# Scientometric Mapping of Creative Economy Research in Southeast Asia

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## Article Info

## ABSTRACT

This study looks at research on the creative economy in Southeast Asia using data from scientific publications. We got data from Scopus (2000–2024) and used VOSviewer, Bibliometrix, and CiteSpace to look at things like who's publishing, what keywords are used together, who's working with who, and what institutions and countries are linked. The results show that the main ideas in this field are the creative economy itself, sustainable development, innovation, and the people who work in creative fields. There are three main topics: (1) cultural industries, tourism, and how cities grow; (2) innovation, starting new businesses, and the knowledge economy; and (3) the circular economy, design, and the digital economy. Looking at how the research has changed over time, we see that it started with creative sectors and urban economies, and now it's focusing on sustainability and digital changes. The main places for collaboration are the United Kingdom, the United States, China, and Indonesia, with strong ties between institutions in Europe, Asia, and Russia. This study gives a detailed analysis of the ideas and global position of creative economy research, using data to back it up. It also points out that there are limitations because of the database used and that more qualitative research is needed.
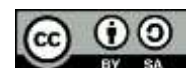
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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The creative economy is now a key factor in global progress, encouraging new ideas, boosting culture, and creating jobs all over the world. In Southeast Asia, it's seen as especially important for economic growth, mainly in countries with rich cultures, growing digital markets, and lively business environments[1]. Over the past ten years, governments in Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia, Vietnam, Singapore, and the Philippines have started including creative economy goals in their development plans. This shows a global trend of recognizing creativity as important for stable economic growth[2]. Because of this, there's been more academic focus on how the creative sector is doing, creative businesses, cultural policies, digital platforms, and small creative businesses, which has led to more research, even though it's not always well-organized.

At the same time, technology has changed how creative work is made, shared, and consumed, especially with things like digital tech, social media, online shopping, and platforms for making content[3]. These things have allowed creative people to share their work worldwide, reach more markets, and create value in different ways[4].

Southeast Asia shows this change, with quick growth in mobile use, digital payments, and businesses based on platforms that allow creative business owners, small producers, and local innovators to do new things. This change has made it even more important to have many views in creative economy research, including ideas from economics, management, media, culture, and innovation. Even with more academic work, the field is still scattered, so we need a clear way to define its main ideas[5].

Also, the creative economy is very important in supporting sustainability plans in Southeast Asia. Global plans like the UN Sustainable Development Goals say that creative industries are needed to help build sustainable cities, welcoming communities, good jobs, and protect culture. Southeast Asia's different cultural and creative resources—like Indonesian food and crafts, Thai design, and Vietnamese tourism—show that the region has a big chance to use creativity to empower people and protect the environment. Still, a lot of the current research is focused on local areas, often looking at specific creative groups, city developments, or parts of the industry[6]. This makes it hard to know how knowledge in the creative economy grows across different countries, industries, and organizations in the region[7].

The variety in Southeast Asia makes researching its creative economy even harder. Differences in digital resources, economic progress, cultural history, and government support affect how creative industries grow in each country. For example, Singapore and Malaysia have advanced digital creative areas, Indonesia and Thailand have strong creative industries focused on culture, and Vietnam and Cambodia are becoming creative centers because of quick city growth and tourism. This shows why it's important to have a way to study publishing trends, research centers, and academic groups in the region. By mapping this out, researchers can find regional strengths, weak spots, teamwork styles, and common themes.

New tools for studying research, like VOSviewer, Bibliometrix, and CiteSpace, offer new ways to measure scientific results and main ideas in creative economy research[8]. These tools help show networks of citations, teamwork, keyword use, and how themes grow over time. Though there has been research done on creative industries, business, and cultural growth around the world, there aren't many studies that focus on Southeast Asia. It's important to have a careful way to study research in the region to find important writers, well-known magazines, teamwork, and main topics that shape what is studied in the creative economy[9]. This info is key for people in charge, researchers, and workers to make good plans, increase teamwork, and create ways to help the creative industry grow based on facts.

Even though the creative economy is more and more important in Southeast Asia, and there are more academic papers about it, the research is still not well-connected between countries, industries, and areas of study. There's no thorough study that clearly shows publishing trends, main ideas, connections, and teamwork in creative economy research in Southeast Asia. Because of this, it's hard for people in charge, researchers, and workers to measure research results, find gaps in knowledge, and understand how research works in the region. Without a full map of the research, it's hard to make good decisions, work together, and improve research in the future.

