
Overcoming creative disadvantage in rural areas with networked economic development strategies

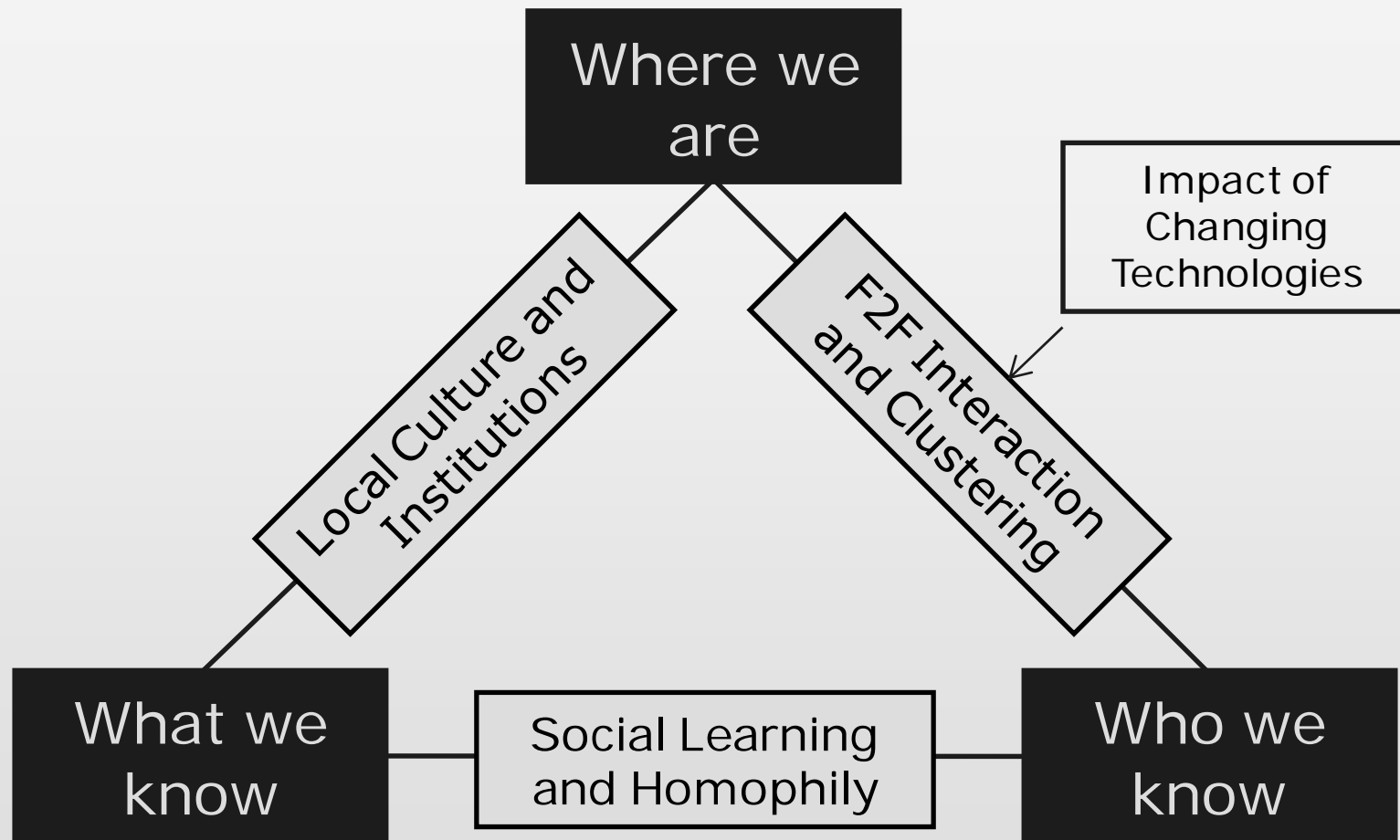
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Personal and research background

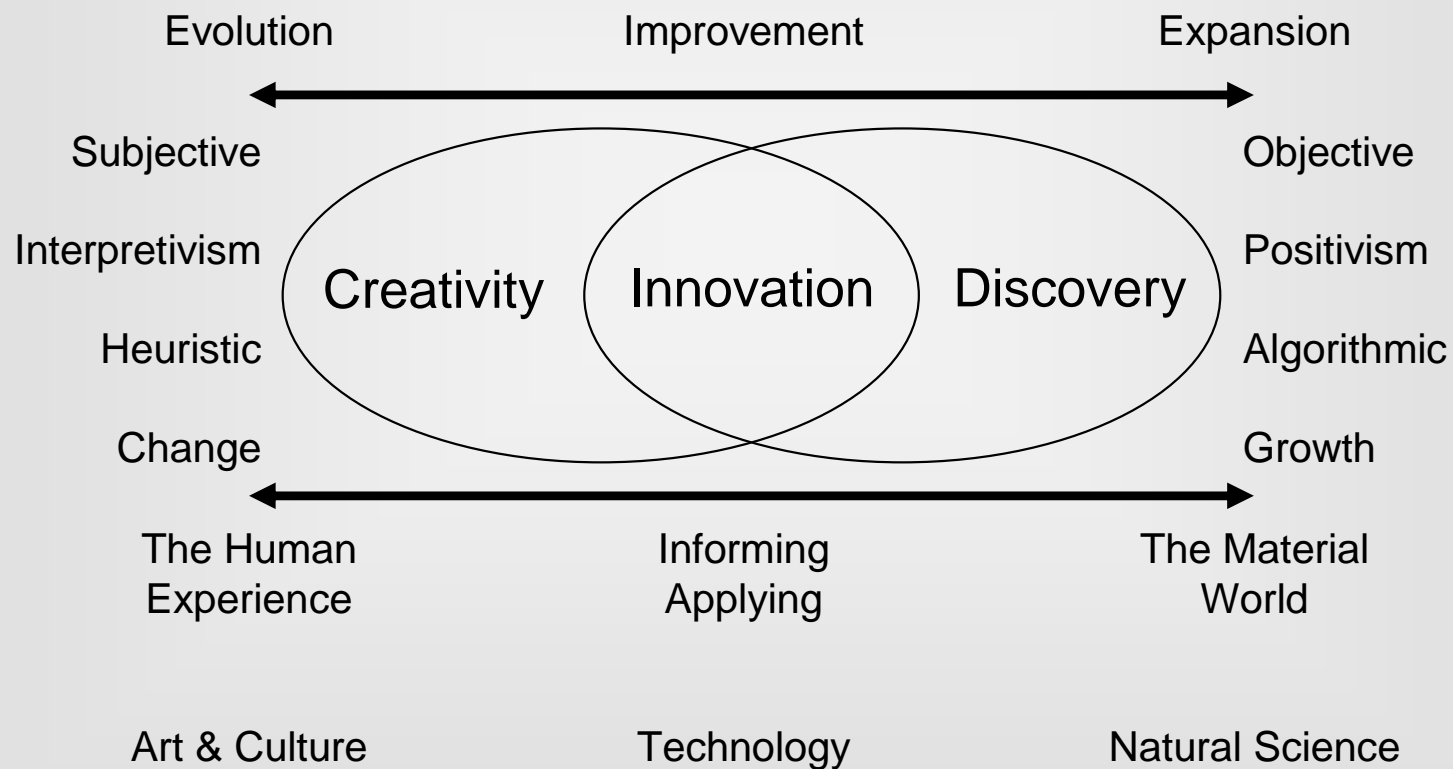
- 4 years as an economic development consultant with the Local Futures Group (London, UK)
 - Knowledge and digital economy focus on LED
- PhD in Geography (UofT)
 - “The creative advantage of diverse city-regions: local context and social networks”
- ISRN *city-region* research 5-year SSHRC-funded project (2006-2010)
 - How do local social characteristics and processes in city-regions interact to affect their economic vitality and dynamism as centres of innovation and creativity?

