

Cultural policy, immigrants and the promotion of cultural diversity - summary of the results of the online brainstorming and the results of two virtual workshops

June 16, 2020

Fountain Park Oy

Hanna Niemelä, Jarkko Kuusinen,
Linnea Pitkänen, Tuomo Lähdeniemi



Background and context

- The Ministry of Education and Culture appointed a working group on cultural policy, immigration and cultural diversity on 9 January 2020
- Task of the working group: to prepare proposals for policies to strengthen the inclusion of people with a foreign background into cultural life and to promote cultural diversity through arts and culture.
- In particular, the working group should also take the following into account:
 - using arts and culture to strengthen the social inclusion and participation of those with a foreign background; and
 - to promote intercultural dialogue by means of arts and culture.

The big picture of web-based inclusion



Inclusion: A wide range of experts active in the field of arts and culture, with a variety of fields and backgrounds, as well as of people interested in the subject matter.

Online brainstorming
Broad dialogue among stakeholders in the online brainstorming session



Virtual Workshop 1
Theme of multilingualism, arts and cultural services



Virtual Workshop 2
Theme of intercultural encounter and dialogue

Online brainstorming results



Basic information about participation in the online brainstorming event

- **Objective:** to extensively hear participants' ideas on how to promote cultural diversity in arts and culture.
- **Language policy:** It was possible to contribute in Finnish, Swedish, English.
- **Invitations:** by email and social media
- **Time of participation:** May 5 - June 11, 2020. A total of 331 participants.
- **Participants:** representation of different fields of arts and culture and of the society at large.

The realisation of cultural diversity and multilingualism in creative work and production, arts and culture content and cultural services.

Respondents' thoughts and ideas:



- People of diverse origin in management positions and as curators in the arts and cultural sphere
- Increasing the number of representatives of different cultures on committees, panels, in administration, working as permanent employees, as freelancers, making decisions on funding
- Integrating multicultural artists in the planning of activities and core work in the field of art and culture
- Events in English, information on funding, training, jobs. Consideration of other languages.
- Hiring diversity agents to make a change in a variety of artistic and cultural organisations
- Identifying and making use of good diversity practices, e.g. Arts Council England & diversity unit
- Taking the goal into account in funding, from short projects to ongoing work. Increasing funds.

Opportunities for those of foreign origin to engage in professional and other artistic and cultural activities and to participate in arts and cultural life as users of culture

Respondents' thoughts and ideas:



- Diversification of language requirements in working life, lowering the language barrier
- Fair and transparent application processes for everyone, regardless of background, anonymous application processes
- Possibility to work in English (written and spoken communication)
- Support for inclusive and multilingual productions
- Collecting data on cultural services and their accessibility from the perspective of people of immigrant backgrounds
- Identifying and bringing foreign artists and actors already active in Finland to the attention of a variety of audiences
- Facilitating access to education
- Providing information on networking opportunities and support for networks.

The role of cultural and art activities and actors in helping immigrants integrate and promoting interaction between different groups

Respondents' thoughts and ideas:



- More employees and people in leadership positions with foreign background in cultural and artistic institutions
- Quotas for people of foreign background for leadership positions
- Wider use of interpreters for art events
- Increasing instruction in multicultural communication
- Investing in accessibility and promoting it in institutional cultural spaces
- Prioritising accessibility and multilingualism, e.g. using “selkosuomi”, clear and understandable Finnish language
- Increasing spaces to promote multicultural cooperation and new creation
- Increasing multilingual working environments and cooperation with non-Finnish artists and minorities
- Being present and promoting content in places where multicultural people can be reached
- Making use of visuals in general guidelines more broadly than text

Virtual Workshop results

Virtual Workshop 1: What issues prevent & promote multilingualism and accessibility in arts and culture?

Virtual Workshop 2: What issues prevent & promote intercultural encounter and dialogue in arts and culture?



Basic information about participating in online workshops

- **Objective:** To deepen the two selected themes in virtual workshops in which participants were able to think of obstacles and solutions related to the theme
- **Invitations:** by email and social media
- **Time of participation** Workshop 1: May 27, 2020, Workshop 2: June 8, 2020
- **Registrations:** Workshop 1: 96, Workshop 2: 64

Virtual Workshop 1

What are the issues preventing multilingualism in arts and creative work & accessibility of cultural services from linguistic point of view?

What remedies can be used to achieve multilingualism in arts and creative work & to increase the accessibility of cultural services from linguistic point of view?