This study plans to do a full study of creative economy research in Southeast Asia using research study methods and visualizations. The goals are to: (1) look at publishing trends, citation styles, and how creative economy research has grown in Southeast Asian countries; (2) find important writers, magazines, organizations, and countries that have added to the field; (3) study citation, teamwork, and keyword networks to find connections; (4) define common themes and find new research areas; and (5) suggest what to research in the future based on gaps and chances in the region found by research study facts. By doing these things, the study hopes to give a clear view of the main ideas in creative economy research in Southeast Asia based on data.

## 2. METHOD

This study employs a scientometric and bibliometric research design to thoroughly delineate the intellectual framework and knowledge evolution of creative economy research in Southeast Asia. Scientometric analysis is extensively employed to investigate extensive academic outputs, citation frameworks, and theme connections within certain research fields [7], [9]. This study employs a quantitative, data-driven methodology to assess publication productivity, citation impacts, and network structures. Bibliometric indicators, such as publication counts, citation frequencies, co-authorship patterns, co-citation relationships, and keyword co-occurrences, were employed to evaluate the evolution of creative economy scholarship, the interconnections among research topics, and the formation of academic collaborations across Southeast Asian nations. This methodology offers a systematic and empirical comprehension of research advancement in the domain.

Data were obtained from the Scopus database, renowned for its extensive disciplinary scope and dependability in scientometric research. The search strategy utilized Boolean combinations of keywords including "creative economy," "creative industries," "creative tourism," "cultural industries," "creative entrepreneurship," and "creative MSMEs," along with country identifiers for Southeast Asia (e.g., Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, Vietnam, the Philippines, Cambodia, Laos, Brunei, and Myanmar). The study period encompassed 2000–2024 to document the expansion of creative economy research subsequent to the global debut of the creative economy idea. Irrelevant documents, duplicates, and non-peer-reviewed sources were eliminated via a comprehensive screening procedure. The completed dataset was exported in CSV and RIS formats for later scientometric study. Three principal scientometric tools were utilized for data analysis: VOSviewer, Bibliometrix (R package), and CiteSpace. VOSviewer was employed to display and evaluate co-authorship networks, keyword co-occurrences, and co-citation structures, owing to its capability in producing cluster-based network maps [8] Bibliometrix was utilized to calculate descriptive bibliometric indicators, thematic progression, annual scientific output, and collaboration patterns at the country level [10]. CiteSpace was employed to identify emergent research fronts, citation bursts, and temporal shifts in theoretical advancement [11]. Collectively, these instruments facilitated an extensive delineation of intellectual frameworks, topic groupings, and emerging research trajectories. The triangulation of various scientometric tools guaranteed analytical rigor, reproducibility, and multifaceted viewpoints on creative economy research in Southeast Asia.

## 3. RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS
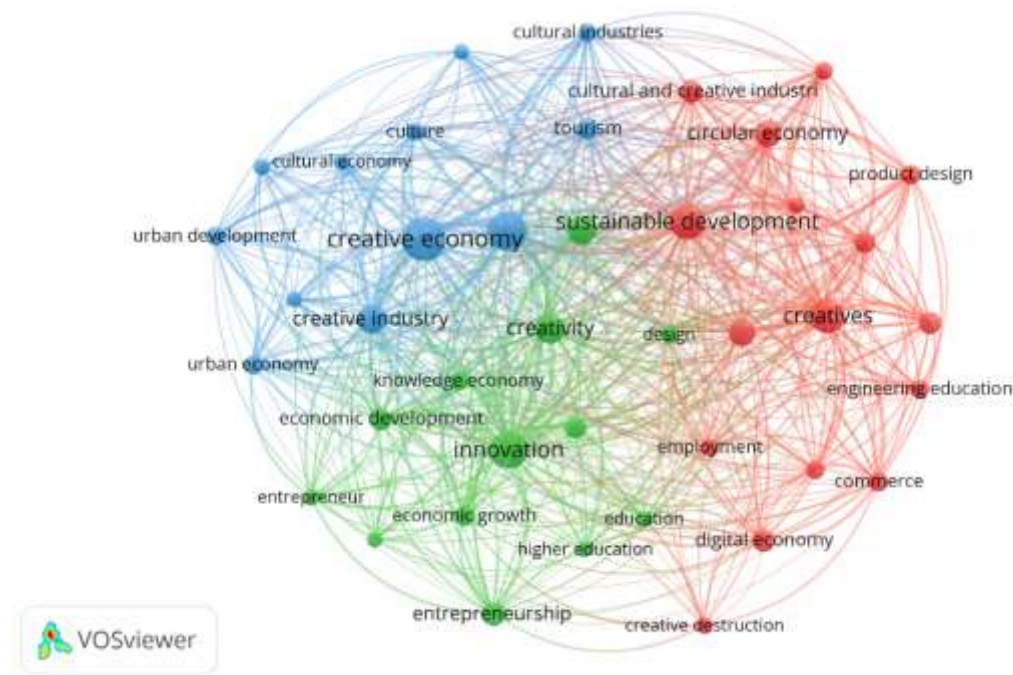
### 3.1 Network Visualization



