



**Nordplus Report. Good practice
for co-creation in culture and heritage.**

Hans Jørgen Vodsgaard (ed.)



Survey Report. Good practice on co-creation in culture and heritage.

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In front of the statue of Nikolai Frederik Severin Grundtvig, Vartov, Copenhagen. From left Justina Jakstaite, Trond Handberg, Bente von Schindel, Ilona Asare and Hans Jørgen Vodsgaard.

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Table of content

Preface	4
The new agenda of co-creation	5
Historical background	5
Ambiguous approaches.....	6
Co-creation in practice	8
The democratic approach	8
New approaches in the cultural field	9
Reference list	10
The library as a co-creator	12
International cooperation with co-creation.....	12
Methods and procedures in the co-creative practice.....	13
Active participation.....	14
Sustainable results	16
New culture policy with co-creation	17
Two examples of good practice	17
Methods of co-creation.....	19
Active participation.....	19
Sustainable results	21
Public brain-storm: “IDEAS for CESIS 810”	23
Invitation to brain storm	23
Engaged citizen groups	24
A sustainable initiative	25
Co-creation at the Open Air Museum	27
The Brotherhood of the Laptev Sea exiles	27
We are united by a fountain	28
Recommendations for good practice	30
Characteristics.....	30
Recommendations for good practice	31
Annex A: Guiding questions for good practice articles	32

Preface

This report is part of the 2-year Nordplus Adult development project, August 2018 – July 2020, entitled “Co-creative cooperation with culture volunteers and managers” (acronym: CO-OP). The project has been supported by the Nordplus programme of the Nordic Council of Ministers.

The partnership consists of five organisations from four Nordic and Baltic states working in the area of participatory culture, adult education and civil society development. The partners are:

Interfolk, Institute for Civil Society (DK) - see www.interfolk.dk

National Association of Adult Education in Art and Culture (DK) – see www.mof-dk.dk

Vestvågøy Municipality, Unit of Culture (NO) – www.vestvagoy.kommune.no/kultur-idrett-og-fritid/

CultureLab (LV) – see <https://culturelab.com>

Open Air Museum of Lithuania (LT) – see www.llbm.lt/en/

During recent years, *co-creation* has been a buzz word for new more equal forms of cooperation between the municipalities, the local institutions and the civil society actors. But there are reasons to be vigilant of the new initiatives, because they can also be used to lay a smokescreen over the public top-down control of civil society initiatives.

Several field researches suggest that public top-down management and public welfare savings can be disguised as co-operation; so instead of praising the big 'communion narrative', we have to share stories about the small steps we take towards a more genuine co-operative practice on equal terms. When does it work well - and when less good? If the castle in the air is to come true, we need both to learn from what's going well - and what's happening less well.

But currently we do not know much about good practices of co-creation. It is still a rarely researched topic and a young field for the practice, especially in the field of arts and culture. To fill the knowledge gap and to support civil society actors in co-creative contexts, this Nordplus Adult project was initiated.

The aim is to promote the knowledge and capacity of the local culture actors to provide co-creative cooperation between local voluntary culture associations, professionals, public and private culture institutions, and the culture departments of the municipalities, including new inter-sector collaboration, open networking, new activity types and reach-out to new audiences.

The objectives are to:

1. Compile good practice and innovative approaches in co-creative cooperation.
2. Develop curricula and exemplary course packages for culture volunteers and managers.
3. Disseminate the results to the wider Nordic-Baltic community in as sustainable manner.

This Report on good practice refers to the first objective, and it helps together with the Workshop Compendium to provide our baseline for the further development work in the project.

We wish you an inspiring reading – discovering the transformative potential of co-creation!

June 2019,
Hans Jørgen Vodsgaard

The new agenda of co-creation

By Hans Jørgen Vodsgaard, Interfolk

The last years the municipal agenda for the delivery of welfare services has been characterised by the concept of “co-creation”, especially in Denmark but also in other Western and Northern European countries, while it still hasn’t got much foothold in Eastern and Southern European countries. The new agenda indicates an aim to strengthening the welfare services by establishing new cooperative relations and roles between the public sector and citizens and civil society.

According to Danish researchers (Andersen & Lundgaard, 2016) it seems like a “collaborative turn” – a turn towards a new cooperation mantra, where “co-creation” forms part of any strategy and speech from municipal employees and politicians. In Denmark, the new agenda is carried out by a number of organisations and public leaders and politicians under names, such as “Kommune 3.0” (Skanderborg Municipality), “Kommune Forfra” (Aarhus Municipality) and “Future Welfare Alliances” (Local Government Denmark). In recent years, a new “market” has emerged, in which a number of consultants, think tanks and researchers offer analyses, competence development, counselling and dissemination to support the agenda of co-creation (Tortzen, 2016).

In co-creation, citizens and professionals are equal partners in developing, implementing and evaluating solutions. At the same time, the concept captures the organisational cross-sectoral form of cooperation across civil society and the municipality (2018; Espersen & Andersen, 2017). Broadly speaking, co-creation means that citizens and associations from the civil society (and companies from the market) and employees and managers from the municipality are engaged in a cross-sectoral collaboration to develop new welfare solutions. When you co-create, you create something new together – hence the name. The parties’ differences, i.e. the total amount of competencies, values and networks, are mixed together in new ways to create new solutions to common challenges.

Hereby, co-creation promotes social innovation, where you put more skills and a larger network into play in new ways. By mixing the cards, one obtains new eyes on old issues that include knowledge and networks from the voluntary world in the municipal – and vice versa. It requires that you are open to thinking completely new – and together defining what you collaborate about and why.

