

**Implementing cultural diversity
in arts organisations: why and how to use intercultural networking**

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ABSTRACT

Thesis

Title Implementing cultural diversity in arts organisations: why and how to use intercultural networking	Number of pages 85 + appendices
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Abstract <p>This qualitative research provides ideas for art managers regarding why and how to include intercultural networking as part of the plan to implement cultural diversity on an organisational level.</p> <p>Art organisations often consider cultural diversity in audience development programmes, guided by the cultural policy recommendations of accessibility, inclusivity, and representation. However, the increasing body of research suggests that organisations must embrace diversity as part of their operations to establish relationships with diverse audiences. This approach indicates that diversity management and change management should guide the implementation of cultural diversity in art organisations. One point where these two branches of management intersect is getting the existing staff on board with the diversity programme. This study aims to examine intercultural networking as an active tool for supporting cultural diversity in the art field. The instrumental case study explores an intercultural networking event organised by Culture Kids and Dörren for representatives of several cultural organisations in Helsinki.</p> <p>The findings showed that art professionals of local backgrounds experienced intercultural networking as an activity that inspired change from within, brought new ideas, and served as a signal mechanism for the field interest in cultural diversity. Art organisations can support intercultural networking by adopting a strategic perspective that treats diversity as a source of learning and facilitating the right environment for interaction.</p>	
Keywords intercultural networking, cultural diversity, arts management, Finland, instrumental case study	
Additional information	

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1 INTRODUCTION

Audience development or audience engagement is an area that many art organisations consider in their operations. For some, reaching to new audiences is directly translated into ticket sales and financial security. In other cases, where the financing of art organisation comes primarily from public funding, other considerations are at play. Where revenue is not yet a concern, the categories of accessibility, inclusion, and participation often inform the strategies for audience development. In addition to the class and socio-economic aspects of accessibility, the differences in cultural backgrounds also present to art organisation a challenge in their audience outreach work.

Globalisation and the ever-growing migration in Europe have changed the demographics of many countries, increasing cultural diversity in population. Research in cultural diversity in the field of humanities, including arts and culture, is often connected to cultural policy and values such as equal opportunities and cultural equity. This specific angle can be explained by the frugal neo-liberal policies, culture budgets cuts, and the participatory turn in cultural policy in Western countries, including Finland. The latter comes with its rising demand for social accountability from the institutions receiving public funding. Virolainen (2016) explains that cultural policy and cultural life are affected by the higher-level agenda to “enhance citizens’ participation in political decision-making by introducing new ways to take part in democracy” (Virolainen, 2016, p. 60). At the same time, changing patterns of cultural consumption cause the decrease in audiences and the subsequent need to find new ways to engage and widen the access to cultural activities (Virolainen, 2016, p. 62). Cultural policy sets the framework for cultural institutions to operate in, however, the political attempts to direct social inclusion through audience development can be viewed critically. Belfiore (2009) calls out the bullshit in cultural policy practice, in general, demonstrating on the example of Britain how defending the role of arts and culture in society and justifying funding for it led to the emphasis on the social benefit of the field. Approaching the matter not from the political, but from the artistic standpoint, Lindelof (2015) questions whether a focus on social inclusion through art is a way to escape more fundamental changes. Whether it distracts from a need of the in-depth exploration of what, for example, is the place of performance in society.

The population for whom Finnish is not a native language has increased significantly over the last 20 years (Population according to language, 2021). The demographic changes due to the rise in immigration have prompted numerous discussions about cultural diversity in the arts and cultural field. As a member of the European Union and signatory of the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions (UNESCO, 2001, 2005), Finland recognises the right to cultural diversity and cultural expression. Finnish government is committed to supporting cultural diversity, both on the local and national levels (e.g., Ministry of Education and Culture Strategy 2030; Art and Culture in Helsinki 2030). Active steps were taken, for example, by the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment that appointed a steering group to help ensure companies benefit from cultural diversity and immigrants are able to find employment matching their skills (Ministry of Economic Affairs and Employment of Finland, 2020). Overall, language and employment are treated as critical factors contributing to successful integration into a society.