Figure 1. Network Visualization
Source: Data Analysis Result, 2025

The VOSviewer network visualization illustrates a densely interconnected domain of creative economy study, characterized by three principal topic clusters—blue, green, and red—that provide the intellectual foundation of the discipline. At the core of the map resides the "creative economy," the predominant and most impactful node, signifying its function as the conceptual anchor connecting diverse research trajectories. The closeness to other prevalent phrases like "creativity," "creative industry," "innovation," and "sustainable development" indicates a cohesive dialogue encompassing cultural policy, economic performance, and innovation-led growth. The intricate interconnections across clusters further illustrate that creative economy research in Southeast Asia is informed by several academic traditions, highlighting the field's fundamentally multidisciplinary nature.

The blue cluster signifies themes associated with cultural industries, cultural economy, urban development, and tourism. These keywords demonstrate a robust research emphasis on the influence of culture and legacy in the evolution of creative industries. The proximity of "urban development" and "urban economy" to cultural issues suggests that several studies investigate the role of cities as centers of innovation, consistent with global literature on creative cities and culture-driven regeneration. The inclusion of "tourism" in this cluster highlights the significance of cultural tourism in Southeast Asia, where heritage-oriented creative industries frequently converge with local economic development. The blue cluster represents the cultural-policy aspect of the creative economy, highlighting location-specific creativity and the socio-spatial dynamics of cultural output.

The green cluster focuses on innovation, entrepreneurship, economic development, knowledge economy, and economic growth. This categorization emphasizes the economic and innovation-driven viewpoints that form the foundation of creative economy study.

The strong correlation between "innovation" and "entrepreneurship" indicates that creative sectors are often examined in the context of company development, startup ecosystems, and value generation. The association between "higher education" and "creativity" within the same cluster underscores an increasing focus on human capital, learning, and innovation as essential catalysts for the expansion of the creative sector. This cluster encapsulates the economic, technological, and developmental themes dominant in the region's creative economy discourse.

The red cluster emphasizes design, creativity, circular economy, digital economy, and product design. This classification demonstrates a progressive research focus, connecting creativity with digital transformation, sustainability, and sector-specific practices. The inclusion of "circular economy" and "sustainable development" in this cluster signifies a robust interest in environmentally responsible production paradigms within creative industries, especially in design, engineering education, and product innovation. The term "digital economy" indicates the growing significance of platform technologies, digital content generation, e-commerce, and innovative digital labor—an especially pertinent topic in Southeast Asia's swiftly digitalizing environment. The red cluster represents the convergence of creative production, technology, and sustainability.

The robust interconnections among clusters indicate that creative economy research in Southeast Asia is significantly integrated rather than disjointed. Cross-cluster linkages—such as those among sustainable development (green/red), tourism (blue/red), innovation (green), and creative sector (blue/green)—indicate that scholars often employ multi-dimensional viewpoints integrating cultural, economic, digital, and sustainability frameworks. This interconnectivity highlights the field's maturity and identifies upcoming priorities, specifically sustainability-focused design, digital innovation, and entrepreneurship-driven economic growth. The map illustrates a dynamic research environment influenced by cultural legacy, technical advancement, and sustainable methodologies.