Historical background

The idea of “co-creation” was first described by economist Elinor Ostrom and her colleagues at Indiana University in the 1970s. Initially, the term was developed to explain the researchers’ empirical findings, which showed that police efforts were cheaper and more effective in small and medium-sized police departments than in the major departments (Ostrom, 2012), among other things because the closer connection to and dialogue with the citizens contributed to reducing crime.

In the Nordic countries there is a long tradition of involving the citizens and for cooperation between the public and civil society, which has been termed “cooperation”, “partnerships” and, last but not least, “co-creation” (Andersen & Espersen, 2017). Although the idea of co-creation builds on the earlier experiences of collaborating and user involvement, it goes further in focusing on citizens and voluntary associations as an equal co-creator of welfare solutions.

In general, the public authorities’ interest in cooperation with citizen groups and civil society associations was high in the late 1970s and early 1980s in many Western countries. For example, in Denmark we had the large-scale government-initiated development funds, called SUM-grants, which came in the 1980s and continued into the 1990s, and promoted the development of bottom-up initiatives that were based on local community groups and initiated by fiery souls in the civil society as well as public sector (Hulgård and Andersen, 2009). But during the 1990s this interest was displaced by new trends focusing on marketing and outsourcing of public services (Alford, 2009), where new public management (and the New Labour turn among many social democratic parties) began to define the agenda of the public administration.

In the late 00’s, the interest in co-creative cooperation operation has revived both politically and scientifically, in the light of the economic financial crisis 2007-2009, which affected many western welfare states. We have a “second wave” focusing in particular on positioning co-creation as a viable alternative to government and market-based production of public services, respectively. The agenda tends to shift from new public management to New Public Governance (Bovaird & Löffler 2012, Pestoff 2012).

The driving force behind co-creation is the desire to involve and give influence to citizens and stakeholders in the development of welfare solutions. It is a basic assumption that citizens and civil society possess knowledge and resources that can be applied in the development of welfare solutions and that they can flourish in equal relationships.

Empowerment of citizens and civil society, understood as the ability to exert influence and evolve from marginalized to equitable participants, is an important focus of research on co-creation, both as process and result. Empowerment can both deal with the individual level, i.e. the individual citizen’s experience of increased power over his or her own situation; and the collective level, i.e. groups of citizens’ opportunities for self-governance – and thus their political power to influence the development of society (Agger & Tortzen, 2018).

There is a new focus on the so-called “transformative potential” in co-creative cooperation (Needham & Carr, 2009), which involves citizens and public employees participating in an equal effort to develop innovative, sustainable and long-term welfare solutions. It is thus a collaboration that has the potential to create synergy by changing the roles and relationships of the actors. Just by focusing on this transformative potential of co-creation, it is possible to mark a difference from other practices such as citizen involvement and volunteering.

Ambiguous approaches

But co-creation is still a young field, both regarding research and welfare policy; and the attempts to define the central concepts are many and varying and the approaches are marked with ambiguities. There are roughly said two conflicting understandings of co-creation, respectively as a mean for efficiency or as a mean for empowerment. Some researchers identify inclusive and

emancipatory potentials in the gaps between organisations and sectors and emphasise the importance of democratic and collective governance (Boje, 2017).

Other researchers have uncovered that the specific cooperation takes place mainly on the implementation of municipal services rather than on development and evaluation, and that the democratic dimension in the concrete cooperation is limited (Ibsen & Espersen, 2016). We also know from other research that the inclusive and democratic function of civil society is under pressure from dominant expectations that civil society must deliver effect and results according to the same logic as the public sector (Espersen et al., 2018).

According to Nordic research (Loga, 2018), the growing public interest in cross-sectoral cooperation, in which civil society increasingly contributes to the development, production and evaluation of welfare solutions, has two very different faces:

- On the one hand, we have a discourse, which is linked to resource scarcity, financial crisis and economic necessity in accessing more resources.
- On the other hand, we have a discourse, which is linked to the ability of civil society to establish democratic governance and contribute to the democratic legitimacy of the welfare state, individual customization and active citizenship.

The first understanding with focus on efficiency has been further developed within the framework of New Public Management with emphasis on economic gains. Co-creation is seen as an answer to resource shortages in public welfare production and aims at efficient production of public services, and typically citizens are seen as relatively “passive” co-producers of services. The goal here is to continuously quality assure, streamline and target and, if necessary, innovate public services (Jakobsen & Andersen, 2013). The understanding is characterized by an economic rationale and a functional perspective, where citizens and users are seen as rational, benefit maximizing actors.

The second understanding that emphasises empowerment has been developed with reference to New Public Governance, and it aims at giving citizens and civil society greater influence on public welfare (Osborne, 2010). It emphasises network-based collaboration between different public and private actors, working together to prioritize, plan or produce welfare. This understanding highlights the democratic potential of co-creation in the form of increased pluralism and legitimacy of prioritizing, planning and producing public welfare. The goal is empowerment of citizens and civil society, and co-creation is seen as a way to promote transformative processes that can change the relations and roles between the public administration and the civil society associations and citizens.

In the empowerment understanding, citizens are regarded as active citizens, and it is emphasised that not only individual citizens, but also civil society organisations, local communities can participate in cooperation. It focuses primarily on the possible democratic and liberating potential in co-creation.

We can emphasise that the partnership circle of this Nordplus project share an approach that is based on the empowerment understanding and the project’s development work will not only focus on cooperation on equal footing, but also try to identify opportunities for civil society actors to be the initiators and the key executives during parts of the cooperation.

Co-creation in practice

The idea of co-creation that has more ideational sources and represents different political agendas is also an ambiguous phenomenon in practice. It can cover a variety of practices (Ewert & Evers, 2012) and unfortunately the many fine words will often not correspond to real practice.