understanding knowledge, relationships, and location

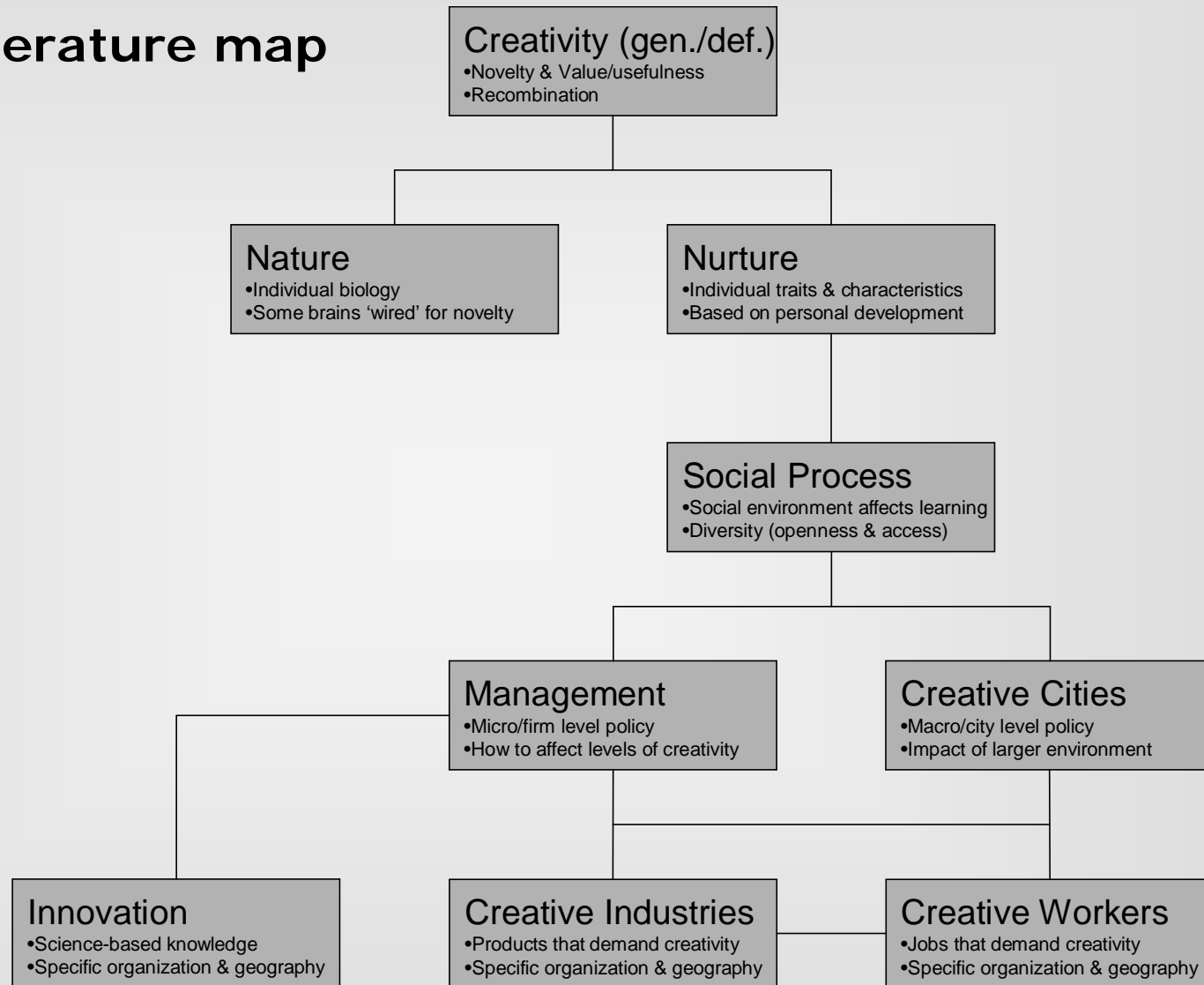


what is creativity? how does the creative process work?

