

Equality in art good questions and best practices

1.edition

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Cover: Kettuki's artist of the year 2022 Aleksi Pietikäinen and his work Hoover, ceramics and ready-made, 2020. Photo Tommi Mattila.

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Supported art activities are guided by various missions and different values. Art can also be an end in itself.

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Foreword

In 2022, Kettuki is celebrating its 20th anniversary working in supported studios. Many things have changed over the years: our once small association has grown into the nationwide Kettuki network and become a well-known advocate in the field. Equality in art has taken huge strides forwards. The roles of those involved in the supported art activities sector have changed and become more diverse. A career as an artist, which may previously have seemed like a distant dream, has been made a reality for many in supported studios.

One of the most important driving forces behind supported art activities has been the active collaboration and networking of various organisations. That is also the inspiration behind this publication, a text born out of a dialogue between artists and professionals in the field.

This publication is aimed at professionals and students in the fields of arts and culture as well as social and healthcare services. This publication discusses issues that concern those involved in supported art activities and provides an introduction to the best practices in the field. The first part consists of an update

to previously published ethical guidelines. In the second, we look at the diverse roles of people working in supported environments. The third part focuses on networks that enable peer learning. In this anniversary year, we would like to highlight not only the Finnish Kettuki network but also our close network of partners in the Nordic countries that are developing their activities. It has been a gift to see how well we complement each other's skills.

This publication is not a final report on our dialogue but a milestone in our common journey towards equality in art.

To mark this anniversary year, the photos selected for the publication are of Kettuki's artists of the year at work.

PART 1.

Good questions – ethical art activities in supported environments

The first part of this publication covers ethical issues in art activities in supported environments. We are constantly faced with ethical reflections in the context of these activities. This publication is intended as a guide to recurring questions in the field.

The text contains anonymous quotes from artists in need of additional support as well as individuals involved in supported art activities. Since it is advisable that ethical guidelines for the field be adjusted to changes in society, this guide is constructed in such a way that the information and views can be updated as necessary. This publication is the second, updated version to the guide published in 2016. To mark the Nordic network's collaboration activities, the ethical guide has been expanded into a handbook of good practice, which is also available in English.

The scope of the issues discussed in this guide varies from practical questions to general reflections on values in the context of culture. The entire content of this guide was originally produced as a collaborative project. The questions, answers and practical solutions presented have been explored and discussed in the Kettuki network together with artists in need of additional support, mentors and other specialists. People working in various roles in the field have also provided comments on the updated version.

1.1 Introduction to the questions

The nature and importance of examining the ethics of art activities in supported environments.

Why do we need to discuss ethical issues?

Ethical art activities in supported environments should be based on a willingness to reflect on and question the grounds for our activities. Highlighting weaknesses and uncertainties is key to the development of our field.

Different professions and trades have ethical guidelines on approaches, responsibilities and attitudes in their industries. When it comes to art activities in supported environments, it is particularly important for us to be aware of how our decisions and actions affect the abilities of others to operate as equal parties in society and the culture sector.

Nothing will change unless we dare to talk about uncertainties.

Art activities in supported environments can be seen as its own area in the field of art. which is why we believe it is important for everyone involved to have access to guidance when addressing ethical issues. The ability to evaluate the ethics of one's practice is considered a hallmark of advanced professionalism. Ethical guidelines are also a tool for disseminating good practices. They improve the self-esteem of those who work in the sector and inspire respect for our activities among others. As organisers of art activities in supported environments, we are positioned at the intersection of social services and arts, so it is also recommended to read the ethical guidelines for social service professionals, which provide a strong foundation for all human services.

Who has the right answers?

Ethical reflection starts with the premise that we all respect the human rights and uniqueness of every person. Art may have different purposes and meanings across different activities, but we all agree that art is valuable in itself.

Art activities in supported environments have their own special characteristics and sector-specific issues, on which this guide seeks to advise. Professional ethics are produced by a consensus, so this guide features the opinions of people working in the field and their views on best practices. In reality, circumstances will determine right and best practices.

Ethical questions are rarely black and white, which is why there are no easy answers. There will be situations in which a perfect answer simply does not exist. In these cases, it is necessary to use ethical judgement and choose the path of least harm.

Even if general principles are shared and widely accepted, it is difficult to provide unambiguous and exhaustive answers to individual ethical questions. It would hardly be ethical to offer predetermined solutions. Questions on right and wrong procedures will appear in various contexts, often unexpectedly. This guide provides some ideas and guidelines for reflecting on one's own

behaviour. If this publication makes you question and think about your own behaviour and attitudes, you will have taken a step towards more ethically sustainable supported art activities.

The ethics of art activities in supported environments is a product of consensus.

1.2 Right to social inclusion

On inclusion, equality and everyone's right to art and culture.

Does our culture treat everyone on equal terms?

Art belongs to everyone. While we can all agree on this, do we really believe that everyone has equal access to art? If we look at the reality behind grand speeches, we still see a world of stairs that are too steep, buildings with no lifts and narrow doorways that make it difficult for people with disabilities to access art. More often than not, obstacles are invisible. They hide in the values, attitudes and policies of communities, which is a greater hindrance to the social inclusion of people with disabilities than any physical obstacle. Even if there were ramps on every staircase in every venue, the art world and its practices

Tiina Elina Nurminen, Kettuki's artist of the year 2014 Photo: Leena Hakala "The impact of art should not be calculated by a head count. Even among people with disabilities, those who are more able-bodied are in a better position. There are people with no access whatsoever to cultural activities in their free time."



would remain inaccessible unless public attitudes change to include all kinds of artists.

There is a growing number of people in our society who need additional support and are engaged in art, be it recreational, academic or professional. However, the right of access to art and culture is not enjoyed equally by all people who need additional support, as provisions and resources for activities vary from region to region.

Everyone has the right to freely participate in cultural life, to enjoy the arts, to educate themselves and their community through these activities and to express themselves freely. These are fundamental cultural rights under Article 27 of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The lack of necessary support measures and educational opportunities and a failure to adapt services have marginalised people and obstructed social inclusion. Many children and young people in need of additional support are still excluded from art education provided by expert art professionals. Even as adults, they may not be able to study or make art like others in society, let alone work as an artist. Artistic talent may go unrecognised and budding artists be stifled by a lack of support.

Regrettably, access to professionally managed and supported artistic activities is arbitrary. It often depends on how proactive a person or their family is and where they live. Although our society recognises visual arts as a profession, opportunities to participate

The lack of necessary support measures is an obstacle to participation and inclusion.

in art activities in supported environments are not sufficiently discussed or promoted.

How to achieve equality in art:

ACCESSIBILITY is a broad concept that enables people to participate in, for example, work, hobbies, studies, cultural activities and art. Accessibility is about recognising and responding to the different needs of people.

Accessibility should not only be assessed in the context of the built environment and mobility. It should also include access to services, usability of tools, accessibility of information, opportunities to participate in decision-making processes for the individual and artistic self-expression. These are prerequisites for equality and sustainable development.

In art activities in supported environments, accessibility also implies a climate of acceptance and understanding for the need for additional support.

AVAILABILITY in the context of art refers to the suitability of activities for as many people as possible, including those in need of additional support. It also means making works of art available to different audiences. Accessible and available art serves and benefits all people.

EQUALITY cannot be achieved if art is not accessible and available. Equality means that no person has greater value than another. A disability, for example, should not affect someone's ability to express themselves through art, or to study or make art professionally.

What is inclusion?

The most important aspect of inclusion is that people feel involved, i.e. that they feel they have an important role and can express their ideas in their community.

For people to have a sense of inclusion in the context of art, we need communities in which people with disabilities can act on an equal basis to everyone else, that they are seen, heard and recognised as unique individuals, artists and valuable members of the community. For a community to be inclusive it needs to operate in such a way that everyone has

real opportunities and power to make a difference and take responsibility for issues in their community.

The promotion of social inclusion removes inequalities and prevents exclusion. Very few people actively seek to be marginalised. Those that are tend to be excluded by the practices and structures of society. Inclusion is important not only for individuals but also wider society; inclusion begets inclusion. By breaking down barriers, artists in need of support question the prevailing perceptions of art activities in supported environments and disability. This gradually makes participation easier for all people who need additional support or have disabilities.

People feel included when they have a say on what they themselves, their community and society do.

Inclusion is an ethical ideal. It embodies the ideal of a community, in which the members feel they are valued and are able and willing to work in the wider world through the community. A sense of engagement in art studio activities creates preconditions for wider cultural and social inclusion.

How is cultural participation supported?

"There is support available for working, but it's difficult for an artist in need of additional support to build a viable career in art. The works show sufficient quality, but building a career as an artist is a full-time job even for an ordinary professional artist."

"It should be written about in the same way as any other art. 'This makes me smile' is not a respectful comment on a work of art. Some talk about brilliant paintings as if they were made by children: 'lovely colours'. That attitude exists, and it's quite common."

People with disabilities must be seen as equal producers and consumers of culture and art. They must be given sufficient opportunities to improve their art making. The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities provides that they must have the opportunity to develop and utilise their creative and artistic potential, not only for their own benefit but also for the enrichment of society and culture. There are artistically talented people among

those in need of additional support who have the potential to become professional artists through education and support. However, people with disabilities will not become artists unless they have equal opportunities to engage in cultural activities, study art and culture and work professionally. It is for this reason that more attention should be paid to the individual interests and skills of people with disabilities and having their strengths supported in schools, recreational activities. vocational education, and supported employment and daytime activity programmes. For example, more opportunities for art-oriented projects should be offered in supported employment and daytime activity programmes. Recreational activities should also be available to everyone, and support should be offered to people with disabilities to facilitate their participation. In practical terms this means personal support and transport services, for example.

> Cultural inclusion is based on equal opportunities for participation.

Antero Laine, Kettuki's artist of the year 2018 Photo: Pekka Syrjälä, Kaarisilta



1.3 The role of art

The role and importance of art in society and the nature of art-related discourse.

Why is art important?

"I've always wanted to make art, but I wasn't able to attend an art school. Now I'm where I want to be. I'm so happy to be making art. For me, art means freedom. There are no

Art allows people
to be seen and
heard in their own
environment, in the
field of culture and
in wider society.

wrong approaches, and I can do everything my way."

"Some issues are difficult to talk about. I can express them through my images."

Art is an important human right because of its distinctive characteristics. Making art is a way of communicating. It's an expression of one's culture. Art is an instrument of inclusion and active agency, and it enables people to belong and have the power to make a difference. Even those who can't express themselves through spoken words can make their voices heard in society through images and artistic expression. People who make art engage in the world and with culture in a very tangible way; they recreate it from their own perspective.

Unfortunately, for people with disabilities opportunities to engage are often restricted by social structures. Art can offer people equal opportunities to shape and examine their relationship with the world. Art gives people the freedom not only to think as individuals, but also to share as part of a community.

Are only talented people allowed to make art?

"Let's keep artistic pursuit open for everyone, but offer a little more to those with talent."

"Not everyone is interested in art. We have to accept that."

Highlighting talent is how the art world operates. However, making art is not an exclusive right of the gifted. It's everyone's right, regardless of their ability or level of commitment. For this reason, art and art education services must be made accessible to everyone.

It is highly unlikely that all individuals involved in art activities in supported environments will become professionals. Being an artist requires not only motivation, but also a remarkable ability to express oneself through art, often referred to as artistic talent. However, not all people with learning disabilities or those who need additional

Artists in need of additional support are able to express themselves by means of art.

support are visually talented. Sometimes the interesting nature of someone's works only becomes apparent through determined practice or experiments with different techniques. Yet everyone has the right to engage in hobbies and learn new things. Authorship in art covers occasional art making, artistic hobbies, art studies and professional practice. The entire field of art and culture must be open and accessible to people in need of additional support, whatever their age.