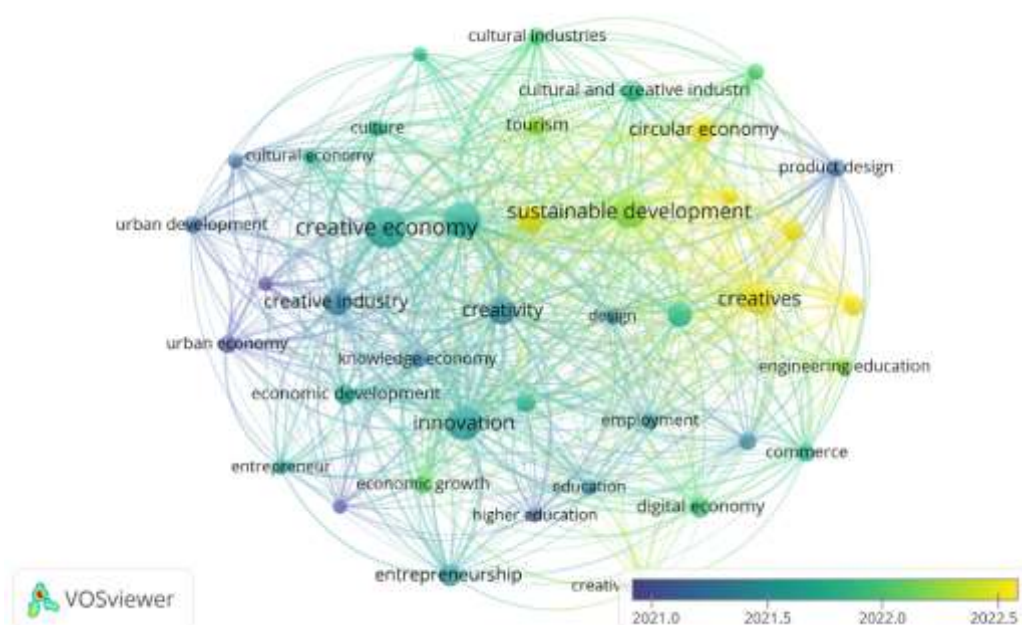### 3.2 Overlay Visualization



Figure 2. Overlay Visualization
Source: Data Analysis Result, 2025

The overlay graphic illustrates the temporal progression of creative economy research, indicating the movement in popularity of keywords from earlier (blue–green) to more contemporary subjects (yellow). Prior studies, shown by deeper blue nodes, focused on fundamental issues including "creative industry," "urban economy," "economic development," and "entrepreneurship." These subjects illustrate the conventional emphasis of Southeast Asian academia in the early 2020s, highlighting economic expansion, cultural economy, and the significance of creative industries in urban development. The aggregation of these initial buzzwords surrounding "creative economy" and "innovation" suggests that early research primarily focused on comprehending the economic impacts of creative industries and their incorporation into wider developmental frameworks.

The map progressively shifts to green and yellow nodes, indicating the creation of novel research frontiers. Terms like "sustainable development," "circular economy," "creatives," and "design" are shown in lighter hues, indicating a recent increase in research focused on sustainability-driven creativity, eco-innovation, and design-centric creative methodologies. The prominent presence of "sustainable development" as a significant and centrally located yellow node signifies that sustainability has emerged as a prevailing issue in the latest publications. This development corresponds with global and regional policy changes that highlight the creative economy's significance in fostering environmental resilience, resource circularity, and climate-aware production methods.

The emergence of terms like "digital economy," "product design," "engineering education," and "commerce," highlighted in yellow or yellow-green hues, indicates the growing incorporation of digital transformation into creative economy study. The recent subjects reflect a transition towards technology-fueled creativity, digital commerce, and skill enhancement in creative industries—especially pertinent during and following the COVID-19 epidemic when digital instruments became vital for creative output and market entry. The overlay visualization collectively indicates a field in transition, evolving from basic studies on economic and cultural development to sustainability-focused, design-oriented, and digitally facilitated research in the creative economy. This evolution illustrates the field's dynamism and its adaptability to global technology and environmental issues.

### 3.3 Citation Analysis

A lot of basic reading affects how we think about the creative economy, city growth, and businesses that rely on knowledge. This reading covers things like political economy, leadership, how people act within companies, city governments, and tourism tied to culture. The table shows the most important books that people mention when studying the creative economy from different angles. These books give us a base for knowing how cities grow into creative spots, how information moves around, how new ideas grow, and how artists and creative people work with the economy and government. Looking at these books helps us find the main ideas that have shaped talks and studies since then.

Table 1. Top Cited Research

| Citations | Authors and year | Title |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 2174 | [12] | Buzz: Face-to-face contact and the urban economy |
| 1867 | [13] | The political economy of international relations |
| 1415 | [14] | Complexity Leadership Theory: Shifting leadership from the industrial age to the knowledge era |

| Citations | Authors and year | Title |
|---|---|---|
| 889 | [15] | Creative cities: Conceptual issues and policy questions |
| 880 | [16] | Location, control and innovation in knowledge-intensive industries |
| 861 | [17] | Urban Regimes And The Capacity To Govern: A Political Economy Approach |
| 804 | [18] | Intrapreneurship: Construct refinement and cross-cultural validation |
| 756 | [19] | Cultural tourism: A review of recent research and trends |
| 743 | [20] | Urban development and the politics of a creative class: Evidence from a study of artists |
| 695 | [21] | Artists, aestheticisation and the field of gentrification |