- a social process of recombining existing knowledge in novel and valuable ways

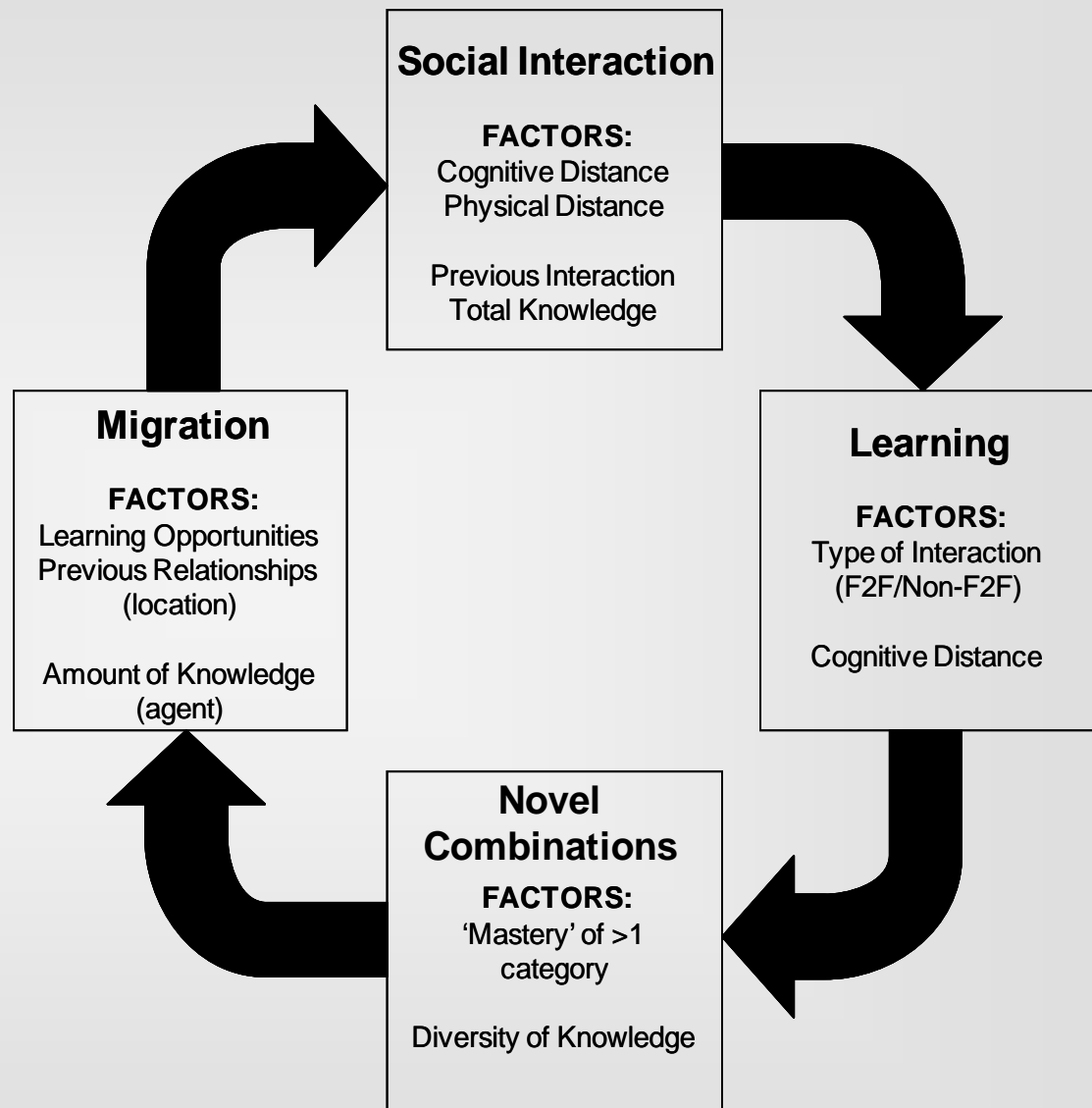


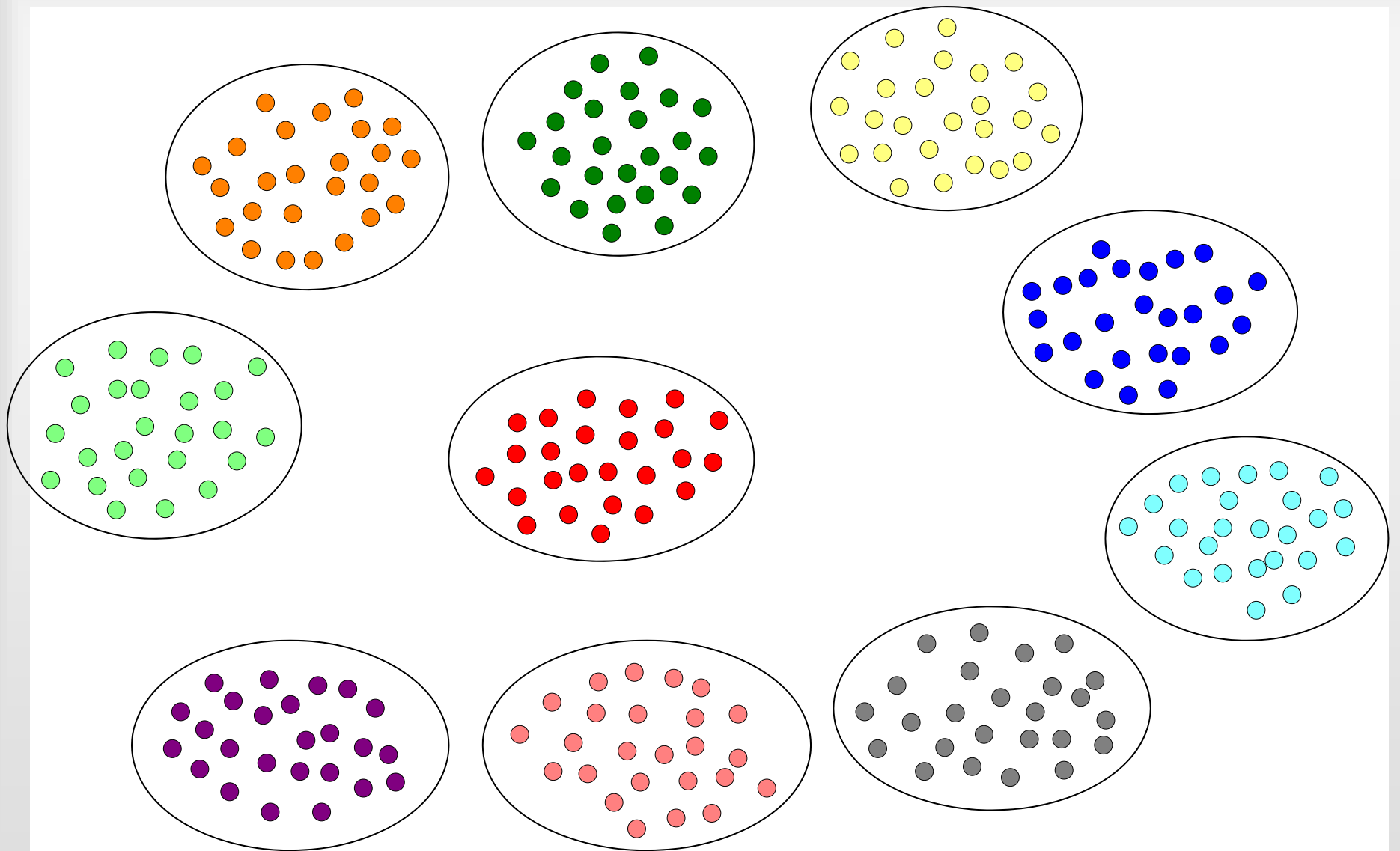
creativity literature map



