

# The Reference Group Meeting: A Retrospective



**November 13-14, 2013**

**Lignellsalen and Rumarsalen  
Jamtli/Landsarkivet in Östersund**

November 13-14, 2013 NCK invited their reference group to the annual reference group meeting at Jamtli and the Regional Archive in Östersund. Representatives from both the Nordic and the Baltic countries participated; in total 24 participants from Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland, Iceland and Lithuania. The theme for the meeting was creativity and innovation and keynote speakers was Evelina Wahqvist, a creativity researcher and communicator of the year 2009 in Sweden, and Klas Rabe, manager for the cultural and creative industries program at Tillväxtverket.

The meeting also consisted of a workshop about creativity and presentations by the participants about the situation for heritage learning at the different organisations and in the various countries. This retrospective is a summary from the two days: about the lectures, the thoughts and ideas, proposals for cooperations, heritage learning trends and the future.

# Lectures

## Evelina Wahlqvist

What's the creativity's core? In her lecture, Evelina Wahlqvist tried to show the reasons behind why creativity emerges and how we ourselves can get there in our day-to-day life. To do so she used five key words to explain this process: *incitements, interjection, inspiration, idea handling and insight*.

It's easy to be creative when we help each other she explained. It's a creative incitement. She then gave us a task. In small groups we were supposed to discuss what we could do to help the victims of the typhoon Haiyan. To send food and clothes, collect money on the spot and to give money to the Red Cross as a present to a friend was some of the suggestions that the groups mentioned. It's not wrong to think inside the box, Wahlqvist pointed out. To know the limitations and what the creative process should lead to is important. Inspiration is also important; it's the fuel that drives the creative process forward.

Creativity means hard work. The execution stands for a big part of the process and to succeed you need both passion and a desire to reach all the way. In small groups we later discussed our first passions; to swim, bike and watch movies was some of the examples.

To Wahlqvist creativity is a crossroad where knowledge and skills meet; it's an interjection where knowledge and resources can be combined in new ways. A person who plays soccer and likes to write can be a great journalist. It's therefore important that we, when we meet, try to map our different talents and skills. What different combinations can your group gather?

It's also about to dare follow your inspiration. We can have many dreams and ideas but if we only act as usual the creativity is inefficacious. This is what idea handling is. Wahlqvist asks us, is an idea really an idea if it's not carried out? We also need to accept ideas in every shape and form. Even the bad ideas can lead us to greater ideas. To create a list of gathered ideas and give them different priorities is a good way to handle it.

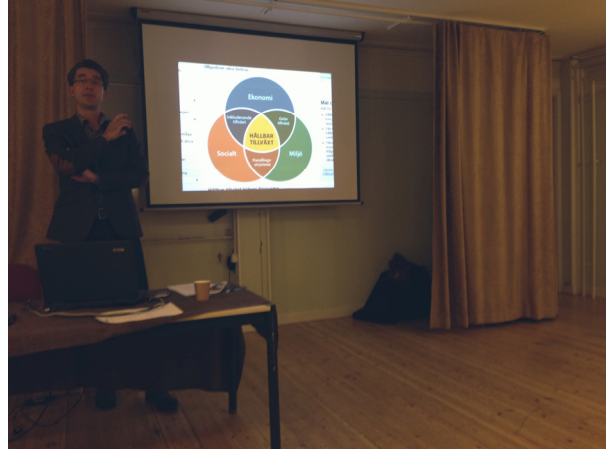
We also need to learn from earlier experiences and to be open to an active and lifelong learning. We need insight.

## Klas Rabe

What's the social value of cultural heritage and cultural heritage institutions? In his lecture about the cultural and creative industries, Klas Rabe tried to describe how Tillväxtverket, a governmental agency working with economical, social and cultural growth, deals with this and what discussions they monitor on a regional, a national and an European level. The agency's ambitions, according to Rabe, are to strengthen culture, businesses and entrepreneurship and to create sustainable growth. It's harder to measure the social values, he concludes, but it's not impossible.

Rabe also looked into the future. To promote creativity and innovation it's necessary to work with *diversity*, *co-creation* and a *recipient perspective*.

This can be a challenging process for cultural heritage institutions. It's therefore important, Rabe explains, that the institutions try to develop and broaden their network. It will be more and more important to have a lot of different skills near at hand and this can be solved in two different ways: an institution can use external services *or* increase the diversity within the institution. It's important with change, but what change? What differences? And for whom?



## Workshop

Next on the agenda was a workshop on creativity. The exercise had two parts: questions and proposal for cooperations. The first part contained the following questions:

- > When your organisation thinks differently, how do you go about this?
- > How can your organisation work with creativity?
- > How can learning be a part of this?

In the second part we searched for:

- > Projects with creativity as its starting point.
- > Projects that creates a creative environment in the society.
- > Projects with a Nordic/Baltic character.

The participants worked in smaller groups before they all discussed the answers and suggestions together.