Source: Scopus, 2025

These key works create a solid idea that backs up a lot of current study on the creative economy. Studies by [12], [15] point out the location, social and money things that cause creativity to gather in cities. [14], [16] explain how knowledge-heavy businesses and difficult leadership play together in creating new ideas. At the same time, the official side of things is described by [13] big-picture look at political economy and [17] ideas on how cities are run. They both explain how governments affect how things grow. Besides these ideas, [18] talk about how people act as entrepreneurs inside of companies. [22], [20], and [23]put importance on the culture, art, and tourism that make cities change. These basic readings give a wide theoretical base that explains how creativity, government, knowledge, and culture grow together to make creative economies that keep changing and last a long time.
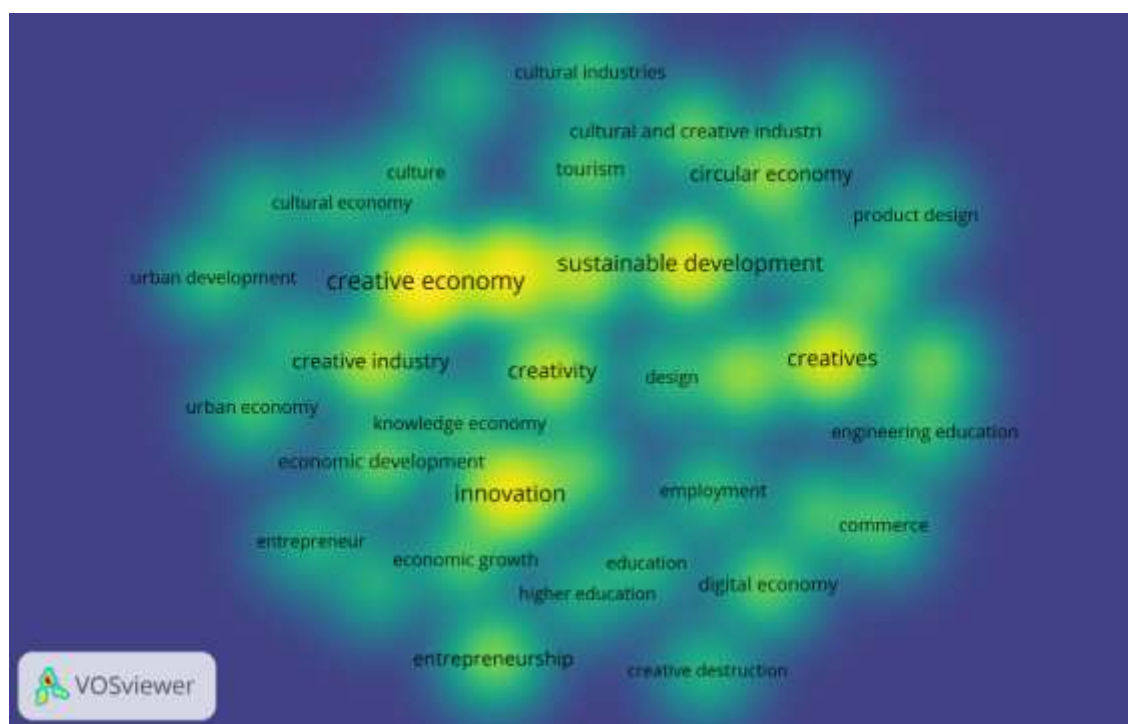
### 3.4 Density Visualization



Figure 3. Density Visualization
Source: Data Analysis Result, 2025

The density map shows where study topics mostly gather in creative economy studies. The brightest (yellow) areas mark the most common and key words. Creative economy, sustainable development, innovation, and creatives

are the main topics, meaning they're important in the writing. The thick areas point out that research in Southeast Asia is increasingly paying attention to how creativity, sustainability, and innovation all tie together to push growth. Around these hotspots are medium-density (green) areas, with topics like creative industry, creativity, cultural economy, and circular economy. These topics are still being researched, but not as much. This set-up shows that the thinking field not only has big concept systems but also includes cultural, city, and policy stuff that makes study at the ecosystem level easier. Moving outward, the density changes to lighter green and blue areas.