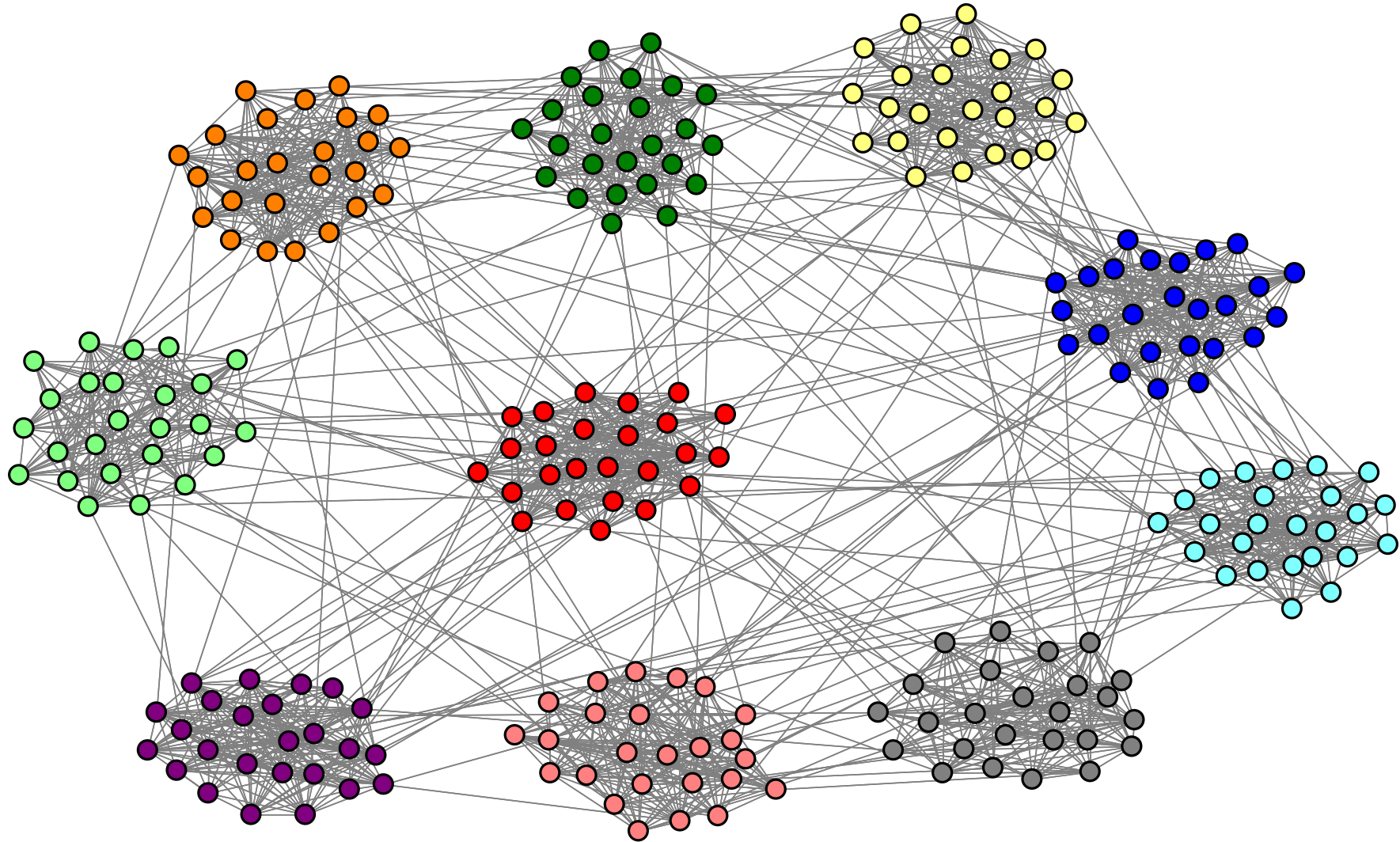
outline of agent-based model of the creative process

demonstrating the importance of diversity, proximity, and density to the creative process