Empirical research in “co-creative practices” shows that citizens and civil society are often involved late and have limited influence in the cooperation. The researchers distinguish between three types of co-creation depending on the role of citizens and civil society actors and where in the process they get influence. They can either take the role of co-initiator, co-designer or co-implementer. In practice, the most common form of cooperation is where the citizens take the role as co-implementer, that is, they first enter into cooperation, when the new services are designed and shall be implemented (OECD, 2011).

A recent Danish study (Tortzen, 2016) showed that in many cases there is a gap between narrative and practice in terms of co-creation. Specific cases were investigated in three different municipalities, with particular focus on how the public management, respectively, supported or counteracted equal cooperation. The conclusion was that all three examples represented top-down initiatives that were presented as “co-creation”.

On the one hand, the municipal leaders use an empowerment tale of co-creation, emphasizing equal cooperation, where citizens and other civil society actors get influence on how welfare is to be designed and produced. On the other hand, it is actually a practice in which relevant and affected groups of citizens are kept out, and where public actors do not seriously provide room for the problem understandings, solutions or resources the citizens wish to bring. This means that it contrary to the fine words in reality is a practice of instrumental efficiency.

The same picture is drawn from a major study, which CISC (Centre for Research in Sports, Health and Civil Society, University of Southern Denmark) has carried out. It shows that even though the municipalities want to strengthen democracy in public services, they cooperate with volunteers on specific tasks in the implementation, rather than involving them in identifying challenges and developing new possible solutions (Ibsen & Espersen, 2016). In practice, the instrumental efficiency understanding of cooperation often prevails in governance.

The conclusion of these two key surveys is that the municipalities are constantly failing to act as facilitators in the co-creative cooperation, by laying down the framework and objectives of the cooperation in advance, and by assuming a dominant role in the cooperation, so that there is no room for the resources and ideas, the citizens and civil society can bring. Such “top-down” partnerships, where the municipality takes the role of defining rather than facilitating, do not allow space for all parties' resources and knowledge to come into play.

The democratic approach

We wish to promote alternative approaches, where the cultural associations can be engaged in more equal forms of cooperation that respects the independent learning capacity and the democratic self-organisation of the voluntary associations. We think a viable agenda for co-creation must focus on the synergistic benefit and the so-called “transformative potential”, where coop-

eration is developed on equal terms and with reference to new public governance and the goal of empowerment.

The most innovative part of our project may be to build on the “citizen help citizen” approach to promote “cultural sustainability” in our support to the New Public Governance agenda of “co-creative cooperation” as a mean for social inclusion and empowerment. The goal is empowerment and we will focus on the transformative potential in a co-creative cooperation, where citizens and public employees participate on equal footing to develop innovative, sustainable and long-term welfare services, also in the area of arts, culture and heritage. Hereby new groups of citizens can be engaged in the design and implementation of new arts and culture activities and the traditional more passive forms as users and audiences are elaborated to more involving forms of active participation.

This approach will in our point of view raise the accessibility and diversity of cultural expressions. Hereby different citizen groups have better access to take part, not only as co-implementers, but also as co-initiators and co-designers of new initiatives as well as to be engaged not only as users, but as active audiences and participants in the arts and culture activities. With such a more open access to take part, all groups have better possibilities to influence the design and implementation and this will promote a more inclusive and multifaceted art and culture life in the local communities.

This understanding highlights the democratic potential of co-creation in the form of increased pluralism and legitimacy of prioritizing, planning and producing public welfare services, also in the area of arts, culture and heritage. The goal is empowerment, and it is emphasised that not only individual citizens, but also civil society organisations and local communities can participate in cooperation.

Hereby, it has a clear link to the first and third strategic objective of a “Sustainable and intercultural Nordic Region” that was presented in the strategy for Nordic cultural cooperation 2013-2020, which the Nordic Ministers of Culture adopted on 31 October 2012. We think that the sustainability of the Nordic societies as well as other EU member states, in general will be promoted by a more accessible and engaging cultural life, and especially by applying the “citizen help citizen” approach, where all types of citizens can be involved on equal terms in the area of voluntary culture and heritage and thereby also in the co-creative cooperation with public representatives and staff from the public arts, culture and heritage institutions.

New approaches in the cultural field

Currently, the co-creative pilot work is mainly developed in the welfare area of social, health and humanitarian activities, and not so much in the area of arts and culture, even though it may especially be in the area of arts, culture and heritage that the transformative learning potential can be strongest.

It can from a pragmatic point of view be mentioned that in Denmark sports, culture and leisure associations together account for half of all associations in the country. The sports associations constitute about a quarter and the cultural and leisure associations also represent about a quarter, while welfare associations (social, humanitarian and health associations) account for less than one fifth of all associations. In addition, cultural associations are the sector, which has the

highest growth in numbers of new associations and new members (Ibsen & Espersen, 2016); and this is a general tendency in all EU member states. Not least outside the larger cities, cultural associations are crucial to ensuring a wide range of culture and leisure facilities for the citizens.

In principle, participatory culture promotes inclusive and mutually beneficial experiences, where the involved participants contribute and benefit equally in the same act, as neighbours and peers, without being targeted or labelled. Compared to many other existing volunteering campaign or charity culture activities, the co-creative approach helps to bring together resources from across a community in more equal horizontal networks contrary to more vertical top-down relations.

In our opinion, cultural associations have special opportunities to engage in an innovative development work, as there are not the same legislative bindings for municipal welfare services as in the social and health field. There is not the same risk that a citizen gets a wrong legal, social or health treatment due to efforts from “unprofessional” associations and volunteers, because in the arts and culture there is no risk for wrong or dangerous services, but only a shortage of possibilities as audience and performers.

The cultural associations and institutions can be seen as the freest of the free associations and as such have the best possibilities to engage in new equal forms of cooperation, where public administrations and institutions to a higher degree in selected areas can release their control and give room and influence for initiatives, resources and contributions from civil society associations and citizens.