What issues prevent multilingualism from being achieved in arts and culture? Respondents' thoughts and ideas:

Understanding Finnish identity through language: language as part of one's security and comfort

- The involvement of non-Finnish speakers in decision-making is perceived as non-existent
- Multilingual artists' experiences with othering and exclusion (e.g. writers not using Finnish or Swedish not accepted in the Union of Finnish Writers)
- Lack of relatability and relevant narratives in multilingual art experiences
- Lack of practices, e.g. in the integration of multilingualism into cultural offerings
- High requirements for Finnish language skills when applying for various jobs
- The experience of discrimination among multilingual writers, including in the form of lacking access to grants

Teaching and training in the arts

- Linguistic inequalities among those seeking to enter fields in the arts and culture
- Lack of diversity in literature used in primary and secondary education
- Shortcomings in the inclusiveness of materials used in pedagogical studies at universities
- Lack of access to multilingual information

What issues promote multilingualism in arts and culture?

Respondents' thoughts and ideas:

Development of the activities of artistic and cultural institutions

- Integrating multicultural artists in the core work of the fields of art and culture.
- Adding responsibilities for multilingualism for all art institutions
- Regularly opening various facilities at art institutions for diverse language groups to use
- Developing a resource platform for multicultural and multilingual people, inclusive working groups
- Investing in accessibility and promoting it in institutional cultural spaces
- Support for inclusive and multilingual theatre productions
- Wider use of interpreters for art events

Increasing collaboration

- Identifying different cultural fusions and dialogue as equals alongside Finnish culture
- Normalisation of communication between different genres: increasing resources for projects combining Finnish and foreign artists
- Reducing the formation of isolated “bubbles” by organising joint opportunities for Finnish and multilingual writers

What issues promote multilingualism in arts and culture?

Respondents' thoughts and ideas:

Developing education

- Taking inspiration from the Helsinki Theatre Academy's sign language theatre arts programme
- Establishment of a multilingual, inclusive and accessible theatre arts programme and the addition of new narratives to the Theatre Academy's study programmes
- Adding diversity to the Theatre Academy's admissions jury

Other thoughts

- Putting pressure on decision-makers to identify existing challenges and calls for advancing measures
- Increasing grants to support translation work and facilitate access to Finnish publishers
- Developing the language requirements of working life to be more diverse
- Establishment of a mentoring programme for multinational artists in the Finnish arts and culture sphere

What issues prevent accessibility in arts and culture from linguistic point of view? Respondents' thoughts and ideas:

Communication and accessibility

- Structures that do not support multilingualism
- Finns' fear of grammar errors in communication, negative attitudes towards other languages
- Providing information on processes and general matters only in Finnish, difficulties with translation
- Challenges of language translation and lack of funding for translation work
- Seeing accessibility and multilingualism as additional work, not as part of core work
- Challenges in reaching multilingual target groups in various projects
- Proving an artist's legitimacy/professionalism to the authorities in Finland is challenging due to the language barrier

Lacking awareness of the benefits of cultural diversity

- Cultural diversity is only realised in bigger cities in Finland
- Lack of resources in various institutions: including money, time, understanding, willingness to experiment, etc.
- Voluntary nature of diversity and inclusivity requirements within organizations receiving public funding
- Lack of multilingual networking opportunities

What issues promote accessibility in arts and culture from linguistic point of view? Respondents' thoughts and ideas:

Development of the work of artistic and cultural institutions

- Identification and development of the best multilingual practices already in place
- Identifying and bringing forth foreign artists and actors already active in Finland into the public eye
- Demanding the support and commitment of decision-makers
- Prioritising accessibility and multilingualism, e.g. using “selkosuomi”, clear and understandable Finnish language
- Promoting translingual work in partnership to reach diverse audiences with different cultural actors
- Adding multilingual panel discussions to institutions' annual plans
- Bringing discrimination into public conversations and projects
- Involving different stakeholders in planning: developing practices with migrants
- Ensuring the concrete implementation of ideas by monitoring processes and communicating about them

Financing

- Translation of information on funding programmes into several languages, financing of translation work
- Increasing access to funding for different cultural projects
- Adding inclusion requirements and other relevant development to funding criteria

What issues promote accessibility in arts and culture from linguistic point of view? Respondents' thoughts and ideas:

Information sharing

- Establishment of workshops/courses for cultural workers of foreign backgrounds on work opportunities in Finland
- Production of easy language materials and arranging of easy Finnish and Swedish book clubs
- Adding digital materials to library selections in various minority languages
- Providing information packages, websites and general services in immigrants' own languages
- Making more use of visuals in general guidelines
- Collecting data on cultural services and their accessibility from the perspective of immigrants
- Use of new platforms for the marketing and networking of artistic and cultural events

Training

- Organisation of training for those interested on the benefits of cultural diversity, for cultural producers, in particular
- Uniformly structured native culture and language instruction in schools
- Developing a local education system to improve adult education
- Getting familiar with youth culture and increasing post-secondary school cooperation with students of foreign backgrounds, e.g. in translation work

Virtual Workshop 2

What issues prevent intercultural encounter and dialogue in arts and culture?

