

# Cultural Daily

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## What Are We Incubating, and Why?

Diane Ragsdale · Thursday, October 6th, 2011



A couple weeks back Thomas Cott published an issue of “You’ve Cott Mail” centered loosely on the theme of [innovation and business incubators in the arts world](#), in which he linked to a post by one of my favorite bloggers/researchers/thinkers, [Devon Smith](#). Devon contrasted the concept of ‘incubator’ in the tech world and the arts world. After reading her post I was curious to read up on technology and business incubators and ask myself what, exactly, arts incubators are incubating and to what end?

Devon makes the point that in the tech world it is ‘demo or die’ and that, in contrast, many arts incubators tend to be about process without the expectation of a deliverable on a certain time frame. Devon characterizes it as ‘we’re here to support you in however much you get accomplished for however long you are here’. Beyond the expectation to ‘demo or die’, however, there’s something else I learned in my reading: business incubators, philosophically and practically speaking, perceive themselves to be incubating the entire enterprise. At the end of 33 months (the average amount of time spent in a business incubator) it is expected that the startup can leave the nest with a viable business model and product and fly on its own.

[Jump to how this relates to ‘arts incubators’ ???](#)

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