It is worth noting that a person in need of additional support may have a particular artistic talent. The need for support and ability for artistic expression are not mutually exclusive. Anyone wanting to become an artist needs practice. Works by artists who need support can be of high quality and interesting, and they can establish their place in the art world alongside 'ordinary' art without any special treatment.

Who is art made for?

Defending the rights and promoting the art and artistic activities of people in need of additional support raises awareness of art activities in supported environments and the need for these activities. An exhibition or work by an artist who needs support may encourage other people in a similar position to express their creativity. It can provide an important role model and encourage cultural debate.

However, art created in supported environments should not only be targeted at special groups but at the public in general. It can convey important information about the life, thoughts and feelings of people who need additional support. This kind of art adds to artistic and cultural offerings and provides new perspectives.

Art has been used for polemics and as an instrument in social debate throughout the ages. Artists who need additional support also have the right to use it for these purposes. Some artists who need additional support deal with disability-related themes in their art, in which case their art can be called disability art.

Art activities in supported environments produce art targeted at people and the public, not at special groups.

Do we need to consider accessibility when we talk about art?

"We should pay more attention to it. Catalogues are often printed in very small font."

That works of art are physically accessible does not mean that everyone can access their content. Equality in art can be enhanced and the content of art made more accessible to all audiences by communicating in a manner that is easy to understand. Accessible language is easier to read and understand in terms of its content, vocabulary and structure than standard language.

Part of being an artist involves acquiring knowledge of the art sector and interacting with others who work in the field. By following developments in the field, artists who need additional support can place their own activities in the broader context of art.

Very little information on art is available in accessible language, despite the fact that it would greatly benefit not only those who need additional support but also the elderly, language learners and other target groups. Accessible language would increase the participation of these groups in the art world and facilitate their engagement in debate. Operators of art activities in supported environments could, if they so wished, be pioneers in using accessible and plain language.

In addition to accessible content, attention should be paid to the visual clarity of texts and communications.

Plain language language makes the content of art accessible.

Does art need prefixes?

"I've never found it important to define what I do as art or myself as an artist. I also don't think about whether I'm an outsider artist or something else. I just do my own thing. That's good enough for me."

"I used to be sceptical about outsider art. I've changed my mind, and now I think it's an opportunity. It's open enough for us to fill it with the meaning we want. It connects the international scene and studios in different countries."

Concepts and terms related to supported art activities are problematic because they tend to emphasise the differences between them and so-called ordinary art. Some language is stigmatising, even when it is used with good intentions and meant to promote equality. We need to consider our choice of words and definitions carefully as they shape our perceptions and consequently reality.

All people should be seen through their abilities and roles. It is not right to characterise any group of people by using concepts based on disability. In practice it is difficult if not impossible to avoid characterisations, and it is likely that even this publication does not manage to do so in all instances. We should remember that we can have some influence on the kind of labels and meanings we attach to certain concepts. We can change our own and others' words and attitudes in light of new understanding.

An artist or work of art does not need a prefix. The aesthetic value of a work of art does not depend on the conditions in which it was created. However, in the field of art activities in supported environments it is often necessary to indicate the context in which a work was created and the kind of support and resources required to enable artistic activities.

Concepts are condensed information that help us to perceive similarities and apply a

Artists and works of art do not need prefixes, but shared concepts help us to focus our attention.



general or theoretical perspective. We do not need to describe the context in which a work of art is produced in every instance if we have a concept by which to refer to it.

Concepts also create and strengthen communities. It is easier for people working on the same things to find each other if they use the same terms. In art, concepts also help to form audiences and guide them to art. If we simply talk about art in general, it is difficult for us to locate ourselves in such a vast field. Consistent concepts are also important when we communicate with sponsors and supporters.

What do the concepts mean?

ART ACTIVITIES IN SUPPORTED ENVI-RONMENTS are artistic activities for people who need additional support that would not exist without, customised support for the individuals. These activities are not based on diagnoses or classifications, but the field can be seen to cover supported art activities for people with learning disabilities, autism spectrum disorder or non-specific learning disabilities. For example, if artist with a disability can work without specific support measures, this does not fall under the umbrella of supported art activities. The term

Paul Gustafsson, Kettuki's artist of the year 2007 Photo: Johanna Immeli, Kaarisilta refers to a specific structure of activities that enables the creation of supported art.

Art created through supported art activities does not need to called special or categorised. We can talk about supported art activities in terms of supported environments, but it is better to leave the works and artists without a prefix. If necessary, the person making the art can be referred to as **an artist who needs additional support.**

Yet, 'an artist who needs additional support' is also a controversial expression. It easily provokes distorted role expectations and may have negative connotations. Characterisations based on a person's mental or physical health, their associated diagnoses or their need for support easily objectify them and deny their uniqueness. When we describe someone as needing additional support, we are not describing the person but their ability to function in relation to what we consider normal. It would be better to talk exclusively about structures because all people are different. Only the environment highlights someone's need for support.

OUTSIDER ART is an international umbrella concept, the scope of which varies according to the individual. The concept can be said to be in a constant state of negotiation, as with all other contemporary forms of visual art. In principle, outsider art refers to visual art that is made outside the mainstream art world and is often identified as art by an expert.

The history of outsider art goes back to the history of psychiatric institutions, which started to collect patients' drawings for diagnostic purposes in the late 19th century. The term 'outsider art' first appeared in the work of the same name by art historian Roger Cardinal published in 1972. It began to be used in art speech as a translation of the French term 'art brut', coined by Jean Dubuffet, but in reality, although the two concepts are related, they have never referred to exactly the same phenomenon.

Outsider art implies exclusion, presupposing an inner circle with recognisable boundaries. In the context of outsider art, this inner circle contains mainstream visual arts. and the institutions of the art world. To be outside of the art world means expressing forms of creativity that are difficult to place within its classifications for one reason or another. If a suitable cultural box does not exist, it needs to be invented. Since artistic expression is not the exclusive right of the artists who operate in the art world but stems from the basic human need to be creative, subcultures have emerged in the margins of the art world throughout its history. In the case of outsider art, an entirely alternative or parallel art world has been built around the creativity of self-thought makers of art with its own artists, collectors, events, organisations, galleries and publications.

Outsider artists are often self-taught and produce their art in their own living environment

or or in supported art studios, rather than in the context of the art world. The concept covers art brut, contemporary folk art (called ITE art in Finland), visionary environments and work by artists who need additional support.

Outsider art was still characterised by an ethos of divergence and social nonconformity even in the late 20th and early 21st centuries, but the field is now opening up to new and more modern interpretations. Large international networks have emerged under the 'outsider art' concept that support their artists' aspirations for equality in the field of art. The cultural force of outsider art is in its multi-voice nature. It conveys messages to audiences that might otherwise never be heard. However, since some people find the term 'outsider' offensive, it is preferable to use it to refer to an umbrella concept and art form, rather than as a prefix for 'artists'.

DISABILITY ART deals with experiences of living with a disability. Thus, not all art made by people with disabilities is disability art. The aim of disability art is to express what it means to be disabled in political, personal and aesthetic terms. Disability art highlights social problems, discrimination and stereotypes related to disabled people. Disability artists often feel that they are activists and use their art to support a shared, positive identity for people with disabilities. Some art created in supported environments is activist and disability art by its nature.

1.4 Additional support in art activities

The meaning of additional support in the contex of art.

What is additional support?

"Guidance is offered on art and everything else. We live side by side."

"Sometimes I get stuck in my head. Talking to the mentor helps me carry on."

We should keep in mind that striving for equality does not mean that all people should be treated in the same way in all situations. Equality often requires active consideration and support measures to ensure that everyone has access to the same opportunities. For example, people face different barriers to inclusion depending on the nature of their disability. Even if the reason is the same, i.e. the difficulty of operating in the art world without support, the solutions and expertise applied in practice need to be based on each individual's circumstances and need for specific support.

Disability is not a disease that needs to be cured. What we can improve and change are the structures and practices of society. Disability or the need for support does not make anyone's life bad or inferior, as long as they feel accepted and are given the help and support they need, be it in housing services or art making.

It is the need for individual support that makes art activities in supported environments special. Artists who need additional support are a very heterogeneous group. All these artists have personal and specific needs.

Additional support means customised support measures to account for an individual's aspirations and disabilities. This can be mental or physical and is sometimes highly practical in nature, for example buying art materials and supplies or help operating in the art world. Someone who needs additional support may require support in all activities throughout the creative process.

Above all, additional support means removing obstacles to inclusion. At every stage of the process, consideration should be given to ensuring that decisions are made by the artist and not the mentor. Decisions in this context can mean anything from choosing a subject to mixing colours and finishing a work.

Some experienced artists do not need much support for the execution of their work if they are using a technique that is familiar to them, In supported art activities, people come first and art second.

but they often need help to get started and to finish, as well as to manage the artistic thought process. Creating art requires decision-making. Even experienced artists who need additional support may require a mentor's help with artistic thought processes.

It may be challenging for art professionals to stay in the background and only offer support if they believe they have a better grasp of artistic concepts than the artist who needs additional support. They must remember that mentors are facilitators not only in the creation of art but also with regard to someone else's rights and personal goals.

What kind of art is made?

"Making art is not hard. Starting is, and I never really know when to stop. I don't always know when the work is finished."

"We don't always get results; it can be just a fleeting moment. Documenting the process would be important to prove the effectiveness of these art activities. Sometimes the only outcome of a workshop is a memory and a puddle of drool."

How and what kind of art is made is based on the goals set with the artist. Having all artists follow the same method is rarely the best way to guarantee equal opportunities in artistic expression. For example, it may be very difficult for a severely mentally impaired person to participate in pictorial work because they may have difficulty picturing the connection between an object and an image, whereas multisensory art projects could provide new experiences and opportunities for communication and engaging with a community.

It is advisable to try out various methods with makers of art because it is fundamentally wrong to decide for others what they are capable of and what suits them. Almost anything can be done with someone's support, but the need for support varies. Situations may arise in which an assistant or mentor appears to be carrying out most of the execution. This becomes problematic if the person in need of additional support no longer owns the creative process.

The methods and tools for art making should preferably be chosen together with the artist and selected on the basis of their interests or skills. To enable selection, participants in activities should be introduced to as wide a range of techniques and approaches as possible.

What makes supported art activities special?

The aim of supported art activities is not to be special but to make ordinary art activities available to those for whom making art poses challenges that they cannot overcome by themselves. A good starting point is initially to only offer support when necessary.

When working on art projects, sticking to the same solutions and well-known practices is not always the best approach. Continuous experimentation is the key to renewal, development and high artistic quality.

Good practices:

1. Consider the age of the person when choosing techniques and materials. A disabled adult has much more life experience and a different way of thinking than a child. Choose techniques and materials that are appropriate for the person's biological age.

