilitated by intellectual property protection, in Manado City has proven effective in enhancing the understanding and capacity of tourism and creative economy actors. The participatory approach, which integrated socialization, consultation, technical assistance, and facilitation of registration, addressed low legal literacy and limited intellectual property ownership among business actors. The increase in average pre-test and post-test scores, along with the facilitation of 86 intellectual property applications, demonstrates that the program not only improved participants' knowledge but also generated tangible outcomes, including strengthened legal protection for business activities. Therefore, similar facilitation initiatives should be implemented sustainably and expanded in

scope to ensure that more local business actors can protect and optimize their intellectual assets as part of a competitive, sustainable strategy for creative economy development.

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