## Questions

Several submissions mentioned the learning institutions and the cultural heritage institutions ability and potential to reach beyond their own organisation and network. It's important to represent your organisation in different and unexpected contexts and to have contact with organisations and groups that have other skills and competences. The institutions also need to have the ability to completely change who's in charge and how power is distributed. We are often heterogeneous groups, one of the participants pointed out. Maybe we need to what we don't like to address other, but we need to do what we like to be creative.

Time is also an important factor. It's important with long term projects, especially because most projects are short term. We need to have the time to reflect and to find peace but this is something we can decide for ourselves. We do have the freedom to choose what's most important to us.

Leadership is also important. How good do the managers explain their ideas and what space is given for the creative process? Are we capable to change the rest of the organisation or is this up to the single individual? And what's the reason to be creative? What needs do we have to think about? This is some of the questions and thoughts the participants mentioned.

Creativity is to build, administrate and tear down. It's important, one of the participants pointed out, to be able to cease an activity.

### **Proposal for cooperations**

Several groups were inspired by the three key words Klas Rabe mentioned: *diversity*, *co-creation* and a *recipient perspective*.

One of the groups decided to use *creative cultural heritage* as their starting point. With this they meant a concept where all citizens are co-creators and where they together with cultural heritage institutions create an exhibition about their own stories. What are we able to and not able to tell when we use the institution's collection? It's also important that it's an incomplete exhibition we can continuously work on.

Another group continued with a similar thought. The collective and mutual memory is important to display properly. Memory is a condition for innovativeness. Maybe the world heritage sites are great places for the communal memories? We also need to revise our collections. How have we gathered the objects? How did objects and archives end up in the collections?

The groups also talked a lot about cooperations with other organisations, to get help from the outside and to work with crowdsourcing. We need to trust the society, allow co-creation and gather people to do something together, said one of the groups.

With new technology, another group followed, we can make it possible to create a creative environment in the society. Our collections can be used commercially or as a resource. One example is ship journals that can be used in climate research. On the whole, cultural heritage institutions should keep up their work and collect data of their collections. From this they can create platforms and programs that involves cultural heritage, programming and research.

There is also an opportunity for museums, archives and universities to work together with more specific subjects, another group pointed out. They can create creativity workshops and places where the public can meet. Together they can create a lot of attention and a difference for solidarity, the environment and diversity in the society.

# Presentations

**Aud Mikkelsen Tretvik** (Norway) talked about the situation for the humanities in Trondheim and the kulturminnesförvaltning program at NTNU that celebrated ten years this autumn.

**Christina Forssell** (Finland) talked about the activities at Arkivverket and Arkivens Dag in the Nordic countries and Vetenskapens natt.



**Ann-Sofi Forsmark** (Sweden) talked about Stockholms stadsarkiv and the archives public activities. This included, among other, the book *Stockholm – din och farmors farmors stad* and the Cultural Heritage Day.

**Pauliina Kinanen** (Finland) presented the Finnish Museums Association and their current activities. Their vision for 2023 is to be one of the forerunners in the European museum sector.

**Leena Tornberg** (Finland) talked about the survey that NCK has made in cooperation with the Finnish Museums Association.

**Maria Press** (Norway) talked about the archival learning situation in Norway and the National archives and the Counsellor for Cultural Affairs involvement in this.

**Lena Eriksson** (Sweden) talked about the activities at Nordiska Akvarellmuseet and the project Bilderbokens nya skepnader.

**Ane Hejlskov Larsen** (Denmark) presented Dansk Center for Museumsforskning, a resource centre for university education in esthetics, communication and museology.

**Ann-Siri Hegseth Garberg** (Norway) talked about the current situation in Norway, right after the change of government, and the activities at Kystmuseet i Sør-Trøndelag, a part of Museene i Sør-Trøndelag (MiST).

**Charlotte S. H Jensen** (Denmark) talked about the cultural heritage institutions and their challenges. Crowdsourcing and participation is some of the things they can do to be a part of the development.

**Bente Jensen** (Denmark) talked about instagram and how the service can be used at cultural heritage institutions and cultural heritage sites. Instagram is cultural heritage, she concluded.

**Søren Ehlers** (Denmark) mentioned the future and the challenges we face – among others, to measure the effects of heritage learning.

**Gita Šapranaukaitė** (Lithuania) talked about heritage learning and the situation in Lithuania.

**Brynja Birgisdottir** (Iceland) talked about the activities at the National Archive in Iceland, an exhibition and the Nordiska Arkivdagen.

**Cornelius Holtorf** (Sweden) talked about the projects he and Linnæus University are involved in right now.

**Tine Fristrup** (Denmark) mentioned the platform Age of Creativity and learning for seniors.

## Participants

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Bente Jensen  
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Lena Eriksson  
Gita Šapranaukaitė  
Peter Aronsson  
Ane Hejlskov Larsen  
Henrik Zipsane  
Eva Sjögren Zipsane  
Malin Bäckström  
Torgärd Notelid  
Kristoffer Soldal  
Anna Hansen  
Martina Deidda  
Carolina Jonsson Malm (sick)



**norden**

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