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The library as a co-creator

By Trond Handberg, Inspector Vestvågøy Culture School & culture consultant Vestvågøy Municipality

International cooperation with co-creation

The Cultural Unit of Vestvågøy municipality was represented at a library conference in Murmansk, Russia from 11th to 14th of March 2019 by librarian Thor-Yngve Hetzler. Øystein Stabell from The Library of Oppland County presented a project at the conference, which appeared to be an example of very good practice from Norway.

- 1. Are there cases in your municipality/country when citizens are involved in the design of solutions in local cultural life, not only in implementation of local cultural strategies and goals? Who were the organizers of these co-creation practices?*

In 2018 The Library of Oppland county got a development grant for a project called “Biblioteket som samskaper”, in English “The library as a co-creator”. The grant giver was the National Library of Norway, and the amount for 2018 was kr 1 375 000, which means about 150 000 Euros. And they got the same amount for 2019. This project runs for two years; 2018-2019. With this project the Library of Oppland county and their partners wishes to challenge the way libraries develop services and solutions. This is done through focusing on the services which are being developed together with the inhabitants and the local community. The purpose of the project is to make libraries innovative and relevant community developers.



The Library as a co-creator

The partners in the project are the county libraries of Buskerud, Finnmark, Rogaland and Oppland, and in addition nine municipal public libraries from these four counties. Through systematic work during the project period the libraries learn, in theory and practice, to lead co-creation processes.

Before this project, the County Libraries of Buskerud and Oppland worked with a preliminary project called “Bruk & del – innovasjonsspredning i bibliotek” (In English “Use & share – innovation spreading in libraries”). In this preliminary project, the libraries defined that the main project should lead to the libraries, to a much greater extent than today, further developing and using innovative solutions that can create value for the citizens.

Methods and procedures in the co-creative practice

2. *Could you describe the methods or procedures used for these co-creative practices? What goals are achieved and in which manner? Are there some innovative methods used (e.g. special games, different design thinking methods etc.)?*

The project is ongoing, and it is not finished yet. The main goals are:

- Together with residents and communities, the project partners solve common tasks, problems and challenges related to democratic participation learning, knowledge sharing and cultural experiences
- The project partners have a good knowledge of relevant innovative measures, which have been tested elsewhere and which can create value in their own community
- The project partners have established methods and tools for this knowledge transfer to their own organization and to other librarians who wish to involve residents and communities

There are three tracks in the project:

- Action learning: Participants from the public libraries work on their own co-creation projects and get together in action learning groups
- Knowledge transfer: Participants from the county libraries spread knowledge and experience from the project, and support the participants from the public libraries
- Partner meetings: The libraries work on important topics within co-creation that are reflected in relation to the participants' own practice and co-creation projects
- Action learning and knowledge transfer are conducted between the partner meetings.

The libraries want to test different tools and methods between governed co-creation and facilitated co-creation. Libraries have good opportunities to lead co-creative processes. The project groups are spread over a very large geographic area. The partner meetings are the central instruments to ensure progress and to accumulate expertise. For practical reasons they always use a conference hotel next to Oslo Airport.

The main resource person who leads the partner meetings is Jens Ulrich from VIA University College in Denmark. The joint gatherings are conducted as a combination of short lectures, dialogue, discussions, group work and presentations in plenary. The project partners must be ac-

tively participating in the learning process, in order to be as good as possible at transferring the knowledge from the community collections into action in their municipalities.



Photo: Private. The mentor, Jens Ulrich, speaks to the project participants.

After each partner meeting, the project partners test and initiate the process works on local meetings in their communities. It includes:

- How to find out what really are the municipality's challenges
- Who and how many that should be invited to solve the challenge
- How the meetings can be held for the good ideas to come up
- How to choose the idea
- How to involve the whole process – completely until the solution has been tested, realized and evaluated.

Participants from the County Libraries have continuously followed up the project participants in their counties. The project partners also adopt innovations others have made.

Active participation

3. *Could you describe in which way the active participation of citizens is organized? Is it open and inviting for everybody/different representatives of the society? What groups of citizens usually take part or have taken part in these co-creative practices?*

The owner of the project is The Library of Oppland County. The management group consisting of the heads of County Library heads and general managers of the participating municipalities

adopt the plans, workshare and use of resources. The project group is already mentioned. The county libraries and the municipal libraries have in different ways the task to organize and support the active participation of citizens.

In the project, a network map was created. This map has been instrumental in finding participants from the civil society, both participants with strong connections to the library and participants with a weak connection. Each participating library has completed meetings with the citizens to map out expectations of the library. Other units of the counties and municipalities, the business sector and volunteers have been represented. This should give an idea of what challenges the library is facing and what they can cooperate.

4. *What factors would in your opinion contribute to the success of this practice? What attitudes and tasks would this practice require from public employees?*

In the meetings they have asked open questions about the daily life, like «What do you think are the biggest challenges in your local community?» And “what is the good life?” After these more general questions the next question could be “how can the library help to solve these challenges?”

The participants spend a lot of time working on problems before they work with solutions. Some participants brought problems to the workshop, but the libraries really wanted blank sheets. The project lasts for two years and they are still working with exploring after three quarters of a year. Thoroughness often leads to success.



French food with the Book Bus in Oppland municipality

Anchoring and understanding in the municipal organization, politically and administratively, also will contribute success. Project work is difficult to report in the strict quarterly reporting

regime in municipalities and counties. The goal must be to get the municipality to see the usefulness of co-creation, thus enabling this reporting regime to be changed.

Co-creative practice requires more professionalism from the librarians than the library profession and the professionalism must be used in another way. The librarians must accept the unanticipated and losing some of the control. Co-creation demands opinions from others. The librarians are not better experts on the challenges than the others.