In Finnish art field, cultural diversity is generally considered in relation to the audience engagement programmes. However, there is an ongoing advocacy for more inclusion on a professional level. In June 2020, a joint project between Globe Art Point, Kulttuurilla kaikille (Culture for All), and Cupore, the Research Institute for Cultural Policy released an *Avaus* study on the status of foreign-born artists and cultural professionals in Finland (Lahtinen et al., 2020). Among other things the research examined how cultural and linguistic diversity reflected in the arts and cultural institutions that receive public funding. Many directors of arts and cultural institutions in Finland acknowledge the benefits of cultural diversity and being open to promoting it (Lahtinen et al., 2020, p. 103), yet a third of the institutions that took part in the study admit to lacking the competency required to take cultural and linguistic diversity into account in the operations and organisational development. A practical recommendation of the report includes a need for clear diversity implementation strategies for organisations (Lahtinen et al., 2020).

What emerges is a gap between a strong social and political push to address cultural diversity and the lack of strategies to achieve the practical implementation of cultural diversity within art organisations. To paraphrase Andy Grove, a legendary Chief Executive of Intel (Newport, 2016, p. 81), there is a difference between knowing what needs to be done and knowing how to do it. Thus, in addition to philosophical, ethical, and social aspects of cultural diversity, there is also a managerial matter of implementation to be considered. This study recognises the

connection to social changes as a context stimulating transformation, but the main interest of my work lies in the practical implementation of cultural diversity in art organisations, rather than legal or political impetus for practices and programmes.

1.1 Background of the study

The current situation in the arts and cultural field in Finland highlights the role of connections between artists and cultural professionals of local and foreign backgrounds. The *Avaus* report emphasises the need for “more cooperation, encounters, openness, and mutual respect” between the Finnish and foreign-born professionals” (Lahtinen et al, 2020). It notes that foreign-born professionals increase their chances for employment by having industry networks in Finland. The report also acknowledges that cultural diversity “is only rarely incorporated into personnel management or organizational development...” (Lahtinen et al, 2020, p. 5). Further to this, in 2020 the Ministry of Education and Culture appointed a working group for Cultural Policy, Immigrants and Promotion of Cultural Diversity. This working group has since released a report containing specific suggestions for streamlining cultural diversity in the field of art and culture in Finland. Similar to the *Avaus* recommendations, the working group proposes to increase networking, intercultural encounters and dialogue among other ways of building connections between people (Ministry of Education and Culture, 2021, pp. 8, 21, 25).

At the same time, a growing number of studies (e.g., EU, 2014; Glow et al., 2021) stress that to bring the desired results in audience development, cultural diversity cannot be implemented just in one particular area of operation, but rather should be adopted across all organisational practices. The academics and policymakers advocate for mainstreaming versus a project-based approach for the implementation of cultural diversity, maintaining that the isolated initiatives are not effective. An all-encompassing implementation of cultural diversity on an organisational level inevitably brings a change to the operations of an institution. What has spurred my interest in the specific intersection of change and diversity management even more is the role change plays in the implementation of cultural diversity:

It appears that openness to cultural diversity is apparent on some level: there might not be resistance towards cultural diversity itself but towards the changes that it brings along. – Lahtinen et al, 2020, p. 104

Thus, both diversity management and change management need to be considered for implementing cultural diversity in art organisations. A point where these two branches of management intersect is the part of getting the existing staff on board with the diversity programme, be it training or any other activity.

As building connections between people was recommended for promotion and implementation of cultural diversity, intercultural networking between professionals of local and foreign backgrounds is an activity worth contemplating among other methods. In general, existing research on intercultural mentoring or networking assess the programmes aiding integration and promotion of cultural diversity based on the experiences of the foreign-born professionals. These studies often follow the impact on the party which is perceived to benefit from the social transaction the most, the minority. It is easy to grasp that the foreign-born professionals gain from networking with local counterparts. The effect, however, is two-sided. For an art manager, it is important to understand what their staff as well as their organisation achieve from such experience. Given the highly networked nature of the art world, this knowledge is important for promoting change and mitigating the possible resistance to it. Consequently, the focus of this study is on the perspectives of the local art field professionals with a recent experience of intercultural networking in Finland.