This means there are more specific or newer topics, like "engineering education," "digital economy," "commerce," and "creative destruction." These outer areas show smaller but growing research paths that add to the main groups. They are a sign that the creative economy talk is going toward tech skills, digital change, product design, and job force growth. The density view paints a picture of a field that has a strong base focused on sustainability, innovation, and creativity, while also reaching out into many different and future-looking areas.
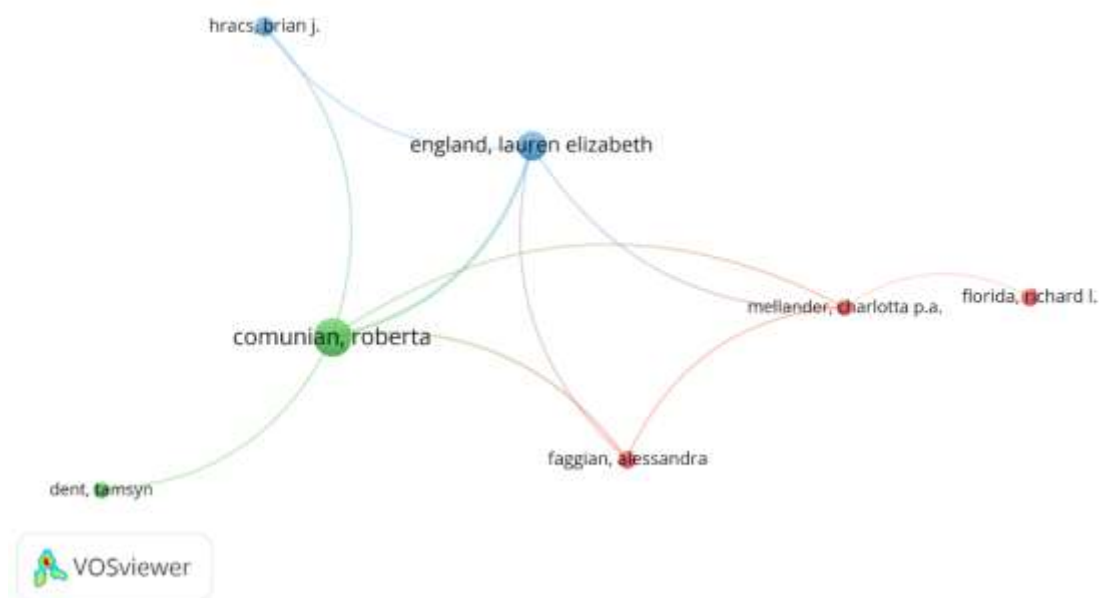
### 3.5 Co-Authorship Network



Figure 4. Author Visualization
Source: Data Analysis Result, 2025

When you look at the co-authorship network, you can see a tight but well-organized group of well-known scholars who study the creative economy and cultural industries. Roberta Comunian is at the center. You can tell because her node is big, and she has lots of links, showing she's the most active and collaborative researcher here. She's closely linked with Lauren Elizabeth England, Tamsyn Dent, and Brian J. Hracs. Together, they form a small group

focused on creative labor, cultural activity, and how to get better skills in creative jobs.

Another group includes Alessandra Faggian, Charlotta Mellander, and Richard Florida. They stand for the ideas of creative class theory, regional growth, and where to find talented people. England's between them and Faggian, which kind of bridges Comunian's group's cultural-labor research with Florida and Mellander's

urban-economic views. The network shows two main research areas: creative labor studies and creative class/urban growth research. They're linked by a few co-authorships, which means there's both specialized work and teamwork going on in the broad field of creative economy studies.
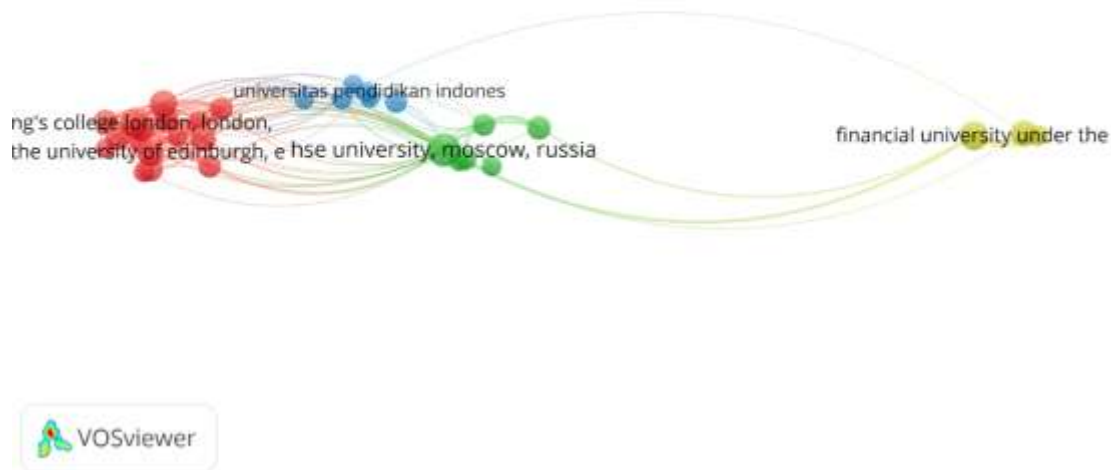