Sustainable results

5. *What has been the result of this practice? Has it been continued with a follow-up phase? Is it a regular and sustainable practice?*

As mentioned, the project is not finished. All partners have committed to use a 20 % position for a period of two years. In this period other public units, the business sector and volunteers will be involved. If it is not followed up with co-operative practices in the future, this project will be unsuccessful. To be sustainable the project has to be as relevant as possible for the citizens. The participants must learn all the methods. They also must learn how to look at their own profession.

6. *Do you have some recommendations for the future use of the described co-creation practice? Do you see any important factors that need special attention in order to use this practice with good results?*

Co-creation is a craft. You will be good at it when you do it repeatedly. You get even better when you practice a lot. You must have some tools to work co-creatively, but you need to use them. A tool is not a goal, but it will help you to achieve that goal.

New culture policy with co-creation

By Bente von Schindel, chairman of the Association of Adult Education in Art and Culture

Two examples of good practice

1. *Are there cases in your municipality/country when citizens are involved in the design of solutions in local cultural life, not only in implementation of local cultural strategies and goals? Who were the organizers of these co-creation practices?*

Here we present two co-creative initiatives from Thisted Municipality in North West of Denmark and Guldborgsund Municipality in South East of Denmark, where citizen groups and civil society were engaged in cooperation with the local institutions and culture departments of the municipalities.

Thisted

In many municipalities in Denmark there are - in addition to the usual cultural institutions - many cultural civil society associations. In order to unite the influence of the associations, local cultural councils has been established as an umbrella of the associations in order to make it easier to make joint events and not least, have a voice in the municipality's cultural policy. In many municipalities the local cultural council is recognized as an equal partner in the organisation of the local cultural policy and when the city council is renewed every 4 years, the local cultural council participates on equal terms with the cultural politicians and the cultural institutions in the decision on which cultural policy should be pursued.



Svein Knudsen: Menneskesten (Human Stones), 1997. Placed in the dunes at the North Sea.

In Thisted the municipality has set up a system for co-creation processes in connection with the renewal of cultural policy every four years. It contains procedures and principles for the co-creation leading to this policy.

Guldborgsund

The many waterways at the island of Falster, where you find the Municipality of Guldborgsund, have led to many cultural historical sites. Falster has Marrebæk Pump Station – a museum with an old pump - a model of what will happen at watercourse, a model of the Gedesby ship (from the 13th century), the ship Agnete (the Gedesby ship in small version) and another model is in the middle of the medieval centre just outside Nykøbing, the largest city of the island.



Marrebæk Pump Station

In the woods near the west coast there are a lot of ancient burials from the Stone Age. The island, just north of Gedesby has never been completely dry, but a few years ago thoughts have been advancing to clean it. Just outside of the southernmost town, Gedser lays a rampage and the remains of a castle. There is a ferry port and there has been a ferry to Germany since 1886.

The southern tip of the island is surrounded by water on 3 sides, but has previously been covered by forest and been used by the nobility for hunting and grazing. The forest is destined for the construction of especially warships - especially because of many wars against the Swedes.

Unfortunately, all of the listed cultural historical sites are in default and in a project supported by the Nordic Council of Ministers the idea was that volunteers will be restoring the area, so buildings (and nature around them) would be attractive both for residents and for tourists.

The project was initiated by the National Association of Cultural Councils and the Municipality of Guldborgsund and as the municipality at that time just had started to implement co-creative ways of making projects this became one of the first projects done in that way. Therefore it was also very much a learning-procedure for all partners.

Methods of co-creation

2. *Could you describe the methods or procedures used for these co-creative practices? What goals in which manner are achieved? Are there some innovative methods used (e.g. special games, different design thinking methods etc.)?*

In Thisted the municipality has set up a system for co-creation processes in connection with the renewal of cultural policy every four years. It contains the following procedures with the principles:

- Wholeness and coordination
- Political framework management / Trust in management
- Cross-cutting solutions
- Co-responsible and co-creative citizens
- True dialogue and participation
- Citizen Involvement
- Confidence
- Individualization - fits the individual
- Co-creation
- Comparison
- Citizens = Resourceful active people

In Guldborgsund they have the following principles:

- Lead through processes rather than leading the process.
- Be facilitating rather than controlling - drop the control
- Expand the problem understanding - start understanding the problem again!
- Submit the right of initiative and instead fertilize the earth for others to do so.
- Be responsive to the needs of the outside world go to discovery in the unknown.
- Supported arenas for co-creation and participation
- Think big and start small with connecting to the existing one

Active participation

3. *Could you describe in which way the active participation of citizens is organized? Is it open and inviting for everybody/different representatives of the society? What groups of citizens usually take part or have taken part in these co-creative practices?*

Thisted has divided the cultural groups in the municipality into different groups, all of which participate in the process. They are:

- Institutional and cultural groups

- Professional networks
- Cultural schools
- School service and The Cultural Backpack
- Coherent talent development programs from preschool to adult within artistic genres
- Working group on Hanstholm Lighthouse
- Mapping the physical resources
- Open institutions, transport, digitization and dissemination (Accessibility)

All groups – as equal partners - discuss for 4 weekends - areas of action also called the 6 main roads in cultural policy. It is:

- Increased focus on the localized potentials
- Cooperation and holistic thinking
- Children and young people's access to culture and talent development
- Knowledge environments and professionalism
- Strengthening and rethinking the physical framework
- Cultural diversity and accessibility in everyday life

Guldborgsund: In the Municipality of Guldborgsund, the co-creation is carried out with various types of councils from the civil society, grouped according to which "professional" profiles they have. These are:

- The Cultural Council
- The Sports Council
- The Adult Education Committee
- The Citizen Council
- The Green Council
- The Senior Council

4. *What factors in your opinion contributed in order this practice would be successful? What attitudes/tasks this practice requires from public employees?*

In the municipality of Guldborgsund they have a mind-set for the public employees saying:

- "We want to be closer to the citizens to create a close community and involve them in relevant decisions. We do so because we believe that all citizens are an important resource that has a shared responsibility and a role to play in our municipality.
- "We make it concrete by being more facilitating and being in early dialogue with citizens, associations and other actors. It's about creating small local communities and cross-community communities in the big community?"