1.2 Research approach

My interest in networking preceded the curiosity around its effects as a cultural diversity driver. One initiative that stood out to me during the initial search for intercultural networking programmes in Finland was Dörren run by Luckan Integration. Dörren (meaning “Doors” in Swedish) organises meetings between foreign-born and local professionals in the same industry (<https://dorren.fi/>). ‘Door openers’ (local professionals) and ‘participants’ (foreign-born professionals) are matched in the process of intercultural networking. Dörren observes that arts and culture field professionals represent the third largest field of professionals registered in the programme (G. Norrgård, personal communication, September 3, 2021). Although it is not unique to the art field, or indeed to Finland, success in the arts also depends on “who you know”.

Collaboration with an existing programme, like Dörren, that facilitates professional intercultural networking presents an opportunity for art and cultural organisations to test how

the approach suggested by recent studies can work in practice. By offering their staff experience of participation in intercultural networking, the organisations, on one hand, provide their personnel with a learning and networking opportunity and foster a positive attitude to cultural diversity in the workplace. On the other hand, and in line with the research suggesting that audience development benefits from embracing cultural diversity on organisational level, the networking has a potential to bring new ideas and connections to aid in reaching out the audiences that organisations struggle to represent otherwise. The two aspects served as a starting point to explore the intercultural networking as a practical step for the promotion and implementation of ethnic cultural diversity in the art field context.

As Dörren was not known widely or used in the art field, we agreed to invite cultural institutions in Helsinki to arrange an intercultural networking event for their staff. This approach was aimed at creating an instrumental case study (Stake, 1995, as cited in Creswell, 2007, p. 74) and a pool of interviewees, local art field professionals who would take part in intercultural networking facilitated by Dörren.

As a result, this qualitative research follows a networking event facilitated by Dörren for Culture Kids actors. Culture Kids, Kummilapset in Finnish (<https://kummilapset.hel.fi/en/home>) works with 35 cultural institutions, called “actors” within the programme, in Helsinki metropolitan area to create engaging artistic offering for children and their families. The staff of art organisations, mainly producers, participating in the Culture Kids programme took part in the networking event on 5 March 2021 to meet with professionals of foreign background from the same field. The Culture Kids’ objective for the event was to reach out to the communities of interest, establish new contacts, and to explore together with the participants how to make the programme attractive to all families living in Helsinki.

In the context of the study the local professionals mean the art and culture professionals who are born, educated, and working in Finland. The foreign-born professionals mean art and culture professionals who came to Finland with a prior working background but lack local networks in the field. While the term “cultural diversity” embraces many facets, here it is used mostly to refer to the ethnical and language diversity, unless stated otherwise. The research is qualitative by nature and uses case study framework as an approach and semi-structured interviews and observations as primary data sources.

1.3 Aim of the study

I explore intercultural networking as a practical step for promotion and implementation of ethnic cultural diversity in art organisations. Considering the existing demand for strategies to implement diversity policies in the work environment (see e.g., Lahtinen et al., 2020, p. 110), this research is timely and relevant to the arts management field in Finland. The study contributes to the body of research on the use of diversity networks and expands the range of practical ideas for implementing cultural diversity in the art field. It also complements the existing knowledge by enquiring into the perspectives of local professionals, as a generally under-researched group in intercultural relations between individuals. It is valuable to better understand what drives the “door openers” to participate in intercultural networking. In turn, this understanding informs the choices of art managers in planning and implementation of cultural diversity in a workplace.

Networking is frequently recommended for promotion of cultural diversity; however, it is beneficial to organise and test existing knowledge regarding why it could be a suitable approach specifically for art organisations. The scope of this study is based on addressing three information gaps. Firstly, I look at the idea of cultural diversity through the arts management rather than policy or social lenses, aiming to gain a practical understanding of a connection between changing society, audience development, and organisation’s operations. Secondly, based on the premise that diversity management and change management rely on the goodwill of the existing staff, the study builds upon the perspectives of local art field professionals. This angle is chosen to add to the existing knowledge about the changes in the art field due to the growing cultural diversity in society. Finally, I enquire into the role and effect of networking as a method for implementation of cultural diversity in a workplace. The goal of this is to test whether the experience of intercultural networking can help to mitigate the resistance to change among the existing staff and if so, how would it work.

In short, the study questions:

- How and why to use intercultural networking for promotion and implementation of cultural diversity in art organisations?

The desired outcome of the study is to provide practical ideas regarding what can be gained from implementing cultural diversity in the workplace through intercultural networking. Decision-makers and art managers can benefit from considering the attitudes of their staff towards diversity as well as what steps can be taken to influence these attitudes and perceptions. Thus, the case study aims to determine the strategic and practical potential of intercultural networking for the purpose of promoting and implementing cultural diversity in the arts and culture organisations.