What remedies can be used to increase intercultural encounter and dialogue in arts and culture?



What issues prevent intercultural encounter and dialogue in arts and culture? Respondents' thoughts and ideas:

Lack of understanding, cooperation and dialogue

- Lack of diversity education and communication skills in institutions and in general
- Lack of dialogue between cities and other regions
- Lack of extensive dialogue with people born in Finland
- Lack of meeting places and networking opportunities
- Lack of understanding of Finnish institutional structures: e.g. how multicultural people should approach various topics
- The lack of cooperation between arts and culture institutions and different language groups
- Lack of digital communication skills
- Lack of translated information
- Lack of accessibility, e.g. information in sign language, accessibility of art education

What issues prevent intercultural encounter and dialogue in arts and culture? Respondents' thoughts and ideas:

Discrimination and structures

- Structural racism, discrimination, old-fashioned practices
- Othering, targeting, tokenism, etc.
- Lack of representation: the feeling that institutions do not represent society
- Underestimating the professional skills of artists of foreign descent
- Lack of communication between different multicultural groups and a sense of being an outsider

Lack of tools among artistic and cultural institutions

- Lack of concrete tools that facilitate multicultural encounters
- Lack of integration of diversity strategies: low level of diversity in Finland
- Lack of reflection of the equality plan
- Limited tools to address inappropriate behaviour, lack of transparency in recruitment processes
- Poor resonance of content in different audiences: e.g. abstract pieces, modernism...
- Challenges in influencing the content of cultural experiences through children's schools

What remedies can be used to increase intercultural encounter and dialogue in arts and culture? Respondents' thoughts and ideas:

Promoting encounters

- Being present and promoting content in places where multicultural people spend time
- Adding safe spaces for multilingual families
- Increasing spaces to promote multicultural cooperation and new creations
- Increasing multilingual working environments and cooperation with non-Finnish artists and minorities
- Increasing grassroots work with children

Increasing education and understanding

- Considering and learning from the younger generation
- Increasing instruction in multicultural communication at all levels of education
- Increasing multicultural competence for artistic and cultural gatekeepers
- Setting up teaching platforms for immigrants
- Promoting digital communication skills, especially among adults
- Increasing open leadership studies to empower young people
- Emphasising motivation: diversity creates new things and brings joy

What remedies can be used to increase intercultural encounter and dialogue in arts and culture? Respondents' thoughts and ideas:

Development of the activities of artistic and cultural institutions

- Requirement for value-based activities and the promotion of diversity and inclusion in institutions
- Clear definition of responsibilities and roles to promote change and the monitoring of measures
- Making the equality plan a reality: monitoring, people who will advance the plan to work at all levels
- Hiring diversity agents to make a change in a variety of organisations
- Promotion of advanced, forward-looking open art organizations
- Increasing diversity as a part of the strategies of arts and culture institutions
- Increasing representation at all levels of artistic and cultural institutions
 - Increasing the number of representatives of different cultures on committees, panels, in administration, working as permanent employees, as freelancers, making decisions on funding
 - Learning safe space practices, making use of professionals to help therein
 - Promoting cultural heritage as an insight enhancer between people

What remedies can be used to increase intercultural encounter and dialogue in arts and culture? Respondents' thoughts and ideas:

Promoting thinking of "Institutions as a Platform"

- Deepening discussions and promoting development by bringing together individuals, groups and organisations familiar with working with themes of diversity
- Involving important stakeholders in discussions and decision-making
- Development of a legal framework, investment in anti-racist work
- Integrating art and culture into immigration policies
- Developing a safe culture of discussion that promotes learning: what Finns and what multicultural/multilingual people gain from shared discussions
- Promoting norm-critical work: dismantling and diversifying power structures
- Identifying and making use of good diversity practices, e.g. Arts Council England & diversity unit
- Information on networking opportunities and support for networks: e.g. Globe Art Point, the Culture for All service, Ruskeat Tytöt Ry, Sivunvalo, Catalysti, Museum of Impossible Forms, UrbanApa, #StopHatredNow, and so on

Fountain Park

We ensure success through joint development and dialogical strategy work.