Figure 5. Affiliation Visualization
*Source: Data Analysis Result, 2025*

The co-authorship network between institutions shows a clustered but globally spread-out structure of partnerships among universities doing creative-economy research. On the map's left, there's a thick red group with schools like King's College London and the University of Edinburgh, which means there is strong research activity in the UK academic world. These universities seem to work together a lot, building a close academic group in cultural, artistic, and urban studies. The blue group in the middle has Universitas Pendidikan Indonesia (UPI) and other Southeast Asian schools, suggesting that Indonesian universities are a link between Western and Eastern European research groups. Their spot in the middle shows that Southeast Asian researchers are joining and connecting to global academic talks about the creative economy.

The green and yellow groups on the right show the involvement of schools like HSE University Moscow and the Financial University under the Government of the Russian Federation. These points are farther from the main UK–Indonesia group, suggesting a separate but related research path, maybe tied to creative industries, innovation, or cultural policy in Eastern Europe. The links across groups, mainly those connecting Indonesian and Russian schools, point to growing cross-regional teamwork that goes beyond old Western networks. The map shows a creative-economy research area mainly focused on UK schools, increasingly connected to Southeast Asian universities and also Russian academic schools, showing a diverse, multi-regional research setup.
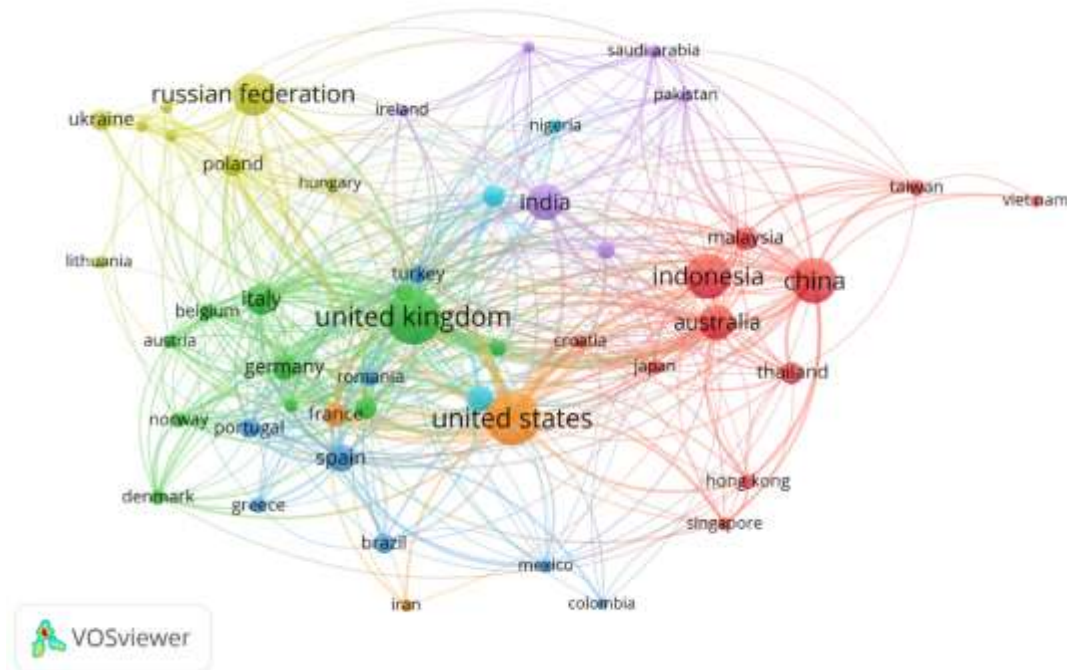
Figure 6. Country Visualization
*Source: Data Analysis Result, 2025*

The nation co-authorship network shows that research is now very global and spread out, with a few main regional centers leading studies in the creative economy. The UK and the US are the biggest and most connected spots on the map. This shows their influence and many research ties around the world. These two are important hubs that link research networks in Europe, Asia, and the US. Germany, Italy, France, Spain, Norway, and Portugal work together a lot as Western European countries. This tells us that Europe has been a leader in studies on culture, creative businesses, and new ideas for a long time