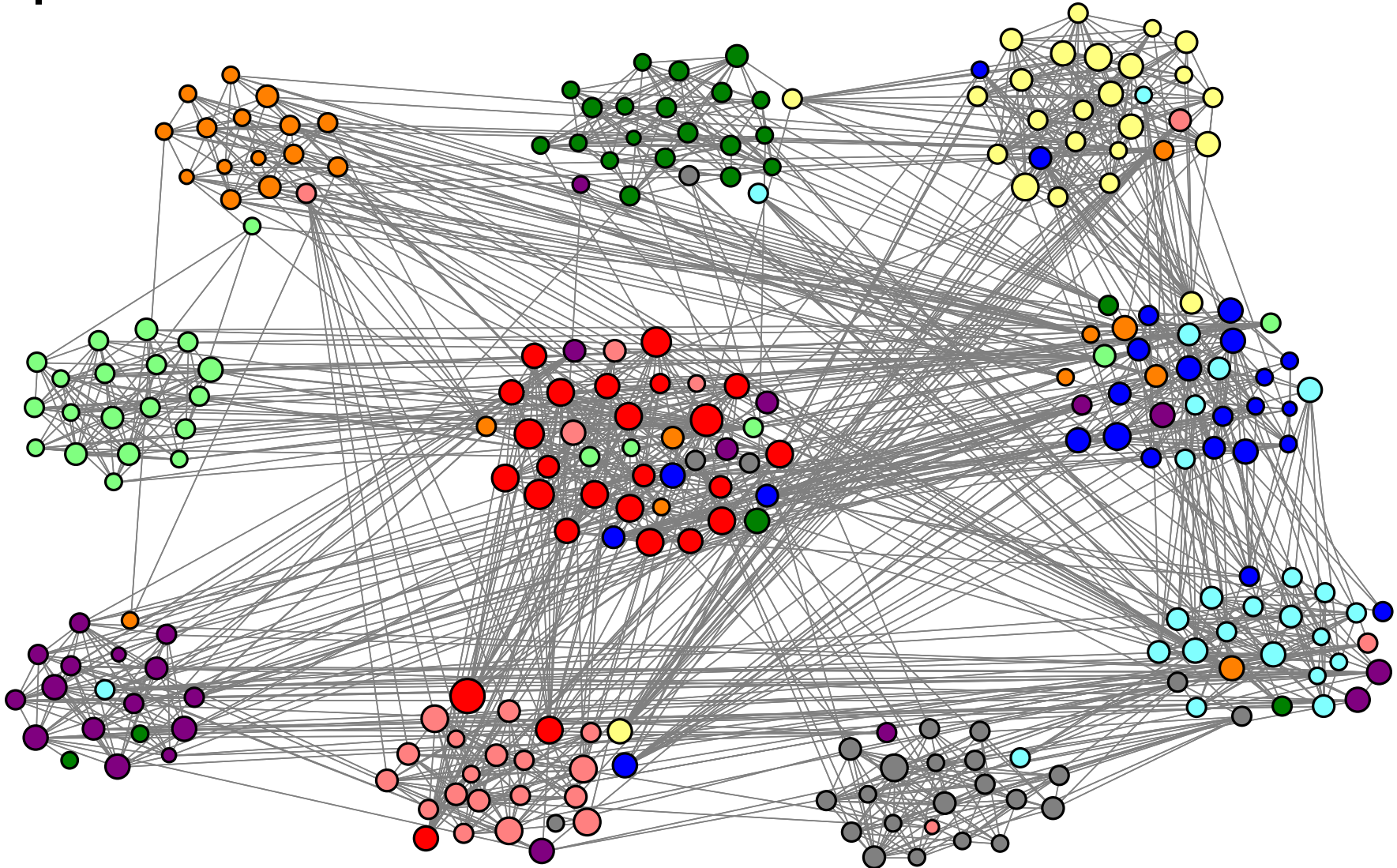




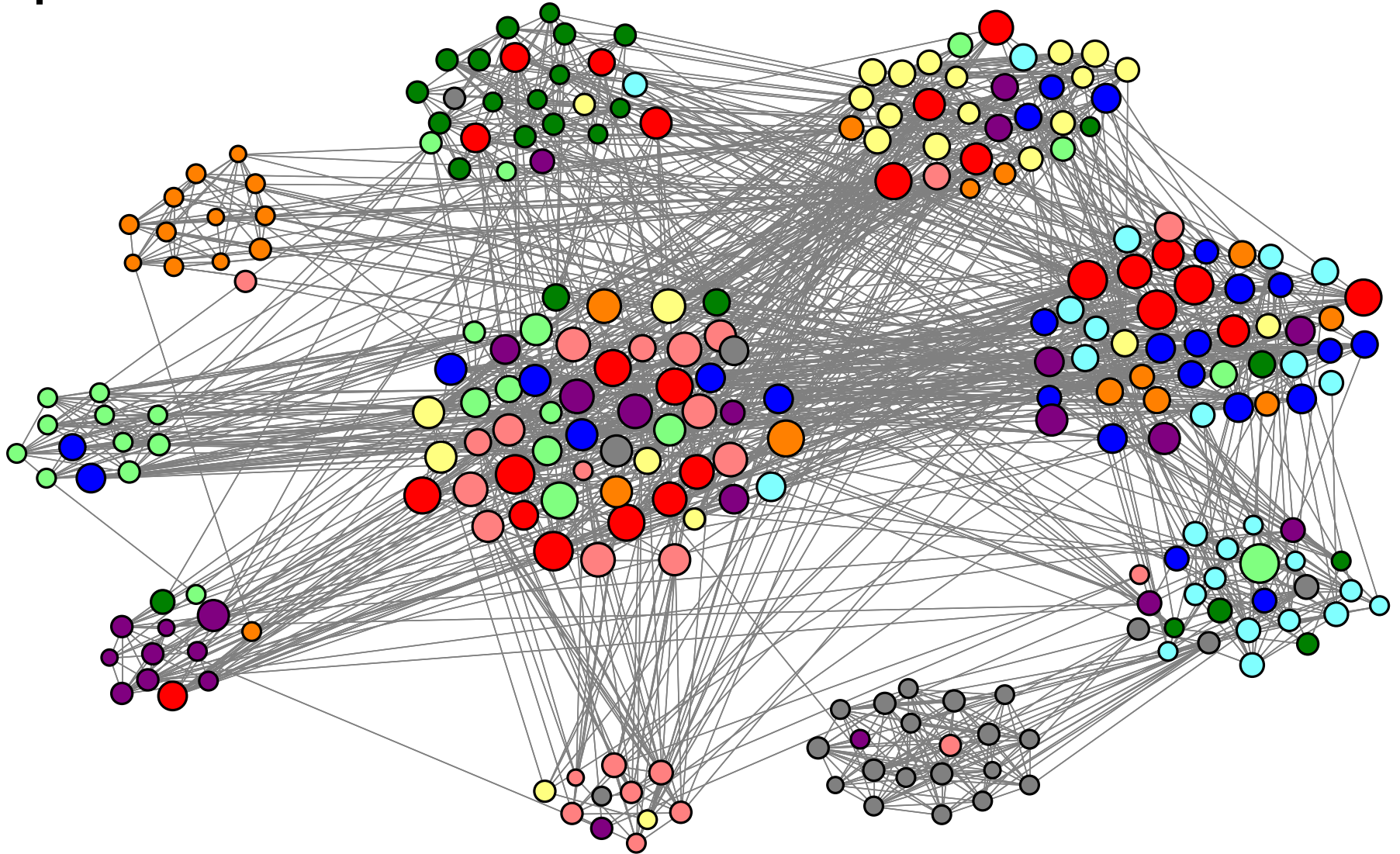
initial Set of Interactions



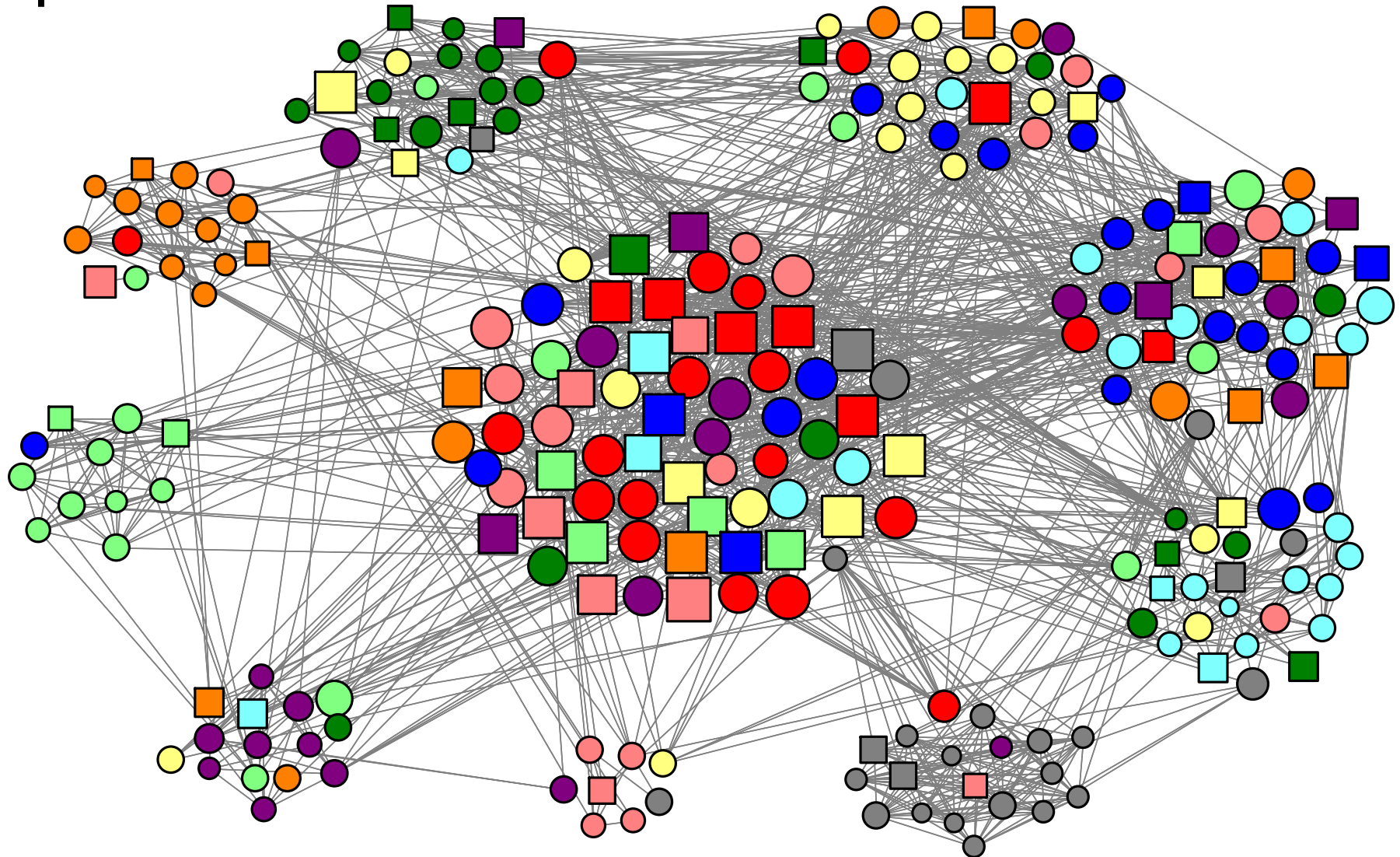
pattern of interactions after 10 units of time



pattern of interactions after 20 units of time



pattern of interactions after 30 units of time



mapping knowledge intensive industries

Rank	'Creative' Industries		'Innovative' Industries		'Discovery' Industries	
	Geography	LQ	Geography	LQ	Geography	LQ
1	Toronto	1.58	Kitimat	4.73	Ottawa - Hull	2.95
2	Vancouver	1.41	Labrador City	4.50	Salaberry-de-Valleyfield	2.32
3	Calgary	1.25	Wood Buffalo	3.56	Québec City	2.20
4	Regina	1.23	Baie-Comeau	2.79	Brockville	2.12
5	Montréal	1.22	Thompson	2.45	Montréal	2.05
6	Halifax	1.15	Sept-Îles	1.92	Sherbrooke	1.76
7	Yellowknife	1.09	Estevan	1.83	Hawkesbury	1.76
8	Ottawa - Hull	1.05	Chicoutimi - Jonquière	1.82	Guelph	1.48
9	Kelowna	1.04	La Tuque	1.78	Saint-Hyacinthe	1.43
10	Whitehorse	1.02	Timmins	1.77	Charlottetown	1.23
11	London	1.01	Fort St. John	1.67	Saskatoon	1.22
12	Victoria	1.01	Rouyn-Noranda	1.66	Brantford	1.21
13	Winnipeg	0.99	Calgary	1.64	Swift Current	1.20
14	Kitchener	0.97	Powell River	1.62	Toronto	1.19
15	Hamilton	0.97	Granby	1.58	Vancouver	1.12
16	Oshawa	0.97	Shawinigan	1.54	Kingston	1.05
17	Moncton	0.96	Alma	1.53	Victoria	1.01
18	Rimouski	0.96	Brockville	1.51	Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu	0.94
19	Barrie	0.94	Lloydminster	1.49	Brandon	0.86
20	St. John's	0.93	Sarnia	1.47	Lethbridge	0.85