As for the municipality of Thisted all the participants in the process have made a statement:

1. Co-creation isn't a reproduction of something that already exists.
 - The innovative aspect of co-creation can take place at many levels.

- The key is that the parties experience added value
2. Co-creation is a mutual dependence
 - In co-creation everyone has a central role to play and no one can be dispensed with.
 - Requires a clear expectation match.
 3. Co-creation is a dialog-based process
 - One defines together problem and action.
 - A common reflexive room.
 - A continuous renegotiation.
 4. Co-creation spreads the right to take the initiative
 - No one owns the initiative or process.
 - A shared responsibility where everyone who wants can participate
 5. Co-creation requires risk of liability
 - Dare to let go
 - No one has the decision-making power alone

Sustainable results

5. *What has been the result of this practice? Has it been continued with follow-up? Is it regular and sustainable practice?*

Both in Guldborgsund and in Thisted you now have a co-creation consultant. Guldborgsund has also created a knowledge centre for co-creation. In Thisted they still use the co-creative way of deciding their local cultural politics.



Thy Rock arranged by Thisted Rytmiske Musikforening (Thisted Rhythmic Music Association)

6. *Would you have some recommendations for future use of the described co-creation practice? Do you see some important factors where attention should be paid in order this practice could be used regularly with good results?*

I will recommend some of the principles from the two municipalities:

- Wholeness and coordination
- Cross-cutting solutions
- Be co-responsible and co-creative
- Have a true dialogue and participation
- Confidence is crucial to creating space for co - creative processes
- Lead through processes rather than leading the process.
- Be facilitating rather than controlling - drop the control
- Expand the problem understanding - start understanding the problem again!
- Submit the right of initiative and instead fertilize the earth for others to do so.
- Be responsive to the needs of the outside world go to discovery in the unknown.
- Supported arenas for co-creation and participation
- Think big and start small with connecting to the existing one
- It's not all things that can be co-creation. Many good well-run collaborations should not be replaced by co-creation

Public brain-storm: “Ideas for Cesis 810”

By Ilona Asare, chairman of Culturelab

Invitation to brain storm

1. *Are there cases in your municipality/country when citizens are involved in the design of solutions in local cultural life, not only in implementation of local cultural strategies and goals? Who were the organizers of these co-creation practices?*

Before the celebration of Cesis town 810 years anniversary (in 2016) a public meeting was organized with the representatives of Cesis city council and municipal cultural centre, inviting to take part active NGOs and cultural activists or interested citizens to come up with the new ideas, how the city should celebrate the anniversary and what cultural activities should be organized in the future. The meeting was organized by the NGO Culturelab in cooperation with Cesis municipality.

2. *Could you describe the methods or procedures used for these co-creative practices? What goals in which manner are achieved? Are there some innovative methods used (e.g. special games, different design thinking methods etc.)?*

For an introduction an inspirational presentation by the municipal cultural agency was prepared emphasizing the changes and achievements in culture in Cesis during last 10 years, giving to the audience a larger perspective to look forward to the next 10 years defining what would be important for cultural life in Cesis in the future.



Presentation at the Brain Storm meeting

Participants were divided in smaller thematic groups to come up with at least 10 ideas in each group. The groups were called:

4. PROUD Cesis – all ideas connected with the local identity, local cultural heritage, famous local artists etc., how to put for the better use the local cultural resources and how to promote them;
5. GREEN Cesis – all ideas intersecting culture and nature, how to contribute through cultural activities to more sustainable and nature friendly lifestyle of local inhabitants;
6. ACTIVE Cesis – all ideas intersecting culture and entrepreneurship or active lifestyle, how to stimulate cooperation among inhabitants, promote use of local products and services, social entrepreneurship etc.;
7. CREATIVE Cesis – all innovative ideas about creation and sharing, revitalization of abandoned places etc.

The work in groups was dynamic, and participants demonstrated active engagement, sharing their wishes and visions for the future culture life in Cesis.



The group present their ideas on big posters

Each group presented their ideas written on big posters, and afterwards each participant voted for the best idea in his/her opinion in each segment of ideas' collection (*Proud, Green, Active, Creative*) and wrote his/her name at the idea he/she is most interested to work on and would like to help to develop.

Engaged citizen groups

3. *In which way is the active participation of citizens organized? Is it open and inviting for everybody/different representatives of the society? What groups of citizens usually take part or have taken part in these co-creative practices?*

Among participants there were people of different age, gender and profession, forming together quite diverse audience. The meeting was open to everybody and was advertised in the local

newspaper and social media, giving a possibility to take part for everybody, but the participants were mainly already active citizens in different cultural and art sectors.

4. *What factors contributed in your opinion in order to make this practice successful? What attitudes/tasks this practice requires from public employees?*

An inspirational introduction was an important ingredient of the event as it made people proud about their recent achievements and raised the confidence and ambition to start with bigger ideas, which could really create a change towards long-term welfare solutions.

Mixing people with different background in groups working together to develop common ideas was also important as it could give different perspective for individuals working in their own narrow field.



Engaged citizen group

Public employees involved in organization of such event should have good mediation and mentoring skills, an ability to see the role of different players in local cultural ecosystem as well an ability to encourage individuals or organizations to work together for common goals. This concerns not only the work during the event itself, but especially afterwards giving feedback and follow-up for active participants of the brain-storming.