- 2. Work without rushing. Communication and preparation may take longer in supported art activities. A leisurely atmosphere ensures that art making is not just a hurried performance and encourages concentration and mindful processes. Spending time on a work is also important for communication and functional interaction.
- **3.** There is no need to finish everything in one go. Creating a work of art is not a one-session exercise. Artistic processes may take time, and designing, implementing and finishing a work of art can take quite a while.
- **4.** Structure, streamline and split activities into phases. A clear and familiar structure, especially when using new techniques and methods, makes it easier for participants to anticipate and understand activities. However, art includes many elements of unpredictability, so it must be possible to change plans if the creative process requires it.
- **5.** Demonstrate and give clear instructions and examples. You can display notes about basic things such as mixing colours, human body proportions and the sequence of work phases. Notes help participants' understanding and give them confidence. Add pictures to your notes if necessary.
- **6.** Mutual understanding is based on reciprocity. Do not talk constantly; wait and give the other person time to find words and to communicate. Allow others to do things their

- way. Be open to interaction, focus on understanding and be responsive.
- **7.** Many people have difficulty starting an activity. Offer support so that they can get started but do not do things for them. Make time for people and offer them encouragement.

All kinds of art can be made in supported environments.

1.5 A good environment

On the environments in which art is made.

What constitutes a safe environment for making art?

Health and safety measures related to physical and mental wellbeing are an important part of an ethical approach. General occupational safety guidelines and regulations are adhered to in supported art activities. Please pay particular attention to the following issues:

- Paints, solvents, adhesives and other chemicals used are often harmful to health. Make sure that everyone wears good personal protective equipment and that there is sufficient ventilation in the workspace. Follow the instructions for chemicals and use them sparingly.
- Make sure that the workspace is ergonomic. Use appropriate tools. Don't forget to take a break every so often.

- Be especially careful when using sharp tools and electrical equipment.
- Appropriate lighting is important. Bright lights or an environment that is too dark can both cause eye strain.
- Maintain a culture of respectful conversation.
- Rushing, a restless atmosphere and noise put strain on everyone. Make sure there are no distractions in the workspace. If necessary, measures such as hearing protection equipment and privacy screens can be introduced.

Safety includes mental health as well as the atmosphere in the workspace. Safe spaces aim to provide participants with a sense of physical and mental safety. The principles of safe spaces usually include elements such as openness and open-mindedness, encouragement, giving everyone space and a voice, inclusion, mutual respect, confidentiality, physical integrity and the right for everyone to define their own identity. Discrimination, harassment, hostility and exclusion are prohibited.

What is a confidential environment like?

"I'm not shocked by any kinds of questions. They work here, and then suddenly someone brings up sex. We share these things. I may whisper 'let's talk about this privately, perhaps you shouldn't mention these things in front of everybody." But we talk about everything."

"You shouldn't share everything, even with your mother. We all want the best for everyone, but an adult doesn't have to share everything."

Making art
allows people to
open up. Working
in a confidential
atmosphere makes
participants
feel safe.

Confidentiality is about our words and behaviour towards other people. Everyone is valuable and entitled to be treated with dignity. The principle of confidentiality in supported art activities often leads to situations in which participants share confidential and private things about themselves. Sharing thoughts openly is inherent in creative processes, which use participants' experiences. The foundation of a sense of community and good manners is that we respect and nurture an open and confidential atmosphere, regardless of whether the participants have disabilities. Confidentiality means that we do not share people's thoughts for others. Supported art activities are often carried out in structures that adhere to rules of confidentiality and an obligation of secrecy in the relationships with the participants.

Issues relating to the privacy of an adult who needs additional support should never be discussed or decided on with family members or other third parties, such as housing service staff, without the person's knowledge or presence. Sometimes it is advisable to contact the person's guardian or mentor, who can help them to understand the issue at hand and to make a decision.

Why do the materials matter?

Attention needs to be paid to the quality of materials and equipment used in art projects to ensure that art making is safe, meaningful and productive. High-quality art materials also ensure that works are long-lasting, which is important for the creation of collections. Many studios have found water-soluble and fast-drying, high-quality acrylic paints to be practical, in terms of both speed of work and space required.

However, we suggest that techniques and materials associated with experimental, contemporary art or handicraft methods be used in addition to familiar and safe materials. Artistic merit is not based on preferred techniques and materials but on original creative expression. Some makers of art may find that woollen yarn or recycled cardboard suits them better than traditional art materials. It is only by experimenting that participants can find their most natural means of expression. Art projects can be successful if tools and materials are selected according to personal needs. Someone with motor-coordination difficulties may find it much easier to achieve their goals if they use, for example, brushes with short handles, non-slip surfaces, high-contrast borders of painting areas or stencils. Mentors need to find solutions, together with participants, that make working easier

The ethical approach also covers the idea that high-quality tools are well looked after to ensure that they can be used for a long time. Materials should be as eco-friendly as possible and any waste avoided.

The artistic merit of a work does not depend on the techniques or materials used.

1.6 Artists' rights

Artists' rights and representation of their interests.

Who decides?

"I'm open to suggestions. Different mentors suggest different things. I may try one of them. If it works, I can use it later. The decision, however, is always mine."

Respect for human dignity means that everyone is seen as an individual capable of making choices and decisions. However, independent decision-making does not mean that people should do everything themselves or by themselves. Everyone has the freedom to choose and to decide for themselves, and others have to respect this right of self-determination.

The premise of supported art activities is that artists must be involved in all decisions concerning them, and their views must be respected. People with disabilities should also be represented when decisions are taken on matters that concern them. The motto of the disability rights movement, 'Nothing about us without us', sums up this demand, which extends to all areas, including art.

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities provides the basis for everyone to be a subject who is allowed to make decisions about their own life. However, people with disabitities often need support in decision-making.

People in supported art activities should also be closely involved in decision-making processes that affect them. Art has a significant influence on society and is a manifestation of culture, which is why it is important for everyone concerned to be involved in shaping art world structures. Individuals, communities, operators in supported art activities and society should all be able to be part of joint, supported decision-making and influencing.

It is clear that none of us can make decisions without knowing and understanding the alternatives. Decision-making requires background knowledge as well as practice. People have the right to make decisions that are not to everyone's liking as well as the wrong choices. It is easy to forget that risk-taking is a part of everyone's life, and people with disabilities may be over-protected from feel-



ing disappointed. Self-determination is not a licence for anyone to behave however they want. Decisions come with responsibility for oneself and others.

The best solutions, big or small, can be found through discussion and sharing ideas. Making decisions on someone else's behalf is not an act of enabling or representing their interests – not in art or any other context.

nterests – not in art or any other context.

Whose art?

Artists' rights and copyrights are ethical and legal issues. It is important that creators retain their decision-making power also in supported art activities.

When it comes to copyright in art, the keyword is the threshold of originality. In the con-

"Nothing about us without us."

Hanna Keynäs, Kettuki's artist of the year 2017 Photo: Marko Junttila

Art belongs to the maker.

text of supported employment and daytime activity programmes, a work remains with the organiser if it is not sufficiently original. For a creative work to warrant copyright protection, it must be sufficiently original and created independently.

All works of art are subject to copyright laws. Artists who need additional support are entitled to the standard copyrights to their works of art. It is up to them to decide whether they wish to transfer some of these rights.

Artists keep the copyright even after their works of art have been transferred to third parties. Transferring a work does not normally involve the transfer of the copyright. The terms of transfer, such as what is to be transferred and for what purpose, should therefore be agreed on a case-by-case basis. Unless it is a gift, it is advisable to give something in return, such as an agreed share of the sales proceeds.

It is essential that the person clearly understands what the agreement entails. An unambiguous agreement is in the interests of all parties. The organisation offering the supported art activities is a natural choice for an artist's representative and manager.

A wide range of agreements and contractual procedures are available. An oral agreement is valid but can be difficult to verify afterwards. For example, a 'thumbs up' on video may serve as a signature for a person who needs additional support if it is not possible to obtain a written signature.

What things should be agreed on?

To safeguard the rights of all parties, various agreements and permits are required that should also be discussed among all parties. A disability or need for support should not be relevant to an agreement. To ensure the procedure is ethical, the elements of the agreement should be presented in accessible language and demonstrated as necessary. All parties must understand what the agreement entails and what it means in practice.

It is important that the artist who needs additional support is treated like any other artist. It is good practice to first consider how the situation would be dealt with if the party was

a so-called ordinary artist before discussing any 'special' characteristics.

In principle, people who are of age make decisions on permission to take photographs, interviews, public displays of works and other communication themselves. However, they are entitled to receive appropriate support for the decision-making process. If the person has a guardian, it is necessary to inform the guardian of the sale of works and similar agreements.

In practice, many art organisations act as artists' representatives in the art world, which is similar to having an agent or even a manager. It is important to have regular conversations with artists about their artistic ambitions.

Issues that artists and representatives of the support organisation should discuss:

- Are you given enough support for decision-making? / What has your organisation decided on agreements?
- How do you store your works? / How is the safe storage of works organised?
- How do you feel about publicity?
 Would you give your permission to be photographed? / What is the organisation's communication strategy like?

All matters concerning the artist must be agreed with the artist.

- Are the permissions for photographing in order?
- Would you be willing to sell your works?
 What is the compensation for selling works? / How do you handle the sales of works and what is the artist's share of the sales proceeds?

Is publicity a bad thing?

"An exhibition is a process and the goal. It motivates people when their work matters. Then it's not just a hobby. Exhibitions are also important for mentors."

Publicity is an important part of an artist's profession and work on the art scene. Art exhibitions and public performances are a way for people who need support to stand out and show what they can do and what they are good at. People with disabilities are too often viewed through the challenges of participation that they face.

Works of art are often very personal. When they are exhibited, the artists' views must be heard. It is important to ask them what they want and how they think their works should be displayed. The guiding principle of setting up an exhibition is to respect the works and present them as art. If, for some reason, there are not sufficient resources to hang an exhibition professionally, it is worth considering if the works should be exhibited at another time.

Every successful and professionally built exhibition is a good advertisement for the entire field of supported art, but it can also attract negative attention. There may be people who visit an exhibition of works by artists who need support for the first time. We are jointly responsible for the image created in these encounters.

Of course, everyone who is involved in supported art activities contributes to ensuring that disabled artists do not find themselves in unpleasant publicity-related situations. For example, it is advisable to ask journalists to provide their interview questions in advance or for an assistant to be present in an interview.

Publicity is important.
Respect must be earned.

Can works be sold?

"There are works that I'll never want to sell. They're personal. They're about me, my childhood and my family. They're fine works. I don't want anyone else having them. I need them more myself."

Selling works is part of an artist's job. When works of art are sold, they attract new viewers. Works sold to public collections are important for the status of the entire sector.

Prices should be negotiated with the artist and the advisor. Gallery owners or other art experts, for example, can offer additional support on pricing, but it is the artist who decides whether a work is for sale and at what price.

If a work is publicly displayed, it is advisable to put a price on it in advance or to decide that it is not for sale. Overpricing and underpricing both distort prices in the market. If the artist is not willing to sell a particular work, it can be marked as 'not for sale' in the catalogue. If prices are left out of the catalogue, there should be a mention of who to turn to

The price of works by a novice artist is often close to the actual cost of producing the work. The cost of production includes the hours worked in addition to the materials used. The sales value of works increases

as the artist becomes better known, more skilled and has a career in art. A share may be payable to a gallery owner or agent, and this needs to be taken into account when deciding on the price.

Selling works is part of being a professional artist.

1.7 Values and practices

On the contents and objectives of supported art activities.

What is the aim of supported art activities?

"Promotion of wellbeing is just one possible approach. It's not the most important approach for us, but it mustn't be underestimated. This area may employ artists in the future and improve many people's quality of life."

"Art is one of the tools that we use. Art is not an end in itself; it's a tool for coping and getting to know yourself. A wide range of skills are practised."

