

## ESPOOCULT FACT SHEET 2

# Culture and cross-sectoral cooperation

*"The CultureEspoo 2030 actions are cross-administrative, and their realisation requires commitment from the different sectors."* CULTUREESPOO 2030

## How is cross-sectoral cooperation realised?

### Structures and management

The realisation of strategic goals requires supporting cross-sectoral structures. No organisational branch or sector can achieve the goals on their own. Cross-sectoral cooperation calls for broad-base actions and consensus on the processes through which the goals can be achieved. All actors need to know their roles and responsibilities and be ready to work towards the common goals,

*"The cultural sector has so much to give to this picture on the whole."*

INTERVIEW QUOTE

with readiness to adjust according to the needs of the operating environment. The city's organisational structures must support cross-sectoral cooperation.

*"Collaboration needs to be stimulated, monitored and facilitated in order to produce desired outcomes."*

AGGER & SØRENSEN 2018

### DATA:

12 interviews with employees and officials in different sectors of the City of Espoo as well as strategic and administrative documents. The interviewees represented both the cultural sector (3) and other sectors (9). The interviewees were chosen to represent the different branches of the city organisation as diversely as possible.

**Cross-sectorality is cooperation between the different organisational branches.**

Culture is strongly linked to the goals of the Espoo Story, i.e. the strategy of the City of Espoo and all its fields of activity. The development of cultural services requires cross-sectoral cooperation. (EspooCult Fact Sheet 1.)

**This fact sheet examines how cross-sectoral cooperation in Espoo is realised and how it can be further advanced.**

### EspooCult RESULTS

- The Espoo Story and its contents are well-known. The interviewees in all the sectors and administrative levels use it as a guiding document in their work.
- Few people working outside the education and cultural sector know the contents of the CultureEspoo 2030 programme in detail.
- The goals for the city council terms are not always seen to be in line with the goals of the Espoo Story or to serve towards achieving cross-sectoral aims.
 

*"It didn't seem like a huge success, the strategic work (during the term) we did together with the city council. It should be clearly targeted and there should be a few goals that are rolled out to us."*
- Cross-sectoral development programmes are currently the key instrument in cooperation within the city organization. Most of the interviewees perceive them primarily as channels of cooperation between officials and elected representatives. At best they can increase mutual understanding. In practice, the programmes are seen as detached from the daily work and goals.
- Sectoral silos and structures, hierarchies and operating cultures set barriers for the cooperation. This prevents the promotion of experimentation and innovation in the public sector through cross-sectoral practices.
 

*"It's very important to have the kind of programmes that offer a free mandate for development work and creating new initiatives under certain themes."*

*"The line organisation alone can't achieve these goals connected to the realisation of the strategy [...] They are impossible challenges to present to the hierarchy."*
- Actors in the cultural sector are perceived as good at identifying and responding to the problems that fall between the gaps of the traditional line organization.
- Culture plays an important role in the development of the inclusion and participation of residents and other stakeholders.
- Culture is scarcely addressed in the plans and actions of the cross-sectoral development programmes.
- Some of the operations and actors in the cultural sector are seen to remain "inside closed walls" and "in a bubble".
 

*"...in Cultural Services they have like all these different units and they are in part quite isolated so [...] I don't see that their work has anything to do with cross-sectorality or so. It's very difficult if you're inside those closed walls."*

*"Strategy is what an organisation does."*

EINOLA &  
KOHTAMÄKI  
2016

### Practices and resources

Large cities function in complex operating environments and have many kinds of responsibilities. This means that it is also difficult for them to establish coherent operating models. A cross-sectoral approach enables the adoption of new, innovative practices. All the administrative levels need to be involved. A cross-sectoral approach cannot be achieved in conditions of strict control and authoritarian bureaucracy, instead, it calls for flexibility and creativity. Trust and commitment are strengthened through personal

interaction. It makes sense to organise the shared resources so that they serve development effectively. In general, it is best to organise and finance services where they are actually used. Consequently, synergies can be created by developing cross-sectoral service networks. Sustainable cross-sectoral cooperation requires permanent practices. The roles of the different actors need to be clearly articulated and common and transparent ground rules for promoting cross-sectoral practices need to be developed.

#### EspooCult RESULTS

- The indicators, funding and operations are linked together according to sector and department. There are no sets of indicators for measuring the realisation of cross-sectoral cooperation and practices.
- The processes of the different actors go forward at different paces.
- The running of the core activities consumes the resources. There is little time, money and staff for cross-sectoral cooperation. There isn't enough time for the sectors to get to know each other's work.
- Based on the interviews, the actors in the cultural sector are regarded as good at developing new practices. Actors in the cultural sector can open new perspectives and be an asset for other sectors.
- Cooperation with the cultural unit often begins with certain smaller issues or needs.
- Especially at the beginning the cooperation is personified and realised through the active role of certain individuals.
- Cultural activities need spaces, but there are still many obstacles to the shared use of city facilities.

