



There are several models that are theoretical references to understand the role knowledge plays in economic growth and social welfare, and they ultimately converge in what is now known as the New Growth Theory. Paul Romer, the main proponent of this theory, states that knowledge applied to the innovation process is an asset that can be used simultaneously by an unlimited number of individuals and is not restricted by the laws of scarcity. Therefore, investment in knowledge generates an increasing return thanks to the creation of new markets.

The basic principle of this theory is the following: although knowledge as an asset can be costly in its generation, once produced it can be used almost infinitely at minimal marginal costs and not only by those who produce it. Consequently, ideas become the root of social transformation and the main engine of economic growth. However, to obtain an intentional process for the generation of new ideas that achieve their successful insertion in the economic system, there needs to be an education system that promotes creativity and allows its social and political recognition; this means an educational system that emphasizes the training of comprehensive citizens with the ability to both innovate and adapt quickly and effectively to changes. In Romer's words: *"If a poor country invests in education and does not destroy the incentives for its citizens to acquire ideas from the rest of the world, it can quickly take advantage of the knowledge accumulated worldwide and that is publicly available."*

This process depends on the creation of conditions such that the generation of knowledge is a process inherent to society itself. This implies that scientific and creative activity must not only occur in universities and research institutes, but also in the productive sector so that there is a close relationship between basic and applied research and development. In addition, it is essential that the entrepreneurial capacity, which allows converting this knowledge into successful innovations, is part of the training of professionals, researchers, and entrepreneurs.

On the other hand, what the creative industries in countries such as the United States, Australia, and Germany, among others have meant for economic growth, as well as their contribution to knowledge from the arts, design, and architecture deserve separate reflection. According to John Hartley, "The idea of creative industries describes the conceptual and practical convergence between the creative arts (individual talent) and the cultural industries (massive scale) in the context of new information and communication technologies (ICTs) in a new knowledge economy for new consumer-citizens to interact." This means that the generation of added value for these types of industries depends on technological development and on creative content that is directly related to the type of knowledge fashioned in the arts, architecture, and design. This approach can lead to a social redirection from the academy itself, from the reflection of our own work as universities in Colombia.

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