Artistic and cultural activities have gained a greater foothold in the social services and healthcare sectors in recent years. These barrier-breaking art activities, often referred to as applied art activities, are carried out as projects characterised by a strong belief that culture and art can have a real impact on people's health and wellbeing.

Supported art activities are sometimes mistaken for art therapy. Although, broadly speaking, all art-related activities can be seen as therapeutic, the principles and goals of supported activities are fundamentally different from therapy, in which the aim is not only to support a person's overall development but also, to some extent, recovery.

Although art has proven benefits for health and wellbeing, the right of people in need of support to artistic activities cannot be justified solely from the perspective of wellbeing or the benefits they bring. Art does not need justification, because inclusion in artistic pursuits is a fundamental right that belongs to everyone, including people with disabilities.

Art making is also often thought to follow its own rules, to be an autonomous activity in which people simply pursue the goal of art in itself. This has often been understood to mean that it is only aesthetic factors that matter in art, but art can have many values, which are not necessarily mutually exclusive. Art can also be seen as a means of achieving non-artistic goals in supported art activities. Art activities in supported environments should be examined as a whole that recognises a number of overlapping and parallel values.

Art can be a source of income and employment for the maker. Art often also contributes to enhancing the self-knowledge and self-esteem of people involved in supported activities. It can promote the overall wellbeing of artists and even be a means of recovery. In addition to mental wellbeing, art can be an aid in motor recovery and improving physical function. Art making and the interactions and communities that these activities create have an important social role. None of the above-mentioned elements diminish the artistic value of the resulting works.

Supported art
activities are guided
by various missions
and different values.
Art can also be an
end in itself.

What is good art?

"It moves something in you. It wakes up a sense. That'll do for a goal."

Disability and the need for support are not things that should be hidden in art. Disability is a characteristic and a part of the identity that can be reflected in art made by a disabled person. It is part of the diversity of our society, and works by supported artists and their characteristics are part of cultural diversity.

The 'normalisation' of visual expression by supported artists is generally neither necessary nor desirable. If an artist's stroke is inherently shaky and delicate, it may be a stylistic characteristic of their sensitivity and expression that does not need to be corrected or changed. Even a sun drawn in the upper corner of a canvas, perceived as a cliché, can be an important compositional element stylistically, and not something to be unlearned.

The outsider art world is interested in art in which diversity and originality are seen as an asset. In the history of outsider art, this has led to situations in which attempts have been made to prevent artists from receiving art education and protect them from outside cultural influences. This is wrong. Art is a bridge that connects us with the surrounding world; it is an instrument of inclusion. If they so wish, artists who need additional support must be offered opportunities to study art and interact with other professional artists and operators in the art world.

Respect diversity also in artistic expression.

There is no right kind of art or specific goal that participants in supported art activities should pursue. It is the artist who should decide on the direction and content of their art. All techniques and themes are equally suitable for supported art activities. The role of facilitators and mentors is to provide alternatives and support activities, not to steer anyone in a particular direction.

People who need support have the right to make art and develop as artists on the basis of their personal needs, observations and interpretations, not on the basis of someone else's ideas of art. An artist's personal and individual understanding of a desired outcome and successful work will not necessarily conform with established concepts of art. Respecting the fact that people's views on aesthetic values vary guarantees an atmosphere that respects the individual and that outcomes are artistically interesting.

Are all subjects allowed?

"You need to consider the other members of a group, in case they find a subject distressing. If anyone chooses such a subject, it's best that this person works in a secluded area."

Freedom in art is not only a value but also a right. However, there are many sides to freedom. Artistic freedom means the right to choose form and technique. It also means a sufficiently even distribution of resources for art making and maximum autonomy of the art world.

When we consider the circumstances under which it would be right to restrict freedom of artistic expression through censorship, we have to consider the limits of freedom of speech and expression in general. There may be a conflict with widely shared moral values, the maintenance of which is one of the central functions of the state. Examples of inappropriate and offensive subjects have included blasphemous approaches to religious subjects and pornographic art.

In supported art activities, mentors and other facilitators are important defenders of the freedom of art. Artists should be allowed to deal with any subject they want, even if certain works cannot be displayed in public due to their subject matter. Art can

Freedom is an integral element of art. Working with other people entails a responsibility for others.

be a space for people in need of support to deal with difficult issues and vent their emotions, even their anger. They have every right to do this.

Art is for experimenting with and executing what is not possible or appropriate in the real world. Works of art must always be respectful of other people, and images must never be used to violate another person's honour and privacy. Other members of the community must be considered. Other people working in a shared space may find some subjects disturbing or offensive, and they too are entitled to work in an environment that does not offend them.

Are we allowed to talk about disabilities?

"I avoid using any of the terms. I don't want to talk about disabilities in the context of art. If I have to say something, I'll say 'someone who needs additional support'."

"One of our artists doesn't want to talk about disability at all, while another makes art that deals with autism. It's important for this artist to raise awareness through art and related texts."

Artists' biographies are important means to provide background information and explain the meaning of works. Viewers can use them to put themselves in the artist's shoes and understand their life and art. Disability is often an important part of a disabled person's identity, so there is no reason to hide it in a biography.

Yet if the focus is someone's art and works, consideration should be given to whether it is necessary to mention a disability or need for additional support and/or at what point that disability is brought up. It is best to keep the art at the forefront and focus on this. It is obvious that press releases, art reviews and similar communications should assess not the person but their art and work.

Artists themselves decide whether talking about their disability is important.

Artists who require additional support are often interested in whether art was made within the framework of supported art activities. It is human to have a sense of solidarity with and interest in people in similar life circumstances to you, but this does not necessarily have to relate to their disabilities. For example, it could relate to similar work and home environments.

Some artists who need additional support deal with disabilities in their art. They can use their art to take a stand on social issues, defend the rights of people with disabilities and increase awareness. When talking about these artists, it would be wrong not to mention their disability.

If the purpose of their art is to inspire debate, then it must be allowed to do so, and this needs to be supported. Art can create spaces for meeting different people as well as dealing with difficult issues together.

Are we allowed to use reference images?

"We use photos as references, to see what a leg or a structure looks like. We examine things. Images are a way to get started."

Copyright issues fall within the scope of both art law and ethics. The distinction between reprehensible plagiarism and acceptable referencing is often subtle. Plagiarism refers to unauthorised appropriation of someone else's creative work. When using reference photographs, for example, it should be kept in mind that the photographers have the copyright to their photographs; similarly, painters have the copyright to their paintings.

It should be noted that plagiarism usually means representing another person's work as one's own. If works are created for the purposes of study or practice, the use of reference images is less restricted, assuming that they are not made to be displayed in public as art. Artists, on the other hand, must be able to produce new, independent and original works of art on the basis of reference images.

Almost all artists use images in the media for exploring ideas. This is perfectly acceptable as long as it is to seek ideas and inspiration rather than to copy. If you use a reference image, think about its message or meaning as art.

Encouraging the use of reference images may be a violation not only of copyright but also of someone's artistic self-determination. Works of art typically have a message communicated using a particular technique. Working on reference images may easily result in the copying of someone else's message and a failure to reach the heart of art. Reference images have their uses, but visual art does not refer just to images. Works of art are messages from person to person and studies of humanity and the world beyond our verbal expression.

1.8 Last but not least

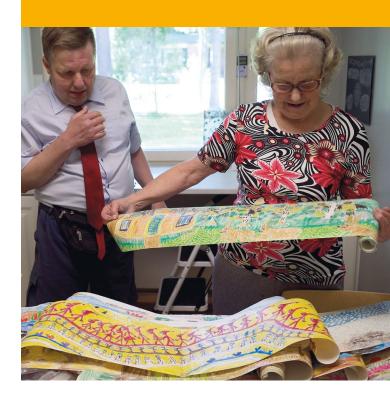
Is it always necessary to succeed?

"It's sometimes difficult to understand that the end result is not important; it's the process that matters."

What we think we can do affects what we can do. The people around us are crucial, and even in the context of art activities it is mentors and facilitators who have to believe in the abilities of people who need additional support and provide them with support when necessary.

No one is allowed to decide for someone else what they are capable of. Many are eager to meet other people's expectations, even when these are undesirable or dismissive. Artists need the ability and courage to reach out to the unknown. A mentor can offer the social support that allows artists to take risks and

Pasi Soukkala, Kettuki's artist of the year 2016 Photo: Minna Hayeri What we think we can do affects what we can do.



explore new ideas. We also need to remember that people who need additional support also have the right to push their limits and fail at times.

When setbacks and failures happen, the mentor's job is to help the artists deal with these issues and cope with disappointment.

What to remember?

We are all similar in that we are all different, and none of us could cope throughout our lives without help from others. It is the quality and quantity of support that we need that varies.

The need for additional support must not be an obstacle to becoming an artist. Not all makers of art who need support become artists, but they too can find a channel for interaction and self-expression in art. People who find it difficult to express themselves through words may find visual arts a particularly useful means of processing and communicating their emotions and ideas. Art provides experiences and promotes inclusion and wellbeing.

It is important for us to remember and understand that art activities carried out in supported environments are not just – or even primarily – social care. In the context of culture, makers of art who require additional support are not service recipients. They have the right to shape our shared culture through their art. As artists, they have a lot to offer.

Different artists open up new and different worlds for us through their art. Our joint responsibility is to facilitate their pursuits – or at least do our very best.

PART 2

The artist's path and support network – the many roles in art activities in supported environments

"Artist' is taken to mean any person who creates or gives creative expression to, or re-creates works of art, who considers his artistic creation to be an essential part of his life, who contributes in this way to the development of art and culture and who is or asks to be recognized as an artist, whether or not he is bound by any relations of employment or association."

The above is a UNESCO definition of an artist from 1980, which is inclusive and based on self-identification. Supported art environments take the same approach. Numerous different roles are involved in the art-making process, and while these reflect an artist's objectives and activities in a community, they provide little or no information about the relative quality or interestingness of the art produced.

Art has many well-documented benefits for wellbeing and is frequently used for recovery, therapy and recreation. Art is also a popular pastime and can be studied at a high level or practised professionally. The art scene as a whole and the different roles within it should be accessible to all. Supported environments build a path that takes aspiring artists from

Supported environments build a path.

one waypoint to the next, but the path is not the same for everyone. While a student does not become an artist overnight, remaining a student forever is not a viable option for serious artists.

Art in supported environments refers to art making and art-related activities that take place in environments that offer additional support. People can take on many different roles in these environments. As in all areas of artistic practice, a distinction between enthusiasts, students and professional artists is made in activities offered in supported environments. Artists and their support networks should be on the same page about their goals. It is a good idea to regularly discuss the nature and objectives of an artist's work with them.

It is important to recognise the impact of the environment on making art and the goals set by an artist. Supported art activities are organised in a variety of settings, and administrative practices can differ greatly across the board. In Finland, local authorities are the main organisers or commissioners of supported employment and daytime activity programmes for people in need of additional support. In fact, art programmes offered by associations and the private sector are often commissioned by local authorities. The voluntary sector and adult learning centres also offer art activities and courses. Another option for artists who need additional support is to simply work from home, without the support of an art studio or atelier.

In addition to structures, our operations are influenced by attitudes and norms. We often have preconceptions about various roles and professions that are sometimes difficult to break. However, there is a huge amount of unexploited potential among us, and it is therefore also important to consider opportunities that break down barriers. The following highlights some typical roles in supported art activities.

2.1 Professional artist, enthusiast or lifelong student

The roles of both makers and supporters have become more diverse.