1.4 Structure of the thesis

The conceptual framework chapter examines theories from sociology of the arts, cultural diversity management and networking to provide ideas that can be explored empirically in the case study. The guiding principle for selecting and organising knowledge in this chapter is to address the networked nature of the art field and how it is connected to society, grounding the subsequent notions of cultural diversity management and intercultural networking in the broader yet relevant for this case study context.

The research method chapter explains the selection of methodologies, summarises the research process, and considers the limitations of the study.

The results and analysis chapter describes the empirical findings that arise from the collected data and discusses these alongside the theories they have resonated with the most, linking the case study results to the existing body of knowledge. The chapter outlines the details of the networking event, its participants and the setting based on the observation notes and offers an interpretation of data collected via interviews with local cultural field professionals who took part in the intercultural networking event, Dörren Event Coordinator, and team members of the Culture Kids programme.

The thesis is concluded with the key insights of the study and how they are interconnected. The last chapter places the research in the wider context and suggests further enquiries in the topic of intercultural networking as a method for promoting and implementing cultural diversity in the arts field.

2 Conceptual framework

The selection of theories that comprise the conceptual framework reflects on the research question of the case study. I start exploring intercultural networking as a method to promote and implement cultural diversity in art organisations from looking at the art field as an environment where the organisations operate. Sociology of the arts offers such a context, outlining the connections between culture and society, exploring the role of art in shaping the future, and contributing to understandings of how the art worlds operate and change. Then, I look at the matter from the organisational point of view and specifically consider the experience of art organisations. The cultural diversity management theories add the factors determining whether the cultural diversity programmes are a success or a failure. Finally, the intercultural networks are explored as a third component of the conceptual framework. This section considers the effects of intercultural networking in general, and more specifically on the participants of local backgrounds. In summary, the conceptual framework moves from the macro-level of the field through the micro-level of an organisational perspective to the individual experience.

2.1 What is up in the arts field

Ideas and visions are important, but their success and permanence rest on organization, not on their intrinsic worth. – Howard S. Becker, Art Worlds

This section examines how changes in society affect the art field to put cultural diversity management in art organisations in a wider context. The sociology of arts studies interactions specific to the role of art in society, as well as relationships within the field. While in business management the decisions to implement cultural diversity primarily relate directly to the explicit legal requirement, profit or competitor advantage associated with it, in the art field a different set of factors is often considered. Social accountability, ethics, and multiculturalism are among the values that the field of arts supports and champions or at least claims to do so. The reasons why and how cultural institutions consider cultural diversity among their strategic priorities vary. Organisations with a strong historical tradition of art forms typical for Western society could approach the necessity of cultural diversity from a different angle than, for example, contemporary art institutions known for their activist position on the matter. In any case, the internal dynamic of organisations is influenced by the environment where an art

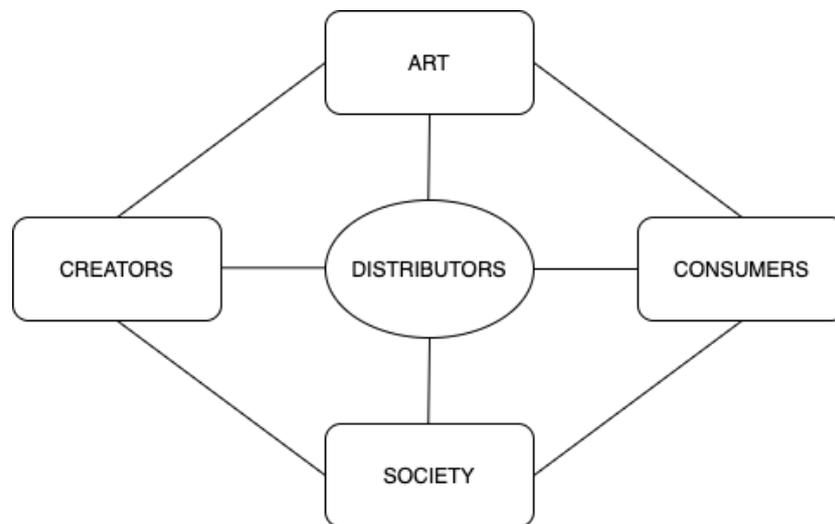
organisation operates. The environment, in this case, can be defined by either the society or the art field itself.