A sustainable initiative

5. *What has been the result of this practice? Has it been continued with follow-up? Is it regular and sustainable practice?*

It was bottom-up initiative and was not repeated on regular basis in exact format described above, but citizens' forums in Cesis' neighbourhoods are organized every year. These forums are

built around the ideas how to manage better the public space in Cesis and cultural activities are only partly included in the agenda. Some of the created ideas were transformed and realized, some are still ideas for the future. The process also helped municipal cultural workers to understand better the expectations of their audience to be able to develop next participative arts projects.

6. *Would you have some recommendations for future use of the described co-creation practice? Do you see some important factors where attention should be paid in order this practice could be used regularly with good results?*

The discussions in similar format should be organized every year or every second year as they bring together active participants of local cultural sector, inspiring each other and motivating to reach bigger common goals. Meanwhile the public sector representatives should act as facilitators making an effort to realize some of the most popular ideas and communicating with participants on regular basis.

Co-creation at the Open Air Museum

By Gita Šapranauskaitė, director and Justina Jakštaite, culture project manager,
Open-Air Museum of Lithuania

Here we present two examples of co-creative cooperation between citizen groups and public institutions in Rumsiskes that is a town in Kaisiadorys municipality in Lithuania.

The Brotherhood of the Laptev Sea exiles

“Lapteviečiai” is the Brotherhood of deportees at the Laptev Sea, a public organisation (established in 1992) uniting the people who were deported from Lithuania in 1941 and later reached the Yakut Republic, as well as their family members (www.laptevieciai.lt/).

One of the goals of the “Lapteviečiai” Brotherhood is to reveal the cruelty of the Soviet genocide and to strive to spread information among Lithuania’s people as well as beyond its borders. The Brotherhood:

- Organises meetings to mark memorable dates ;
- Collects and disseminates information about the deportation and its victims.

Upon the initiative of the Brotherhood in 1991, when marking the 50th anniversary of the deportation, a cross was put up on the Hill of Crosses near Siauliai in memory of the deportation of victims and a pole with a small chapel in Rumsiskes, at the Open Air Museum of Lithuania; and this was the first step towards decades of cooperation between the Brotherhood and the Museum.



Irena Valaitytė-Špakauskienė, guide at the Open Air Museum and member of Lapteviečiai“ Brotherhood

Later in 1992, the Brotherhood made an exhibition in the Museum devoted to the Nationwide Deportation. Here a yurt was built, similar to those in which deportees used to live in the Arctic; a cattle car used for deporting people was stationed. In 1993, a member of the Brotherhood, Irena Saulute Valaityte-Spakauskiene started as a volunteer to work at a new Exhibition Exile and Resistance Movement history in the Museum.

In 1997, Irena managed as a member of Lapteviečiai to get a paid position as museum staff. Till now she has coordinated thematic activities called “The Daily Life of Deportees on the Laptev Sea,” and recounts stories of deportations to Siberia and partisans in the deportation train car. Irena’s gripping testimony, providing an almost tangible experience of the tragedy experienced by the deportees from Lithuania, probably makes this section most exceptional. This is real history rather than learned history.

Visitors usually characterize her testimony as an academic lesson. She has received many requests to tell the full history of Lithuania. She also leads tours on deportation for visitors from Lithuania, Spain, Germany, Japan, Sweden, Russia and other countries. The exposition place in the Lithuanian Open Air Museum turned into a spiritual centre of the Brotherhood “Lapteviečiai”, where the Day of Mourning and Hope is marked every year. Members of the Brotherhood wrote or participated in compiling a number of books too.

We are united by a fountain

Rumšiškės community centre “Kokalnis”¹ initiates and carries out cultural activities in the town Rumsiskes that is part of Kasiadorys municipality in Lithuania.

In 2018 “Kokalnis” started to implement the project “We are united by a fountain”.

The aim of this project was to solve the problem of cooperation and communication between different generations in the community of Rumšiškės town. There is a large central square in the centre of the town, near to both the Cultural Centre, the administrative building of the Lithuanian Open Air Museum and the Gymnasium. Twenty years ago, there was a wonderful fountain, but today it doesn't work and the square is not a favourite place to visit for people of Rumšiškės.

The need for a fountain in a town is not accidental. In May 2018 Rumšiškės Families Club conducted a large-scale survey for the citizens of Rumšiškės with a question "What do you want in Rumšiškės so it can be a better place to live?" The population of Rumšiškės is below 2000, and 190 responses were received. Here the proposals were dominated by requests for a renewal of the fountain.

A large group of townspeople were involved in preparing the project application. The community centre “Kokalnis” initiated the project meeting with the schoolchildren club "SAVAS" from Rumšiškės and the Baranauskas gymnasium and other members of the community to create a performance on how to express the desire of the community to restore the fountain.

¹ See the website of “Kokalnis”: https://m.facebook.com/rumsiskiubendruomene/?ref=page_internal&mt_nav=0



Poster of the video: Antanas mena fontaną.

A video was created, entitled "Antanas mena fontaną" ("Antanas remembers the fountain"), where one of the oldest Rumšiškės inhabitants, Antanas Dementavicius was invited to take part in the video. Gymnasium pupils attended the creation of the video with a loud voice saying: "Fountain unites us". The temporary fountain was created for the video by the team of Rumšiškės firefighters, which also were engaged in the dreams of the community. There is also a verse telling that the idea is presented on social networks. The Video can be viewed here:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1Q801i9DPDQ&feature=youtu.be> or
- https://m.facebook.com/rumsiskiubendruomene/?ref=page_internal&mt_nav=0

The town's central square belongs to Kaišiadorys District Municipality. To implement the project „Kokalnė“ did receive permission from the Mayor of Kaišiadorys to write a project for fountain restoration works. Kaišiadorys District Municipality contributed with 30 percent of the project's budget. The private company MAXIMA LT invested in the project with up to 70% of the total project costs.

