



**New Survey Points to “Creativity Gap” in U.S. Workplace
“Creative economy” to be focus of future workforce, conference**

Fairfax County, Virginia, September 21, 2007 – At a time when many economists and futurists are pointing to creativity and innovation as one of the cornerstones of U.S. competitiveness in the years ahead, a new survey finds that, while an overwhelming majority of American workers believe they are instinctively creative, fewer than two in three think they are tapping their creative capacities on the job.

The survey, commissioned by the Fairfax County (Virginia) Economic Development Authority (FCEDA), host of the 2007 National Conference on the Creative Economy in October (www.creativeeconomies.org), and conducted by Ipsos Public Affairs, found that 88 percent of U.S. workers consider themselves creative. But when it comes to creativity in the workplace, just 63 percent said their positions were creative, and a comparable 61 percent thought similarly about the companies for which they work.

This “creativity gap” – the disparity between the creative resources available and those being employed – can be an important indicator, experts say, in determining how well American companies are preparing for a future U.S. economy that will rely on creativity and innovation more than ever.

“The U.S. economy has always been fueled by new ideas and innovation, and this survey underscores the value that American workers put on creativity at work,” said Gerald L. Gordon, Ph.D., president and CEO of the FCEDA. “In many ways, the results of this research are a wakeup call to U.S. companies. Today they must find new ways to harness the creative energies of the workforce, and give their employees creative and productive outlets for their ideas to close the creativity gap.”

The survey found that most workers put a high premium on creativity at work. Seventy-five percent of respondents thought their employers valued their creativity, and even more telling, one in five (21%) said they would change jobs in order to be more creative at work even if it meant earning less money. Twenty-nine percent of those surveyed indicated they would move if it meant being part of a more creative community. This was especially true of younger workers ages 18-34 (37%).

“The communities that attract and retain this talent will be the economic winners in the future,” Gordon said.

The “creative economy,” a term coined by economist and author (*Rise of the Creative Class*) Richard Florida, reflects the growing sense that creativity is an economic engine, and that creative people – from software engineers to healthcare professionals to entrepreneurs – provide a critical stimulus for economic growth.

Florida will be one of the keynote speakers at the 2007 National Conference on the Creative Economy to be held October 24-25 in Fairfax County. Other prominent participants include Pulitzer Prize-winning columnist Tom Friedman, futurist Alvin Toffler, *FORTUNE* magazine senior writer Anne Fisher and CNN journalist Frank Sesno.

About the survey

The survey was conducted July 23, 2007 through August 3, 2007 by IPSOS Public Affairs, an independent, survey-based research company. As part of its weekly U.S. Telephone Omnibus Study, IPSOS interviewed 564 adults ages 18 and older, who indicated they were employed in a part-time or full-time job. The margin of error for the entire survey is 4.13% at a 95% confidence level.

About the FCEDA

The Fairfax County Economic Development Authority (www.FairfaxCountyEDA.org) promotes Fairfax County as a business and technology center. Fairfax County is host to the National Conference on the Creative Economy and is an example of the creative economy: 57 percent of county residents work in “creative occupations” in information technology, professional services, education and other fields. Fairfax County is the Washington, D.C., area’s private-sector job leader. *Time* magazine called it “one of the great economic success stories of our time.” The FCEDA maintains marketing offices in Silicon Valley, Bangalore, Frankfurt, London, Seoul and Tel Aviv.

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