A big Asian group is forming on the right side of the network. It's led by China, Indonesia, Australia, Malaysia, and Thailand, who are strongly connected through co-authorship. China's large node size shows its output is growing fast and it's getting more involved worldwide. Indonesia's strong links to Malaysia, Australia, Singapore, and China mean it's a key research spot in Southeast Asia. On the other hand, Taiwan, Japan, Hong Kong, and Vietnam are in more distant but still connected spots. This indicates

more people are taking part in global creative-economy learning. The Russian Federation stands out on the left as a major center for Eastern Europe. It's closely tied to Ukraine, Poland, and Lithuania, suggesting a specific regional research setup that still connects to Western Europe and Asia. The map shows how cooperation between different regions has more influence on creative-economy research than individual country goals. This is because teamwork is woven together and spans continents.

### 3.6 Discussions

#### a. Practical Implications

This study gives people in charge, businesses, and schools some useful ideas about growing the creative industry in Southeast Asia. By spotting the main countries, schools, and subjects, it helps create smart plans to boost teamwork in the area, improve research, and create new ideas. People in charge can use the key topics to decide where to spend money first, like on teaching digital skills, starting creative businesses, protecting cultural stuff, and supporting green projects.

Schools, mostly in poorer countries, can team up with big universities around the world to share knowledge and do studies together. Businesses, including small creative ones, can use what we found to guess what's next, like using resources wisely and creating cool designs, which will help them do better in a changing market.

b. **Theoretical Contributions**

This study makes the idea of the creative economy clearer by looking at how it's all put together and how different ideas connect and change. The pictures show how things like coming up with new ideas, cultural businesses, doing things in a sustainable way, and using digital tools all fit together. The study shows that being creative, coming up with innovations, and being sustainable are all linked in the modern idea of the creative economy. Also, the links between writers and schools show how different fields like creative work, urban growth, and company innovation are related. These results build on what we already knew by showing that studying the creative economy is becoming more global and involves many different fields, mostly in Southeast Asia. This study also uses tools like VOSviewer, Bibliometrix, and CiteSpace to look at how ideas have changed in different cultures and places.

c. **Limitations**

Even though this study is thorough, there are some things it couldn't do. First, it mostly uses the Scopus database, which is big but might miss some local writings, journals, or non-English sources that are important to the creative economy in Southeast Asia. So, some important local knowledge might be missing. Second, the study uses word-based ways of finding information, which depend on writers using the right words; if the words are different, it might mess up the results. Third, this

study looks at writings and teamwork but doesn't really look at how good the work is or why it matters. Also, the number of times a work is cited can depend on the field, the language, and the academic world. Future studies can fix these problems by using more databases, looking at the quality of the content, or adding real-world evidence to the results.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS

This study looks at the research around the creative economy, especially in Southeast Asia, by looking at what people have written and who's working together. Using data from Scopus and some tools, we found that the creative economy is built on ideas like creative economy, doing things that last, new ideas, and creative people. The maps show these words pop up the most. It seems like now, people think the creative economy is not just about making money, but also about lasting development, bringing people together, and growing through new ideas. Looking at the words used, there are three main topics. One is about cultural businesses, cities growing, and tourism. This says people have cared about cultural rules, cool cities, and building up places for a while. Another is about new ideas, starting businesses, and the information economy. It ties into ideas about business, running things, and areas growing. The third, newer topic is about using resources wisely, design, the digital world, and teaching engineering. This means a new plan is forming that hooks up creativity with doing things that last and turning to digital ways. The timeline matches up, going from old studies about creative businesses and cities to current research on lasting progress and creativity helped by tech. The UK, US, China, and Indonesia are the main spots for research in different areas. Universities in the UK and Indonesia, and places in Russia, are big parts of this system. Some maps show two ways of thinking: creative work and creative people/city growth. A few researchers link these two ideas. All this shows that research in the creative economy has turned into a mix of subjects and a world of working together,

with Southeast Asia getting more involved in global teamwork. The study also points out some problems. There's not enough writing from local and non-English countries. Some subjects, like coming up with new ideas in the countryside, old knowledge, and how small businesses act, are still not talked about enough worldwide. Future studies could use facts from this kind of study along with looking closely at what's being said and doing case studies out in the field. They could also use data from more than just Scopus. Even with these limits, the study gives a good, fact-based overview that can aid decision-makers, researchers, and those working in the field. This can help them see where Southeast Asian creative economies fit in the world and create more focused, collaborative, and sustainability-focused research plans.

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