Not everyone who makes art within the context of a supported employment programme is necessarily considered an artist. However, even amateurs can have a strong sense of artistry. From the perspective of those who make art, the determining factor is personal aspiration. Do they feel like an artist, enthusiast or student? The status of artist is based on self-identification, rather than being a consequence of the environment within which art is made.

The objectives and status of an artist can change over time. We can only ensure equal opportunities if we recognise that people have different objectives and roles and that this determines the nature of their activities and the support they need.

As supported art activities have grown and become better established, the roles of both makers and supporters have become more diverse. In Finland some projects has offered opportunities to experience a variety of art sector roles that provide additional support. For example, artists in need of additional support have occupied roles as curators, community artists or peer mentors. Artists have also produced works for both private and public commissioners. It is clear that engaging people in entirely new roles requires significant support. This has also proven to be a learning process for members of support networks, who usually have only limited experience of these new roles. Overall, these experiences have been encouraging, inviting everyone to reflect on how equality can be improved in the art sector.

Pupil

A career as a professional artist is the conclusion to a path that often starts in child-hood or adolescence. A pupil is someone who has the aim of acquiring information and skills. This process is often led by a teacher who guides and supports the pupil. In our context, a pupil refers to a child who receives an education in art at a school or takes part in a Basic Education in the Arts programme at an art school.

Children with a general learning disability usually receive additional support. The aim of this arrangement is to help and support pupils so that they can complete their education in accordance with their own abilities. The focus is on pupils' strengths, individual learning and developmental needs. It is crucial to identify any challenges to learning and introduce necessary support measures early to give pupils the help they need and allow them to achieve their educational objectives and overcome challenges.

In special education, the mainstream curriculum is adapted to meet the needs of individuals, and a personalised curriculum is created for each pupil. Art in special education is often treated as a tool for achievement outside of artistic objectives. However, art education is important for developing children's visual thinking, self-expression and aesthetic awareness. Education lays a foundation

for future art appreciation and creativity and, as a result, promotes cultural participation. Ideally, pupils in special education are taught by a teacher who is specialized in art. There should be no need to adapt the mainstream art education curriculum. Rather, the aim should be to find ways to meet the same targets in special education by providing the right support.

Art student

A solid foundation laid in early years makes it much easier to partake in more serious art studies later in life. Art students must be motivated and talented and have teamwork skills. Students who were placed in special education during their school years will usually require a personalised study programme during their art studies.

The objective of a visual arts course is to equip students with the fundamental knowledge and skills required to pursue a career as a professional visual artist. Graduates should be equipped to work as professional artists and exhibit their works publicly.

The idea is not to remain an art student forever, but students are supposed to graduate. This is different from recognising that life is

Having access to education is an important part of equality.

a continuous learning process and that we are always improving. Completing your studies does not mean that you stop learning and developing your skills. Graduation means that you are ready to take the next step on your path towards being a professional artist.

Art in supported environments is included under the umbrella term 'outsider art'. Outsider art puts the unique voices of the often-self-taught artists who occupy the space centre stage. This does not mean that anyone should be denied the opportunity to study art, nor that they will be less interesting as artists because they have earned a degree. On the contrary, art studies offer students tools to express themselves and create engaging artworks. Having access to education is an important part of equality.

Enthusiast

For the enthusiast, creating art is a pastime and recreational activity. Typically, even passionate amateur artists do not pursue a professional career in the field because art simply occupies a different space in their life. This distinction is not as clear with people in need of additional support. Vocational art courses or art-based supported employment programmes geared towards people with learning disabilities or people on the autism spectrum are not widely available. This means that making art as a hobby is more prevalent in these groups and a substitute for missing educational and career opportunities.

A person who is picking up a paint brush for the first time should not be called an artist, as one of the qualities of an artist is an extensive production of artwork. Of course, committed amateurs can accumulate a vast body of works and develop a solid skill set and have an identity that will define them as an artist. An art hobby group can be the only place where a person with learning disabilities is offered the required support for making art. As stated above, in the case of artists with learning disabilities, the distinction between professional artists and amateurs is not defined by the environment in which the art is made but rather by the quality of the art, the level of engagement in the artistic work and, first and foremost, self-identification.

There is often a cultural expectation that people with general learning disabilities do not have hobbies. While this can be due to a lack of personal resources, often the necessary support or opportunities are simply not available. In recent years, the accessibility of pastime activities for children and young people has received far greater attention in Finland. An extensive support network and multidisciplinary support are essential tools for clearing obstacles to children's participation. A child might be supported by an occupational therapist, physiotherapist or psychologist who can help to facilitate their access to art activities. However, the most important facilitator is a child's family.

Professional artist

Everyone has the right to make art, but is everyone who makes art an artist? Being an artist, and even the title 'artist' itself, differs from many other careers and titles in that it is not regulated or subject to a licence. Anyone can call themselves an artist if making art is an essential part of their life. Normally professional artists have formal qualifications, but artists can also be highly dedicated self-taught practitioners. In addition to an extensive body of work, professional artists typically have a strong professional identity. Being an artist is a way of life. It is often their source of livelihood, whether through the sale of works, remunerations or grants.

Making art is a mental and physical process that results in a work of art. In addition, being a professional artist involves exhibiting your work, acquiring materials, maintaining your work spaces, participating in projects, having an online presence, selling works of art, applying for grants, scholarships and awards, managing publicity and communicating with other people in the art sector and with the public. Supported environments play a significant role in enabling the professional careers of the artists they support.

Peer mentor

Besides being a professional artist, other careers in the art sector should also be accessible for people who needs additional support. Supported individuals can guide art activities as peer mentors or act as exhibition curators, film directors, critics or researchers. To perform these expert roles requires support from a person who specialises in the relevant area of expertise. It is highly valuable for people in need of additional support to have opportunities to take on many roles in the art sector as it opens doors for new perspectives and diverse content.

Peer-to-peer support means that people who have similar experiences support each other. When people have personal experience, skills and knowledge in making art and are passionate about sharing their experiences with others, they can become peer mentors. Finnish peer mentoring training equips artists in need of additional support with the tools they need to create a mentoring plan and assess their mentoring performance. Peer mentors should be provided with the necessary support, guidance and training to perform their role. For example, the ethical principles and rules for peer mentoring should be reviewed with the person becoming a peer mentor. Sufficient training and familiarisation with the role will ensure safe peer mentoring that is beneficial to all parties.

Peer mentoring is one way of implementing equality in the art sector. It is important that children and young people can have role models who are able in different ways.

It is highly valuable for people in need of additional support to have opportunities to take on many roles in the art sector.

2.2 The support network

"Making art requires such expertise that it would be impossible to support anyone without any expertise of your own. You have to be able to support people mentally. You need to understand the language of art and the process. There are moments when we are lost...That's part of understanding the creative process."

The principle is that people who guide others in supported environments are themselves professional artists and art pedagogues. However, high quality work is not solely based on the abilities and professional skills of guides. Being a guide, teacher or mentor in a supported environment requires knowledge of art and relevant working methods as well as pedagogical competence and the right values. You must be able to interact with people respectfully and deal with challenging situations in an ethical way. These are essential qualities and cannot necessarily be taught.

Art guide

'Art instructor' is a generic term that can refer to a teacher or mentoring colleague. In supported environments, an art instructor is someone who guides and enables art making. A instructor can also offer advice in other areas of life beyond art.

Any professional who acts as a instructor must be sensitive to the needs of the supported individual and respect their will, especially if the person has limited functional or communication abilities. The role of a instructor is to provide support when needed, not to control or make decisions on behalf of the supported person. The aim is to support artists' agency, independence and control over their decisions

Social counsellor

Art activities in supported environments sit somewhere between the cultural and social sectors. This means that those providing support must have broad professional competence. Supported art activities are often organised by a multidisciplinary team that consists of art and social sector professionals. Some team members have qualifications in several areas. In practice, many counsellors have degrees in both social services and the arts. It is important that specialists from dif-

ferent sectors respect each other's expertise and share a common vision of the objectives of the activities with the person in need of additional support.

In supported employment and daytime activity programmes, the counsellor's role is to encourage the supported person's participation and independence in their community and society. Counsellors plan, implement and assess their client's day-to-day functional capacity, treatment, care and rehabilitation. They provide personalised support and safety. A social counsellor can be an important facilitator of participation in art activities for a person in need of additional support.

Art teacher

An art teacher is someone who educates young students in schools and those studying for an art degree as they acquire formal qualifications. The teacher's role is to help students learn facts, artistic skills and techniques. Instruction usually follows a set curriculum. For young students, the focus is on holistic education that supports the personality and inner growth of children and adolescents.

In supported environments, art teachers must be prepared to support each student and enable their participation in the curriculum activities. There are no steadfast rules for how to deal with individual situations, but professional art teachers are required to ensure accessibility and support for students. Providing personal support requires familiarity with an individual student's challenges and needs. Teachers must find working methods that allow equal participation through creative thinking and dialogue with students and their families.

The aim is
to support artists'
agency, independence
and control over
their decisions.

Mentor

"A good mentor encourages the artist to think one step further. But not too much. Just enough to get the ball rolling. Without a quide, this step would not be taken."

The fundamental principle in mentoring is that artists in need of additional support are recognised as equals and colleagues who need support in realising their artistic potential. In practice, mentors, who are also experts in the field, support the artistic endeavours of their colleagues in a trusting relationship. The aim is to amplify the unique voice of the supported artists and enable professional growth.

Mentoring is often more like a discussion than guidance or instruction. In simple terms, instruction is systematic work towards particular objectives, while mentoring keeps all doors open. Making art is a process by which artists transfer their thoughts and feelings into a physical material. Although mentors are obviously not going to grab the brush out of their colleague's hand and 'fix' their personal style, they may exhibit more subtle forms of undue influence that are more difficult to observe.

Supporting the agency of the artist is often a matter of asking the right questions. There are no right answers in mentoring. Instead, the aim is to find answers together. It is important that the artistic process allows artists to express their inner world through their work. Art can be a communication channel for people who otherwise have limited ability to convey their thoughts or feel that they are not seen or heard by society. Control over the creative process must remain with the artist, even if outside support is provided at various stages of the process.

Colleague

In mentoring activities, artists in need of additional support are recognised as peers. The work can deepen into a collaboration between colleagues, so that an artist in need of additional support is seen as an equal colleague. Collegial work takes place within the framework of equal interaction, which mutually benefits and enriches each party. Collaboration can inspire new perspectives and bring new ideas to both parties' artistic thinking and work. In Finland, grants have been awarded for cooperation between professional artists and artists in need of additional support.

Assistant

The role of assistants is to enable the supported artists to work on their own terms.

Freedom of expression and control over, for example, the tools used must always remain with the supported artist. The aim is to advance the artist's autonomy.

Comprehensive training of assistants pays off. While assisting someone involved in the art-making process is different from dealing with ordinary everyday challenges, assistants cannot be expected to be experts in the arts. It is enough to understand that the assistant provides support and removes obstacles but does not create works of art on behalf of the supported person.

Manager

In practice, many supported art studios represent their supported artists in the art scene. The role of the studio is similar to that of a manager. However, this managerial role can also fall to a family member.

The duties of a manager stretch from promoting participation and wellbeing to art sales and drawing up contracts. The role also entails being a contact person between the artist and various interest groups and networks and searching for potential work opportunities. In this role, it is important to have regular discussions with the artist to ensure their objectives are understood.

2.3 In the background

Art activities in supported environments have many advocates who are not necessarily involved in the art-making process itself or even have any contact with supported artists. However, without them it would be very difficult to achieve equality in the art sector.