During the restoration of the fountain, the members of "Kokalnė" actively volunteered too. Now Antanas and the whole Rumšiškės community are eagerly awaiting the opening of the fountain in 2019!

Recommendations for good practice

By Hans Jørgen Vodsgaard, Interfolk

Characteristics

The agenda of “co-creation” has varied status in the participating countries. In Denmark the co-creative cooperation between the civil society and public administrations in the cultural field has gained some influence, in Norway and Latvia and Lithuania the idea of “co-creation” isn’t much known and it is in practice a rather new approach. Nevertheless, in all the partner countries an increasing number of cultural actors are becoming aware of the possibilities of co-creative cooperation.

The examples of good practice in the partner countries cover different target levels and show that co-creation in different settings is possible and can be successful. However, a similar pattern is apparent in all cases: The first initiative for the projects can come from civil society actors as well as from public institutions, but the actual implementation was thereafter only possible with the support of the public stakeholders, who committed themselves to the cause and made it their own. If this support was stopped during the project, it meant a threat to its continuation.

The initiatives from individual actors are needed to start the process of change. They act as a sort of catalysts for co-creative processes. Collective initiation is also conceivable, but requires already existing structures and networks, so that existing groups can jointly come up with new ideas.

Besides initiation, the question of resources is crucial. None of the projects examined could have been implemented as they were without some public support with resources or funding. At the same time, the different working statuses of the people involved often create inequality that makes joint processes more difficult. Volunteers or freelancers in the cultural sector, in particular, have other starting conditions in common discussions as permanent employees in the cultural administrations and institutions have. Being part of a leading co-creative team demands time, which not all members can give equally.

Despite the claim to involve as many people and stakeholders as possible, in most cases smaller teams were responsible for driving the project forward. These are mostly mixed groups from civil society and public actors, but their form of work can vary a lot according to the specific objectives and contexts of the activity.

Due to the very limited number of case studies, no answer can be given as to which forms of co-creation are the most promising in relation to reaching the direct goals of the co-creative project; but it seems clear that the indirect or underlying goals of empowerment of civil society actors or the promotion of democratic processes can only be achieved, if the civil society actors are also given a corresponding role in the project – right from the start.

Finally, allowing for a higher degree of uncertainty and unpredictability in equal and facilitating co-creation is the best guarantee for generating transformative potential and thus for arriving at

innovative approaches to solutions. But this also means that a failure of the co-creative process must be accepted as a possible outcome.

Recommendations for good practice

From the series of good practice examples, compiled and presented by the project partners, it is possible to outline some key recommendations on how to initiate and implement a co-creative cooperation in the local communities.

a) How to start a co-creative cooperation

- Make a map of the stakeholder network, as a help to find and engage the key stakeholders for the new co-creative cooperation.
- Mixing people with different background in groups working together to develop common ideas
- The key actors, also from the public institutions must accept the unanticipated and losing some of the control. Co-creation demands opinions and initiatives from others than the usual suspects.
- Some basic co-creative principle must be accepted by the engaged stakeholders, such as:
 - Co-creation is a mutual dependence
 - Co-creation is a dialog-based process
 - Co-creation spreads the right to take the initiative
- Have a mixed knowledge and different backgrounds represented and value the diverse knowledge of the participating partners.
- Involve all important stakeholders as co-initiators, co-designers and co-implementers.
- Possibly include an external expert for process facilitation, monitoring, etc.

b) How to continue a co-creative cooperation

- Secure an anchoring and understanding in the municipal organization, politically and administratively of the more open and flexible form co-creative working; for example to gain an openness for more flexible reporting forms of the work to avoid the current quite comprehensive and strict quarterly reporting regime in the municipalities.
- Establish an atmosphere of trust and understanding.
- Be facilitating rather than controlling
- Be better to take the perspective of others and be holistic
- Co-creation requires risk of liability
- Time for the processes and a similar commitment of all involved partners

Annex A: Guiding questions for good practice articles

By Ilona Asare, chairman of CULTURELAB

Co-creative cooperation involves citizens and public employees participating in an equal effort to develop innovative, sustainable and long-term welfare solutions.

Here follows some guiding questions that can help to structure the presentations of good practice examples in the partner countries:

1. Are there cases in your municipality/country when citizens are involved in the design of solutions in local cultural life, not only in implementation of local cultural strategies and goals? Who were the organizers of these co-creation practices?
2. Could you describe the methods or procedures used for these co-creative practices? What goals in which manner are achieved? Are there some innovative methods used (e.g. special games, different design thinking methods etc.)?
3. In which way the active participation of citizens is organized? Is it open and inviting for everybody/different representatives of the society? What groups of citizens usually take part or have taken part in these co-creative practices?
4. What factors in your opinion contributed in order this practice would be successful? What attitudes/tasks this practice requires from public employees?
5. What has been the result of this practice? Has it been continued with follow-up? Is it regular and sustainable practice?
6. Would you have some recommendations for future use of the described co-creation practice? Do you see some important factors, where attention should be paid in order this practice could be used regularly with good results?

Nordplus Report. Good practice for co-creation in culture and heritage.

This Report has been published in the framework of the Nordplus Adult development project entitled: “Co-creative cooperation with culture volunteers and managers” (CO-OP) that are carried out in the period, August 2018 – July 2020.

The Report presents good practice and innovative approaches in the cultural field of co-creation between on the one hand citizen groups and voluntary culture associations and on the other hand public culture institutions and the local culture departments.