*"It took us three years to find a person [from another sector] to discuss things with."*

*"You can't apply a cross-sectoral approach in your work if you have to confine yourself in the frame for what a given unit does according to the administrative rules, and the head of the unit distributes the work there based on some peculiar logic."*

*"I don't know what happens to the money for cross-sectoral development programmes, how it's been spent and what has been done with it."*

*"The way they [cultural unit] operate, they seem to follow a cycle of their own, and others may not be familiar with it."*

*"It seems to me that on the culture side there has been much focus on inclusion and active participation, which I think is great and has also deepened and broadened the conception of social work."*

*"It is difficult to establish the practice of doing together as a fixed part of the operations."*

*"Access to the collaborative process itself is perhaps the most fundamental design issue. Who should be included?"*

ANSELL & GASH  
2007

### Attitudes and power

Employees of large cities often have a set conception of the contents and boundaries of their work, which hinders the embedding of cross-sectoral operating models. Attitudes are not easy to change. Involving the employees in the different processes is essential. This builds a basis for a shared vision, increases openness to new ideas and models and strengthens commitment to change. Ostensible opportunities for participation only reproduce hierarchical roles and under-

mine commitment to new kinds of processes. Different groups and viewpoints must be included in the discussions. This is especially important in the production of local services, where network interaction further links in with sustainable development.

### EspooCult RESULTS

- Based on the interviews, the attitude of the City of Espoo organisation toward development is seen as positive.
- Only some of the leaders support cross-sectoral cooperation through their own actions.
- Disagreement regarding the ownership and management of certain issues and differences in operating cultures complicate cooperation.
- Issues are strongly personified. One person can alone prevent or advance the building of cooperation and trust.
- The perception of culture and its role are seen broadly in the different sectors, ranging from various forms of cultural services to the independent actions of the city's residents. The level of the valuation of culture varies.
- The possibilities offered by culture and arts to advance one's goals are not always recognised beyond the cultural sector.
- Initiative and readiness to enhance collaboration with other sectors are hoped from the actors in the cultural sector.

*"There is a kind of an attitude problem, still, and it's pretty strong."*

*"The attitude of ownership is quite strong, as in this is my thing, and that's your thing, and don't start doing my thing."*

*"It is born from people as individuals [...] the people with know-how can do cool things in spite of all those sectoral silos."*

*"They have a very good team working there [in the cultural unit]. There are even places I won't go to but I'm glad to go there."*

*"There's quite a lot of good-quality high culture in Espoo, the city supports it actively, but I get the feeling that they've sometimes tried to hide away the more popular or underground, lower culture, and that I think is a mistake."*

*"... on the creative scene in Finland you still find a lot of the mentality that sees the business approach as something fundamentally negative [...] people fear that they will lose their autonomy or artistic freedom or something."*

## ▶ HOW CAN CROSS-SECTORAL COOPERATION BE ENHANCED?

### There need to be:

- Permanent **network-based structures and practices** that cut across all levels of operation.
- Different **funding instruments** to support cross-sectoral cooperation and the work of artists in different sectors. These include, for example, target-oriented budgeting, budget for community engagement and more flexible funding elements.
- **Skills and internalising** of strategic development and cross-sector work broadly in the city organisation.
- Readiness to **open facilities** for the use of arts and culture and broader **sharing** of cultural facilities.
- More systematic **monitoring** of cross-sectoral operations and objectives and taking them into account in the existing indicators.
- **Dialogue** to find common denominators and to create a shared vision and goals.
- Commitment to **include stakeholder groups and residents** in different collaborative processes alongside the city organisation.

*"We would like to have more cooperation with the cultural unit compared to other units, much more."*

*"...one of the tasks of culture is to strengthen social sustainability and to advance those goals of sustainable development, to provide support and help with that, to be in a very central role there [...] it's a remarkably good instrument and tool [in work towards sustainable development]."*

*"When we collaborate across professional boundaries, we usually get better results and more impacts, and the work makes sense."*

*"It shouldn't make any difference to the residents which organisational unit a service falls into. It should all present itself as a common service and support produced by the City of Espoo."*

## Sources

The Espoo Story

CultureEspoo 2030

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## EspooCult

The EspooCult research project is the first comprehensive research into the cultural services and cultural profile of Espoo. The research project will be carried out during 2018-2019.

The research

- Maps the current state of cultural services in Espoo
- Evaluates the achievement and potential of the CultureEspoo 2030 objectives
- Presents conclusions and recommendations for the future development of the cultural services.



### Further information about the research project:

The Center for Cultural Policy Research Cupore  
<https://www.cupore.fi/en/research/research-projects/espoo-cult-131435-26042018>  
 Facebook: facebook.com/Cupore/

The City of Espoo, Cultural Unit  
[https://www.espoo.fi/en-US/Culture\\_and\\_sport/Culture/About\\_us/Research\\_project\\_EspooCult](https://www.espoo.fi/en-US/Culture_and_sport/Culture/About_us/Research_project_EspooCult)  
 Facebook: facebook.com/KulttuuriEspoo/

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