Art writer

Equality in art can only become a reality when both the physical and social environment in which art is made is accessible to all. The language we use around art can be seen as a way of educating and influencing the public, raising awareness in society and steering the general atmosphere to be more accepting of diversity.

Art critics and researchers are necessary influencers who offer new perspectives on supported art activities. Information increases understanding and appreciation. The language around art creates and uses concepts that build the reality we in the art sector operate in

Curator

Curators are like interpreters and storytellers. They organise works of art into well-planned exhibitions for the public to experience and enjoy. Ideally, the voices of artists will be listened to when exhibitions are created, after which the art is allowed to speak for itself.

It is important that art created by artists in need of additional support is not only exhibited in supported environments and outsider art exhibitions but also alongside other contemporary works of art. This is only possible if curators have access to art created by artists in need of additional support even if they are not particularly familiar with this art scene. For this reason, the Kettuki network has created its own artist register containing pictures of works of art and short artist bios in Finnish and English.

The language around art creates and uses concepts that build the reality.



Financer

Supported art activities sit at the intersection of the social and cultural sectors. While art is often created within the social sector in supported employment and daytime activity programmes, a cross-sectoral approach is needed to understand the nature of such art and move towards equality. Artists with disabilities or people familiar with the relevant issues should be represented in the bodies who grant funding for art.

Dialogues and reviews on equality in art emphasise that the funding process for supported art activities should be reformed. This means that the unique nature of art activities in supported environments within the social sector should be better identified and recognised and the activities better funded. This would provide resources for more activities and greater visibility within the art scene.

Equality in art can only become a reality when both the physical and social environment in which art is made is accessible to all.

Kenneth Rasmussen, Kettuki's artist of the year 2009 Photo: Lisbeth Thingholm, Bifrost Equality in art funding could benefit from cooperation between the different sectors in the future. Direct support, for example in the form of working grants, would allow supported artists, for the duration of the grant period, to receive financial support for their artistic work instead of relying on their disability allowance. Indirect support could mean more resources for art studios and improved access to art activities. This requires that art is recognised as work by disability services and that professional practice is made possible within the context of supported employment and daytime activity programmes.

Facilitator

The role of a facilitator can be taken on by an individual, community or other body that directly or indirectly promotes the cultural rights of people in need of additional support and access to supported art environments. Artists are often surrounded by people who can act as facilitators. For example, a family member, support person, taxi driver or staff member at a supported living unit can all inspire, encourage and remove obstacles to participation.

Not everyone around people with learning disabilities recognises the meaning and sig-

nificance of making art. Art activities and art making must be supported whenever it is satisfying and meaningful for the person taking part. Consultation plays a significant role in planning personalised services for individuals and, for this reason, is also very important for ensuring access to art activities. At a community level, facilitators include the organisers of supported art activities, such as adult learning centres, associations, foundations and local authorities who produce and commission these services.

Many supported art studios were started by active citizens. The process often involved setting up an association, lobbying decision-makers and developing activities systematically to ensure cultural rights for people with learning disabilities. Politicians and officials at different levels of governance are in a key position to organise services and make relevant political decisions.

Ultimately, the art sector as a whole – art museums, galleries, curators, collectors,

Anyone can be a facilitator.

Artists with disabilities or people familiar with the relevant issues should be represented in the bodies who grant funding for art.

agents and schools – occupies the role of a facilitator. Moreover, the general public can push the art sector towards greater equality. After all, demand creates supply.

Anyone can be a facilitator. Once you have discovered the world of supported art, it is difficult to even imagine a society that does not hear this voice.

2.4 Let art speak!

Supported environments in the art sector have many roles that come with different expectations. Making clear distinctions between these roles and expectations is in everyone's interest. A single art group often includes artists in different stages of their careers. This means that the person guiding the group must occupy many roles to support people at their current level.

Art has many functions. The main function of supported environments may be to further the wellbeing of artists by focusing on their functional capacity, life skills, participation and mental health. Some environments may emphasise professional careers and the act of operating in the art sector. Recognising these different starting points and goals does not mean we are comparing them. Diversity is a strength, both for the people taking part in activities and the art sector as a whole.

Different roles come with specific expectations, and sometimes people get stuck in a particular role for social and structural reasons. Artists in need of additional support have different career paths to other artists. Many supported artists stay in the same environment for a considerable length of time. In situations like this, adopting a new role often does not happen organically. Some people need more space to grow as an artist and experiment in a familiar group. This is a question of identifying and recognising potential and enabling it to flourish. The purpose of identifying the various roles is to make clear their different goals and better understand the kind of support that is needed.

The different roles in the art sector are really based on communication. They become established and active in relation to other people. In supported environments, the two major roles are the supported person who is making art and the person providing support. Regardless of roles, the important thing is to ensure development opportunities for everyone, whatever their level or objectives. The person providing support must be someone who enables artistic expression and not someone who sets limits on it. The supported person is entitled to receive support. This is not only a question of cultural rights but also human rights.

When we let art speak, we are doing a service to the art sector and society as a whole.

PART 3

Good practices – cooperation in the supported studio network

The third part of this publication examines good practices in the supported studio network. Art activities in supported studios are intended for people with intellectual disabilities, autism spectrum disorder and non-specific learning disabilities. The concept of supported studios describes at a structural level the activities in which art is made in a supported environment. Artists and works of art do not need any prefixes.

Network collaboration is on the rise and is now an integral part of many organisations' activities. The benefits are undeniable, providing greater knowledge of the issues, and enhancing skills, education and development efforts. Other benefits of collaboration include growing innovation, credibility in the sector and pooling of resources to promote a shared goal.

As organisations and the supported studios sector become increasingly professionalised, the need for networking increases. What does it take for various parties to feel that their collaborative operations have been successful? The purpose of this chapter is to help readers learn new approaches, identify responsibilities and obligations and encourage smooth, confidential and goal-oriented collaboration.

Network
collaboration can be
a hugely powerful
tool for improving results
through synergies.

This chapter highlights the typical practices, procedures and issues related to networking in the field of supported studios, which should be considered for achieving desired results. The perspectives and themes range from pragmatic approaches and practical tips to general principles of networking. Network collaboration can be a hugely powerful tool for improving results through synergies.

Kettuki has several years of experience in networking in national and international contexts. This chapter touches on Kettuki's network activities in Finland, although the focus is on the NOA Nordic Outsider Art network. The text consists of observations, references to literature, survey material collected by the organisations in the Nordic network and network-related materials from the Kettuki archives. There are also anonymous quotes from artists in need of additional support as well as from actors working in the field.

3.1 Introduction to networking activities

Each network is unique. Networks can be set up on a specific theme or for the purposes of exchanging information. Network operations are influenced by a variety of factors, the life cycles of which vary. They allow independent organisations to work together.

Networks are characterised by change rather than inertia. Successful networking requires effort, commitment and development. If a collaboration is fruitful, it is a good idea to identify what is effective about it and strengthen this area. If there are any problems, it is useful to find out what could be done better.

Individual network organisations have unique characteristics. The activities in a network are guided by a number of factors that set the conditions for shared operations. For example, an organisation's management or sponsors may have certain expectations. It must be accepted that all bodies base their decisions on different premises, and that these are not always in line with a network's

objectives. For one, networking can be at the heart of the strategy, while for another it may only be a small part of the organisation's activities.

In a world of limited resources, the question of competition may arise. Who attracts coverage in the media and which organisations receive funding? The basic idea of networking is to use each organisation's strengths for the common good. This makes it possible to achieve things that individual organi-

Successful networking requires effort, commitment and development. sations cannot. Increased openness has led to the view that working together is more important than competition. Ultimately, the quest for equality is in everyone's interest.

At its best, collaboration is based on mutual trust and respect. It is important to consider how trust is built, how it manifests itself and what the benefits of a climate of trust are. Paradoxically, it sometimes takes shared challenging experiences and coping with difficulty for trust to deepen.

It is equally important to consider what the consequences of a lack of trust are and how it might become apparent. Typical signs of a lack of trust include misunderstandings, friction between parties and weak commitment, whereas trust manifests in constructive resolutions of conflicts, innovative activities and learning.

Ethical issues are always present in the supported studios network. Artists need one-to-one support in their art making, and the people around them should facilitate their artistic pursuits. Willingness to reflect on ethical questions and the desire to promote equality, inclusion and transparency are important objectives. Networks constantly discuss and learn from each other about how to do things better, more respectfully and more openly. How can practices be improved to ensure that artists are able and allowed to act as independently as possible?

"Openness and understanding. Important with the right support from the mentors (not too much and not too little)"

Ethical issues are always present in the supported studio network.

3.2 Well organised is half done

From the perspective of the development of the field of supported arts activities, it is useful if organisations are part of the network and already have extensive hands-on experience of collaboration. Networks make it possible to carry out targeted and clearly defined projects with partners that are already familiar with each other. In networks, elements are made up of many factors; they are intertwined and constantly changing.

Well-organised operations facilitate smooth collaboration, and thus this is an area worth investing in. One of the objectives of organizing is to ensure that everyone is in the right place at the right time. It is important that artists' individual needs are considered and that sufficient support is provided to enable them to focus on the issue at hand. Agreeing on certain issues together and being prepared makes collaboration easier.

"It's been interesting to be involved in the activities as an artist. The visits have been well structured."

Tips for organising your activities:

- Accessibility to the premises and possible transfers between them must be planned in advance. When planning programmes and selecting venues, it is advisable, whenever possible, to include alternative activities and quiet rooms where participants can retreat.
- Structures and predictability are often important for supported artists. Daily programmes should be prepared and shared well in advance, and pictures of places on visit itineraries and restaurant menus can also be sent to participants in advance. Sufficient numbers of breaks need to be included in programmes.
- When organising activities, imagery training can be used to imagine an upcoming event or network meeting step by step.
 This is helpful for picturing situations that may arise.

Agreements bring clarity to collaboration activities

Activities in the supported art environments are typically promoted and developed in collaborative projects, which are funded from either public or private sources. Projects are based on need and are often the only opportunity for organisations to develop their own activities and those of the sector.

Sufficient time should be allocated for the preparation of projects. Issues must be agreed on in a manner that is suitable for each party in order to avoid misunderstandings. If preparations need to be carried out in a hurry, listing key issues in an email is better than conducting a phone conversation, which provides no documents to refer to. All project partners have the right to know what has been recorded in the project plan and funding application regarding issues such as objectives, activities and commitments of the parties.

Agreeing on everything ensures that all those involved know what needs to be done, what is expected of the collaboration and the contributions required of each party. There can be two stages to the agreement. When applying for funding for a joint project, it is advisable to first draft a letter of intent followed by the agreement once funding is confirmed.

Issues must be agreed on in a manner that is suitable for each party in order to avoid misunderstandings.

The following matters should be jointly agreed on as a minimum:

- a description of the collaboration, e.g. the project and its objectives
- the main elements of the collaboration, such as measures to be taken
- responsibilities and obligations of the various parties
- documentation and evaluation of the project
- copyright issues
- notice period, termination and settlement of disputes
- validity of the agreement

It may not be necessary to draw up a written agreement for looser collaboration networks, yet some common rules should be put in place. A network does not automatically entitle organisations to act on behalf of others. For example, an organisation in a network cannot be mentioned as a partner to a joint project in a funding application if it is not involved in that project. This ensures that organisations adhere to their strategies and regulations, i.e. to see things from their own perspective and make decisions in accordance with good governance practices.

Management and leadership

Being a leader in a supported studio network differs from traditional organisational management in many ways. The key questions are how to manage without managing and what is actually being managed.