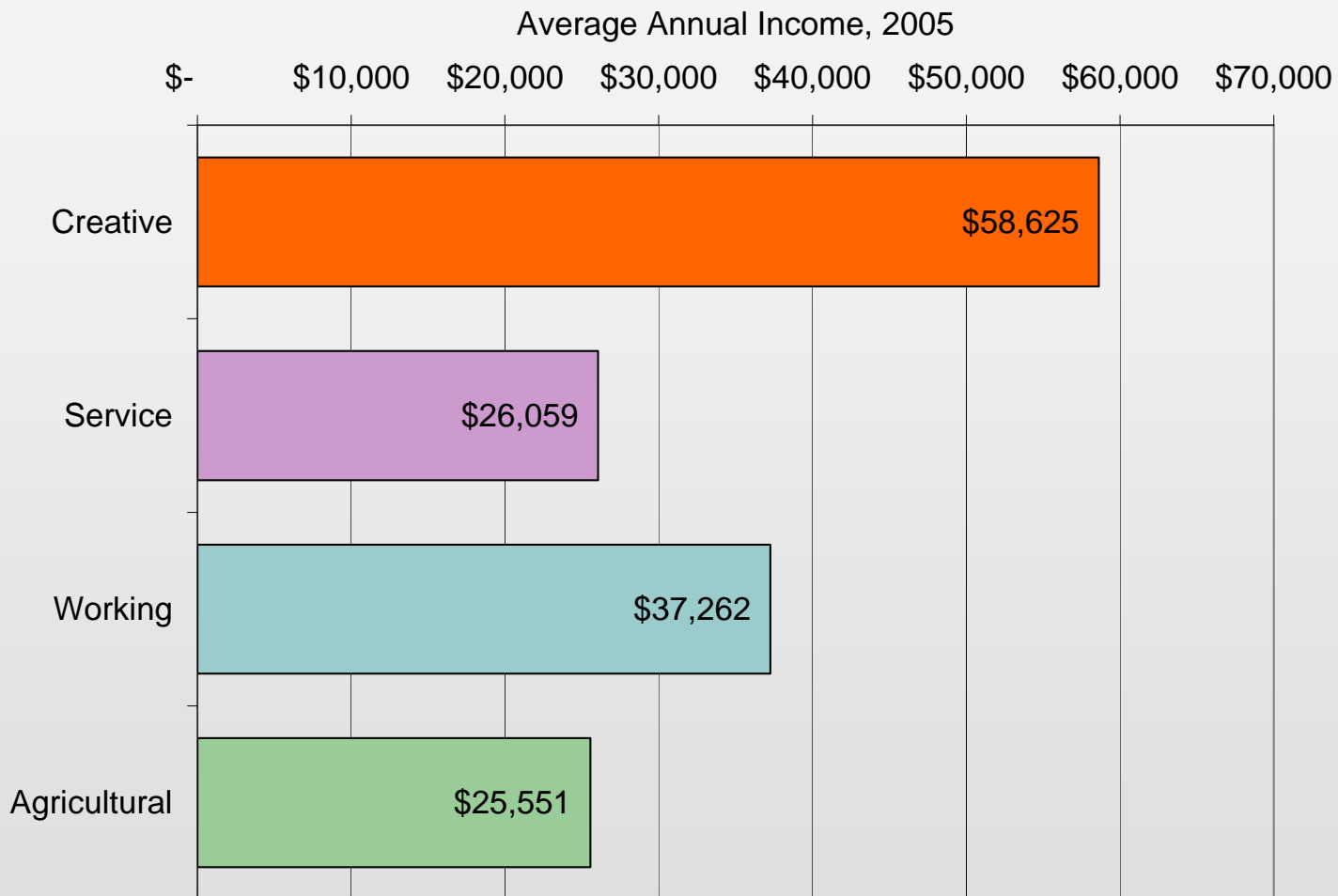
network characteristics of creative workers

- Data from the Canadian General Social Survey (2003)
- Shows that people working in creative occupations and industries tend to have the largest, most diverse, and most dynamic social networks of any category of worker
- Also a significant correlation between social network indicators and incomes
- Suggests that creative workers need more networking opportunities (diverse local environments) in order to thrive