In networks, it is more appropriate to talk about leadership than management. Leadership is about taking responsibility for promoting a common cause. It is about coordination, structuring, prioritisation, compilation, communication and facilitation. Leadership also means searching for and discovering new and interesting things, enabling and paying attention to the things that matter. It is largely a question of how concepts are turned into ideas and ideas into deeds. How are individuals' expertise

and skills used for the common good? How is communication made to work? Leadership in supported studio networks is about removing barriers to inclusion.

The management of networks can also be thought of as shared leadership, a joint activity. It is about more than allocating jobs and responsibilities. The aim of exchanging ideas, listening and sharing experiences and information is to bring views and interpretations together. Throwing oneself into a project, being willing to negotiate and having dedication to the process are all elements of shared leadership.

Managing supported studio also means managing energies and innovation. It is about sensing moods, offering encouragement, getting excited and, above all, listening. Silent signals in the operating environment and network are difficult to detect unless one's ears and senses are attuned. Eyes should be kept on both the present and the future. There must be room for intuition and future perspectives.

3.3 Collaboration is based on effective communication

All views and ideas that are brought to the table are valuable.

"The more we learned about each other, the more we understood each other."

All views and ideas that are brought to the table are valuable. A safe environment needs to be created for open communication. This allows people to understand each other's views while also examining their own ideas.

Art is the language that unites people. The pursuit of supported studio networks is equality and inclusion. Particular attention should be paid to communication so that everyone feels their voice is heard, that they are part of the network and that they belong. Members of the network may have specific needs or challenges in terms of communication; these should be considered and support offered if necessary.

"The understanding and acceptance of different artists' special needs and challenges has made it possible for me to have a good interaction with other people in the network, and to participate in projects. It has also led me to the possibility to co-create with other artists, such as inviting them over and starting up an art collaboration."

It is important to be aware of the potential communication problems that can occur between people. Different values and misunderstandings can lead to tensions and conflicts. Sometimes things escalate relatively quickly. Sometimes a solution is found before anyone has understood what the problem is. Collaboration is often so complex that it requires finding opposing ways to react.

There is no need to be afraid of conflict; it is a natural part of interaction and not a sign of failure. It is important to try to understand what causes conflict and how it can be resolved. Could it be a problem with project management, inadequate expertise or a lack of people skills? It is important that everyone's views are heard in conflict situations. As a rule, always assume only the best in others and try to solve problems quickly.

"The interaction has been very respectful, serious and encouraging. We have had a good structure around information, and because of the innovative task to strengthen the Outsider Art in Nordic countries and high level we also have been lucky to get funding for many of our projects. And the results have been strengthening."

Several issues need resolving at different stages of collaborative projects, and different views need to be reconciled, as people have their own methods of working and their ability and willingness to take risks vary. Although people do not need to work in the same way for collaborative projects to be successful, some common ground is good. People have different expectations about how predictable things should be. Some try to work independently, while others expect more guidance. How clearly should details be planned in advance and what issues could be resolved as the process progresses?

It should be noted that people's personal qualities, such as emotional skills and temperament, also have an impact on how they work together. Challenging situations can be overcome if collaboration is based on trust and parties respect each other.

"I think the project is tied together by good personal relations."

Commitment to collaboration

"I feel like it has been fun and exciting, it has been a challenge at times but the type of challenge that helps you grow as a person and artist."

> Shared goals, visions and values help people be committed.

It is clear that shared goals, visions and values help people be committed, which makes networking activities effective. People are more committed to working together when the issues or relationships are important to them and they feel that collaboration benefits them in some way. People involved in supported studio networks mention their benefits, such as learning and receiving support from colleagues. Activities need to be sufficiently challenging to motivate and engage.

All the senses are open to art. Experiences shared in art-related environments also commit people emotionally. Emotions and a sense of community play an important role in providing meaning and committing people to working together.

"I feel committed to the NOA project. We did something completely new together, and a sense of communality binds us."

It is generally thought that benefits should be distributed among those involved in a network in proportion to their input. In practice, networking is not always reciprocal and resources invested may not be equal. It is often necessary to trust that as energy is circulated, it is channelled into the common good and perhaps returns in a new form.

Successful networking requires adequate commitment at all stages. Sharing of ideas, planning, open communication, mutual trust,

shared rules and leadership help people to become committed to projects. The aim of supported art activities is to strengthen the participation of artists who need additional support. The experience of inclusion is directly linked to commitment, which makes it an extremely important factor.

"I'm an artist and for me the collaboration has been an important tool to create and strengthen the relationship to other artists and artistic institutions. It has led to new opportunities and for the possibility to grow as a person and as an artist."

Internal and external communications

Shared information and permission to ask critical questions is part of constructive collaboration. When agreeing on the network rules, it may be necessary to agree on methods and channels of communication. It is important to ensure that everyone is kept up to date and has access to shared information. Both praise and suggestions for improvement should be given along the way, not just at assessment meetings.

Supported studios are funded with money from public or private sources. It is important to follow financers' guidelines on visibility and, if necessary, to mention the sponsor in project materials. It is equally important to



Shared information and permission to ask critical questions is part of constructive collaboration.

Harri Blomberg, Kettuki's artist of the year 2015 Photo: Katri Stenberg, Atelier K

agree within the network on how to mention the collaboration partners. It is appropriate to mention the collaboration in external communication. Visibility benefits everyone.

If any questions, wishes or disappointments arise in the course of collaboration, it is important to bring them up:

- What does this aim to achieve?
- What did you mean when you said ...?
- Could we focus more on ...?
- What do you think about ...?
- Did I understand this correctly as I think that...?
- Could we be more specific...?

3.4 The content of activities is created by the network

Artists and their art play the most important roles in supported studio networks. The activities are based on facilitating art making and displaying works. Creativity flourishes, art inspires and project ideas are so abundant that they cannot all be implemented.

Networks can serve as a platform for various projects. Their content seems to come from nowhere when artists' views are heard. It is not possible to work on all interesting ideas with the same intensity. A tried and tested model of networking is one in which the responsibility for projects changes hands.

Tips for the different stages of network activities to enrich their content:

ONLINE ART WORKSHOP:

- People in the network take turns to plan a workshop and act as a mentor to the others.
 The artists' expertise is ideally utilised in the implementation.
- Are particularly well suited for sharing knowledge about different techniques.
- Work well when people are getting to know each other.
- By planning and mentoring one workshop, each participant has access to as many workshops as there are other participants.
- Are carried out online.
- A big screen is recommended as it gives the impression of everyone being in the same space.

100 IDEAS:

- Have an ideas sharing session.
- Write down every idea without judging its viability.
- The aim is to come up with 100 ideas.
- Experience shows that it is quite easy to collect about 70 ideas.
- The last 30 ideas may be more difficult to produce, but they are probably the gems that can become ideas for future projects.

Having goals benefits everyone

What should be expected from network activities? It is essential to discuss what is expected from network activities and individual participants. This will prevent people from having unrealistic expectations.

Having goals is important for the development of organisations and networks as a whole, as well as for the individuals involved. It is important to ensure that artists' personal goals reflect their abilities. "A good networking involves respect for the individual and their needs/abilities/challenges, with acceptance that we're all different. The desire for high quality (both in the interactions themselves and in the projects and project results) is important too, so that the participants feel like their efforts and art has value and that they are being treated as adult human beings. To give people the chance to try new things and give them the safety net to fail, as failing is an important part of growing as a person and as an artist."

Continuous learning in networks

Collaboration is a huge source of inspiration. Working together with, meeting and being around new and interesting people, and sharing experiences offers opportunities for continuous learning. Learning can take place in many different areas. Just travelling to network meetings abroad can be an important experience and a source of learning.

"I've learned practical skills related to travel. It has given me more personally than artistically."

Different approaches are also refined into effective practices through experimentation. Everyone should be given time to experiment so that they can get to know each other and learn from joint activities, especially in the

early stages of a network or when new participants join its activities.

"I've learnt how to make films and how to talk in front of a lot of people. I've learnt more about my own limits and how far I can push them. I've learnt of the existence of art institutions around Europe that I otherwise wouldn't have been able to know about."

Collaboration is a huge source of inspiration.

3.5 Everyone is involved in the development efforts

Networks can draw up a plan of action or a strategy that contains the typical elements, from vision and values to implementation and evaluation. It is not necessary to have a formal strategy if the network has a shared goal and vision. Networks in supported studios seldom have drafted strategies, although individual organisations may have recognised the importance of networks and partnerships in their own strategies.

Renewal and development are continuous in networks, as concepts and ideas are constantly changing. The creative potential in this field is enormous. It is neither possible nor necessary to prevent changes from happening, and at the same time the focus must be on what is essential.

Plenty of time should be reserved for developing and creating new activities. Organisations in the network are seldom equal, so it

It is neither possible nor necessary to prevent changes from happening, and at the same time the focus must be on what is essential.

is important to ensure that everyone will be heard. Inclusion is valuable even in development efforts.

Evaluation provides valuable information

The elements of good networking should be discussed among the parties. They may be difficult to determine because expectations, needs and objectives vary, which is why it is important to assess what each party expects from collaboration activities. Evaluations are carried out to see if the objectives have been achieved, whether everything is on schedule, whether the communication is working and what the atmosphere is like.

Evaluations should be carried out at different stages of the network and individual projects. It may be necessary to clarify which one, the network or an individual project, is being evaluated. A useful evaluation requires careful documentation, which is also worth investing in. Evaluations provide important information about features such as successful activities and areas for development. There should be time for evaluations during the workshops and network meetings so that they are not carried out independently afterwards. It is advisable to invest in evaluation methods and to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to express their views.

Evaluate at least the following elements:

- Does everyone share the network's vision and objectives?
- Is there a jointly agreed set of rules in place?
- Is the communication working?
- Are the schedules adhered to?
- Is sufficient feedback provided and received?
- Have the objectives been achieved?
- Are the collaboration activities perceived as useful?
- Are responsibilities allocated in the desired and agreed manner?
- Which elements work, which ones do not?

It is important to assess what each party expects from collaboration.

3.6 Kettuki network

Kettuki association was founded in 2002. The association's members consist of private individuals and most of the organisations that arrange art activities in supported environments in Finland. Since its foundation, Kettuki's aim has been to promote the art of people who need additional support and to raise the profile of this art sector as well as to create opportunities to study art, engage in art activities and work in the art sector.

In addition to organisations in the sectors of culture, supported art activities, disability and wellbeing, the Kettuki network includes artists, their friends and family members, and people with an interest in art. The Kettuki network is a nationwide network of experts, which is unique in the international context. It focuses on the phenomena and issues of supported art activities and outsider art. The network is a platform for cooperation, sharing and professional peer support. Partnership is one of Kettuki's fundamental values.

Kettuki promotes both the intrinsic value of art and the wellbeing impacts of making and experiencing art. The aim is to increase the social inclusion of people who need additional support and to promote equality in art.

Kettuki network activities

The Kettuki network carries out advocacy and development work and promotes topical issues. Communication and information sharing about current issues in the field of supported art activities is one of Kettuki's basic functions. The target groups include artists who need additional support and their mentors, parties and students who operate in the art and social sector as well as decision-makers in the social services and healthcare sectors.

Kettuki publishes books and other materials that support artists and organisations in the field. It also maintains a databank of supported art activities and outsider art and collects theses on related subjects into its archives.

The annual network seminar on supported art activities brings together experts in the field. The seminar programme aims to support the sector's development and networking activities. Experts from Finland and overseas are invited to the seminars to share their good practices and other experiences.