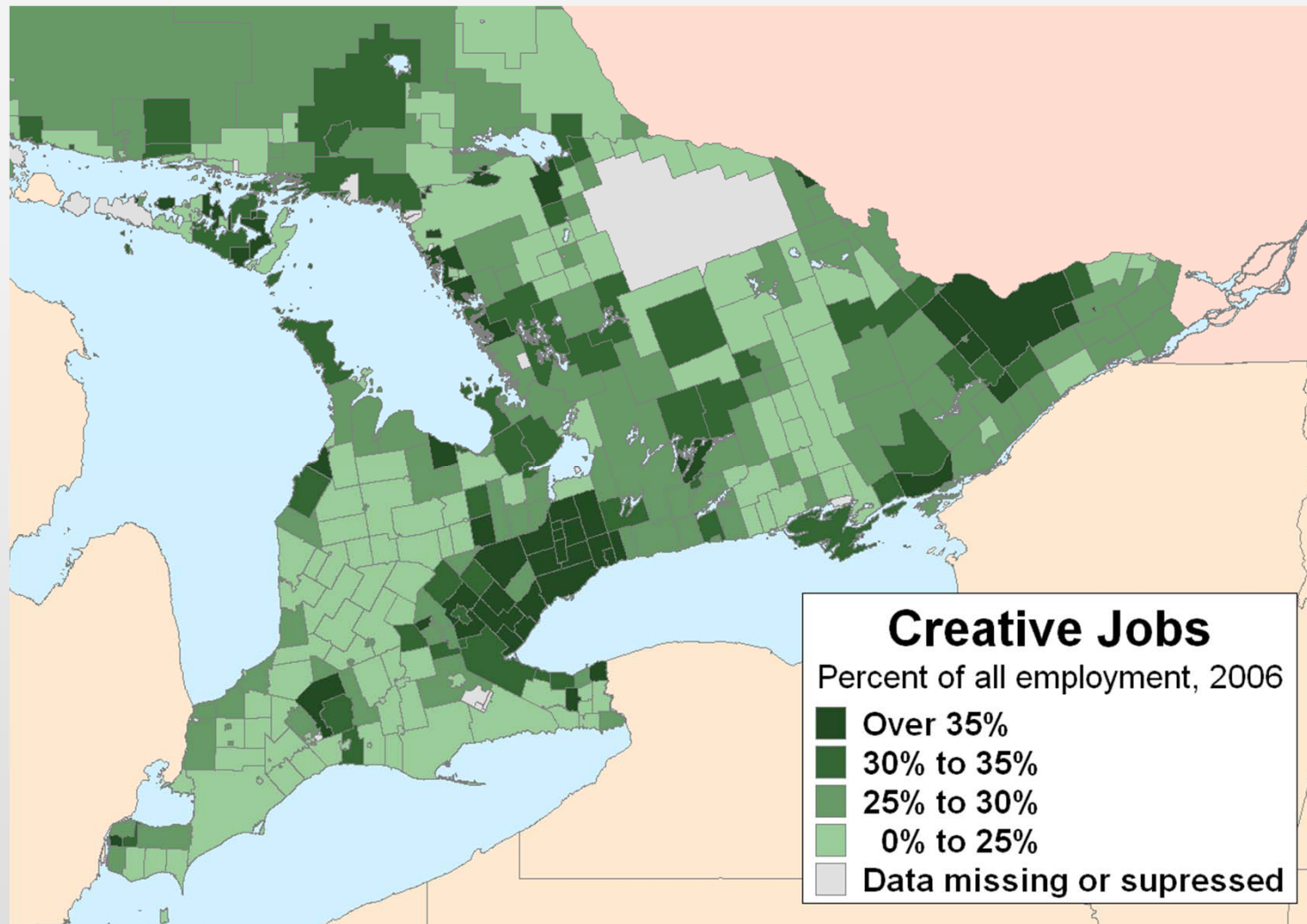
sources of local creative advantage

- the creative process involves the recombination of existing knowledge in novel and valuable ways
- Access to high levels of cognitive diversity increase the probabilities of novel combinations and reduce the risks associated with introducing novel ideas
- Dense and diverse urban environments have a creative advantage over more sparsely populated and homogeneous places
- What can rural places do to overcome this inherent disadvantage?

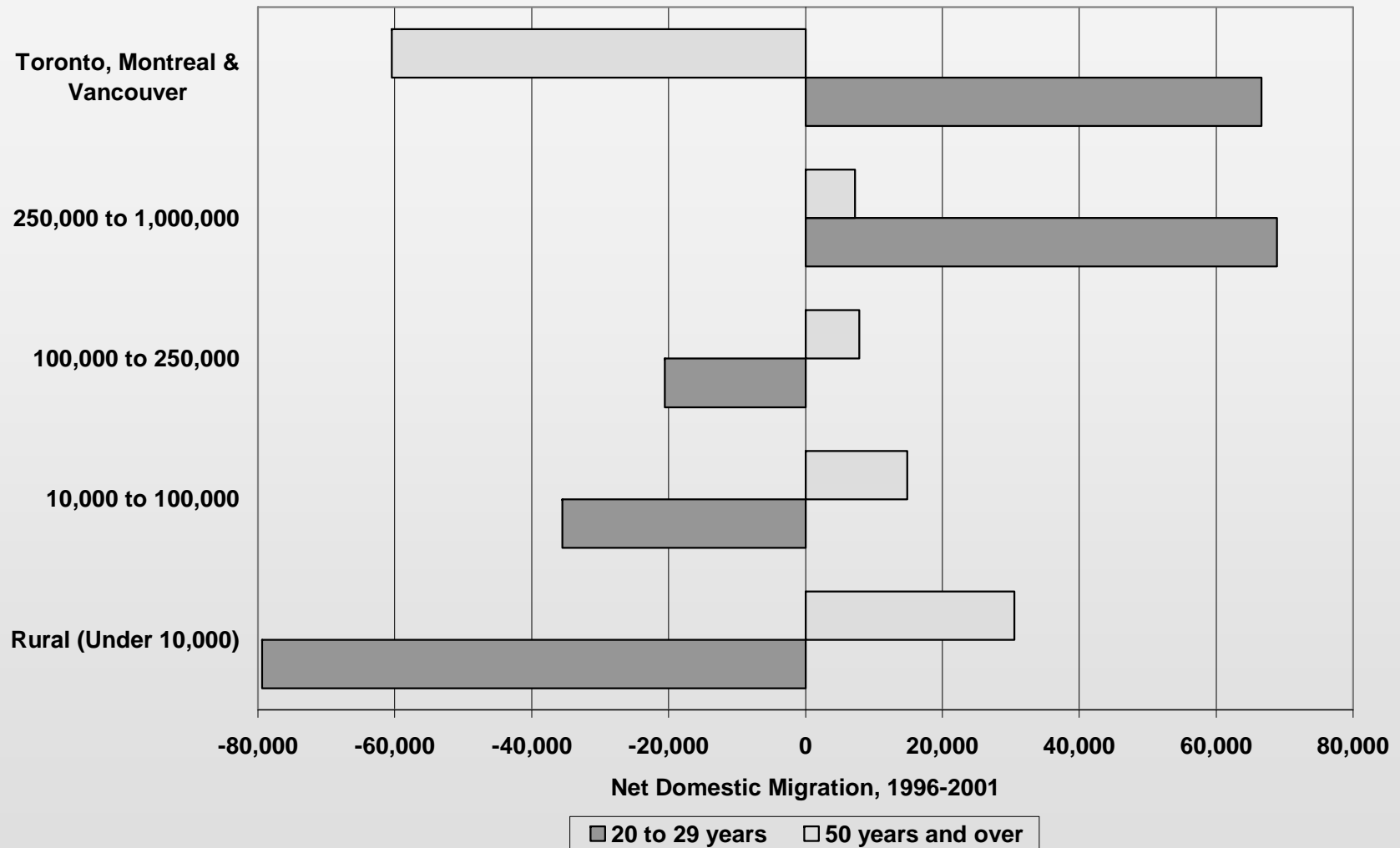
income by occupational group



mapping 'creative' employment in southern ontario



quality of place for whom?



overcoming creative disadvantage in rural areas

- **Creativity needs creative people**
 - Rural areas can often provide a high (and different) quality of life compared to urban places
 - Difficulty is with economic and creative opportunities
- **Greater need for a public sector role on building social/creative networks in rural areas**
 - Local buzz and urban pipelines
 - Less serendipity in rural areas needs greater coordination
- **Building networks requires new and emerging technologies**
 - Also an infrastructure disadvantage in rural areas
 - Problems of leadership and coordination between three tiers of government and private sector