Kettuki is involved in lobbying efforts to influence decision-makers and authorities, and it promotes the rights of people who need additional support to study, engage in hobbies and make art for a living by means of statements, press releases and various campaigns. Kettuki also seeks to influence the public opinion on equality in art.

Kettuki's duty is to consult and guide organisations in the field of supported studios. Kettuki also maintains a debate on ethically sustainable practices with the network of supported studios.

Kettuki has granted awards and prizes since 2004. By selecting an artist of the year, Kettuki brings out talented and unique artists who need additional support. Kettuki also holds a solo exhibition for the artist of the year. Every year, Kettuki awards Art act of the year -prize to a person or organisation that has promoted equality in art.

3.7 NOA Nordic Outsider Art Network

"It feels natural and important to cooperate with the other Nordic countries."

Creativity sometimes requires freeing oneself from routines. Diversity is a given feature in intercultural collaboration. Nordic collaboration operations between the organisations in the field of outsider art work well, as their operating cultures and strategies are compatible, and their structures in the field are very similar. The organisations in the Nordic countries are also united by their geographical proximity and the ideal of a welfare state.

The foundations for Nordic networking activities have been built during a long time. Supported art exhibitions and bilateral activities have been organised in conjunction with various projects. For example, Danish artist Kenneth Rasmussen was Kettuki's artist of the year back in 2009.

The story of the NOA Nordic Outsider Art network

The idea for the NOA Nordic Outsider Art network came about in Hämeenlinna, Finland, in 2015. Having been granted funding by the Nordic Culture Fund OPPSTART, Kettuki invited four Nordic organisations to get to know each other and to share ideas about collaboration opportunities. The parties were invested in collaboration efforts and held in-depth discussions.

There was a facilitated workshop that used the Path method developed by Linda Haynes to consider shared vision and steps to achieve them. Outsider art resources and audiences are limited in each of the countries. It was essential to identify the potential in the sector and the shared and genuine need for cross-border collaboration that artists and various organisations had. Artists' motivation and right to international cooperation were also recognised. GAIA Museum Outsider Art (Denmark), Inuti (Sweden), Kettuki (Finland), Kaarisilta association (Finland) and List án landamæra (Iceland) decided to set up the NOA Nordic Outsider Art network. The NOA network's early operations and subsequent projects have been funded by organisations such as the Nordic Cultural Fund and the Nordic Culture Point

Artists'
motivation and
right to international
cooperation were
recognised.

Collaboration was goal oriented from the start

The aim was set at the first meeting to increase Nordic cooperation and to offer cross-border professional support to both artists and mentors. The approach was very hands-on at first. Information sharing methods were developed for the purpose of jointly creating innovative and high-quality methods for art studios.

Each member planned and ran a workshop, which gave access to four workshops organised by others. The aim was to provide the participants with practical experience in collaborative activities and to share skills and techniques that could be used later. The artists soon wanted more than simply sharing knowledge of techniques.

Why do we always do the same thing? It won't take us anywhere."

People had got to know each other in the workshops; they knew the procedures, and trust had been established. Many artists already had a rather recognisable style, technique and voice, which they wanted to make heard.

Base for the projects

The organisations soon realised the importance of Nordic networking in the development of their own operations. They discussed how to continue after the first stage. The enormous potential of the artists had been recognised, and everyone agreed that their art should be made available to wider audiences. The network agreed that the NOA network could serve as a platform for specific joint projects that have their individual objectives, schedules and funding. The idea was also to enhance understanding between cultures.

The network was soon able to continue working together as it received funding for a film project. Inuti came up with the idea for the film project Out by Art, for which it received funding from the Swedish grant committee Kulturbryggan. The project, produced by Swedish document maker Sven Blume, resulted in five art films and one documentary. The Out by Art films premiered at Moderna

Museet in Stockholm in spring 2018 and have since been shown at numerous festivals and other events.

The following year, the collaboration continued with the conceptual art project The Other Travel Agency. This project was inspired by a question asked by artist with disability and by the dream of equality, in which everyone can be involved in building a shared environment and culture.

"Why doesn't anyone tell you about places that are quiet?"

The Other Travel Agency project, coordinated by Kettuki, generated local art events, exhibitions and products in Finland, Sweden, Iceland and Denmark in summer 2019. The main exhibition, compiled from local productions, displayed Nordic art at the EU Parliament's exhibition space in Brussels and in Helsinki in autumn 2019. The Other Travel Agency was mentored and curated by urban activist, producer Jaakko Blomberg. The project involved several partnerships, and the network expanded further.

After the projects carried out by the members of the NOA network, the network dreamt of setting up residency activities in the Nordic countries. There were already resources and partnerships in place to plan and launch the operations, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the plans have been put on hold.

Good practices and long-term network collaboration

There are many factors behind the success of the NOA network. It is a long-term collaboration effort to develop joint operations, get to know each other and build trust. There has been a low turnover of staff at the NOA network's member organisations, and some of the artists have been involved in the activities since the beginning. It has been possible to grow and learn and to rejoice in doing things together over the years. The network was set up first, and only then was it time for the actual projects.

When networking is based on trust, respect and good human interaction, the prerequisites for success are in place. Collaboration was based on shared needs. An evaluation was carried out, and people offered criticism and gave feedback. But most of all, the artists' views were heard.

"It's not great that we just look at each other's works, and nobody gives us any proper feedback."

What was not perceived to be useful was abandoned. The network has learned to be effective. Every time there is a meeting, there is time for discussions and an accompanying seminar or other event with the locals to

discuss supported art activities in the Nordic countries. Artists, mentors and directors alike can share their views. The NOA network looks to the future and dreams and plans for its next steps.

One of the NOA network's goals is for different audiences to see and encounter art. Our intend is to go where other people are, which has included going to the Reykjavik International Film Festival in Iceland, Moderna Museet in Stockholm and the European Parliament in Brussels.

When networking is based on trust, respect and good human interaction, the prerequisites for success are in place.

We have worked hard for the network. If it was not possible to achieve a goal one way, an alternative solution had to be found. We dreamt of expanding the network at an early stage of operations, but there was no funding. Project funding has since been granted by various sources, which has made it possible to invite others to join.

"I feel like the NOA-network is a distant but still relevant part of my artistic life, that it's constantly there in the background and easy to get in touch with when you want/need to. I'm engaged through my art studio, I don't think I'd be able to keep engaging with the NOA-network without help from other people (not due to disinterest but due to my disability)."

The story of the NOA network continues. The social isolation during the pandemic gave rise to the idea of making a collaborative work of art. The planning was carried out at virtual meetings. Ordinariness and everyday routines became an important theme during the pandemic, and the title of the work is 'My Everyday'. Kitchen towel was chosen as the material, and the artists were given a free hand to choose their technique. Members of the NOA network spread the invitation to artists across the Nordic countries.

The collaborative work of hundreds of kitchen towels turned into art is curated by Minna Haveri, DA, from Finland and sculptor Lotte Nilsson-Välimaa, MA, from Sweden.

The work will be displayed for the first time at the EOA2022 conference coordinated by Kettuki at Gallery Arx in the Verkatehdas Culture and Congress Centre in Hämeenlinna. The joint work belongs to everyone and is owned by no one. Kettuki will archive the work so that it can be offered on loan and displayed in its various forms at exhibitions organised by the members of the network.

Goal-oriented networking activities create added value

Looking at the NOA network activities, it is easy to see that they are topical and non-hierarchical. Relations between those involved are confidential and transparent. People get on and they are given space to be themselves. Diversity is a value.

> People give more to the network than they take from it.

Shared experiences have given the members a sense of purpose as well as stories and experiences. Problems and challenges have been solved quickly. Everyone is strongly committed to collaboration, and everyone is respected. People give more to the network than they take from it.

Collaboration in the Nordic network is goal oriented; it is here for the long term, and it supports the organisations' strategies. The network consists of a variety of skill sets so it can carry out high-quality projects. Networking has provided opportunities to step out of routines.

The NOA network members are united by a desire to act ethically and professionally. The pursuit of high quality is a value in itself. The quality is cherished because the network recognises the competence, creativity and force of artists that enriches the whole culture. The NOA Nordic Outsider Art network has provided added value that radiates to artists, facilitators and audiences alike.

Diversity is a value.

Miia Ruohonen, Kettuki's artist of the year 2012 Photo: Arto Arvilahti, Kuvakas



A note from the artists

You have written this book for you. Regardless of who you are or what your role is in our lives or in our work, this book provides you with support and guidance. How to meet us and to find your way around in a complex field, which is often difficult to understand.

This book is important for those working in supported studios as well as others involved in the field of outsider art. The book deals with questions that do not always have simple answers; it offers solutions to difficult problems and raises questions about different roles and different approaches.

We all have our personal experiences and values, prejudices and unconscious thought patterns that affect how we treat our fellow humans. Working in supported studios requires the ability to ignore one's own prejudices and ambitions in order to implement the artists' will.

The premise of this book is the right of the individual to decide for themselves, to create their own kind of art, while artists are also seen as a tabula rasa, with no personal or artistic experience. Equality in art can also be seen as a question of equal artists. Ethical art activities in supported environments need not only be about how facilitators can best support the artists, but also about what the artists have to give to their colleagues and supporters.

We hope that anyone working with artists in supported environments thinks about how much power they have over the supported artists, how they exercise this power, and how they influence the choices that the artists make. Nobody is to blame in the situation; there are only different roles, and with different roles come different possibilities to have and use power.

It is important for facilitators to act as the voice of and an aid for the artists that they support. The essential thing is to speak for us and not instead of us; the difference is who can make their voice heard. Those who speak instead of us express, either consciously or unconsciously, that we are incapable of speaking for ourselves. Those who speak for us have been given permission to be our voice and to communicate what we want to say. Mentors must act responsibly and be aware of their own values and their impact on the relationship between the mentor and mentee.

Who knows best what we, artists in need of additional support, have to say? Who knows best how to formulate our thoughts and share our experiences, where our limits are and how far we can get? Do we need to look into research on our lives, how others define and interpret us, in order to simply understand who we are?

This is also an important book for us, artists in supported environments. But it's a book by you that's about us. A book about you has not been written yet.

Marianne Schmidt and Hugo Karlsson

Thank you

This publication has been compiled to mark Kettuki's 20th anniversary working in the field of supported environments. These past years have been interesting and full of work. Kettuki has gradually grown into a significant advocate in the sector in Finland. However, there is no equality in art without collaboration between the various parties. The authors of this book would like to thank the following individuals and parties for their expert reflections, comments and support. You have been of great help:

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EQUALITY IN ART - Good questions and best practices

PART I:

Good questions – Ethical art activities in supported environments. (Updated 2nd version of 2016 published guide.) Haveri, Minna 2022.

PART II:

The artist's path and support network – the many roles in art activities in supported environments. Haveri, Minna ja Lilja, Päivi 2022.

PART III:

Good practices - cooperation in the supported studio network. Lilja, Päivi 2022.

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Good questions and best practices towards equality in art

In 2022, Kettuki is celebrating its 20th anniversary working in supported art activities. Many things have changed over the years. Equality in art has taken huge strides forwards. The roles of artists and their supporters have diversified. However, there is always a need for ethical reflection.

One of the most important driving forces behind art activities in supported environments has been the active networking of various organisations. In this anniversary year, we would like to highlight our close collaboration with our partners in the Nordic countries.

Equality in art – good questions and best practices explores ethical issues in the field of supported studios, the roles of various partners and network collaboration. The publication is aimed at professionals and students in the fields of arts and culture as well as social and healthcare services.