2.1.1 *The interconnection of culture and society*

The cultural diamond model by Alexander (2003) helps to understand the links both within and outside the field.

Figure 1.

Modified cultural diamond



Source: Alexander, 2003, p. 62

This version is an improved model of the cultural diamond developed by Griswold (1994) who suggests that researchers should take into account the corners of the diamond and the relationships between them to understand art and society (Griswold 1994, as cited in Alexander, 2003, p. 61). The separate nodes for society and consumers signify that the direct link between art and society oversimplifies reality. Art is generally marketed to and consumed by specific and diverse audience segments. The key change proposed by Alexander to the original cultural diamond is a mediated view of the relationship between art and society. It adds the central node that highlights the role of the distributors, art institutions, and networks that play a crucial role in what kind of art is circulated and communicated and to whom. The interconnections illustrated by the cultural diamond provide a base for the exploration of how cultural diversity in society influences the art field, and how artistic and cultural representation can impact society.

Of course, the theories implying that art affects society can be viewed critically, and so can be the theories suggesting the opposite, namely that society affects arts. However, both viewpoints reconfirm the presence of reciprocal interaction. Further to this, the rise of activism in the arts and culture field indicates that there is a strong response aimed at bringing change rather than a mere critique of the status quo in the said society (Groys, 2014). Targeting issues as varied as representation, equality, and environmental crisis, art activism, perhaps, is the strongest testament right now to the interconnection between the art world and the world at large. Additionally, in support of the cultural diamond model, a prominent advocate for cultural diversity, Naseem Khan maintains that social and cultural factors are intertwined (EU, 2014, p. 47). Nothing is created in isolation and the art worlds' existence and operations are part of the wider cultural scene.

The discourse of cultural diversity in the context of the art field is usually formed around the ideas of accessibility, inclusion, representation, and the change that goes with it. While there are many other voices in-between, there are two polar-opposite viewpoints speculating whether change, in general, is possible and what role art can play in bringing it. On one hand, there are somewhat disheartening ideas of the late Mark Fisher, British cultural critic and writer. Fisher argued that art has lost its ability to articulate the present and instead of contributing to the thinking about the future is stuck in the constant re-imagining of the past. This “nostalgic” turn consequently led to the “slow cancellation of the future” (Fisher, 2014). Fisher coined the term “hauntology” meaning that society is haunted by the possible future scenarios dreamt up in the past that would never happen (Fisher, 2014). Yet, there is another response to this inertia of the modern world. It builds upon the concept of *mondialité* or archipelagos, conceptualised by the Martinique-born French philosopher and poet Édouard Glissant and popularised by the star curator Hans Ulrich Obrist. *Mondialité* is a utopia, where “diversity and creolization are recognised and preserved”. There, “establishing relations with the other” is the “constitutive aspect of the community” that challenges the populist and neo-nationalist movements provoked by globalisation (Glissant, n.d., as cited in Obrist & Raza, 2017). Obrist, developing this line of thought further, sees art as a way to exchange ideas across cultural boundaries and play a role in the creation of alternative futures (The Business of Fashion, 2019). This is a holistic view and encourages one to dream big. Although the two views present strikingly different road maps for field development and decision-making, both emphasise the role of reflecting what is present.

2.1.2 *Changes in the art worlds*

On a less abstract, organisational level, the shift in how the traditions are reviewed and questioned affects the artists, mediators, and gatekeepers in the field, as well as audiences. To explain the interconnections within the art field itself, Alexander (2003, p. 68) quotes the seminal book *Art Worlds* by Howard Becker (1982) and its idea of art being a collective activity that requires input from many people (Becker, 2008, p. 2). An established structure within the art field enables and professionalises the creation of art. As within any other social structure, there are sets of norms and values that guide the behaviour of its members. Furthermore, Becker introduces the term “integrated professional”. One of the characteristics of the integrated professional is that “they know, understand, and habitually use the conventions on which their world runs, they fit easily into all its standard activities.” (Becker, 2008, p. 229). There are also “mavericks”, “folk artists”, and “naive artists” who Becker juxtaposes to the integrated artists. The key distinction being the difficulties that the former types have with the production and distribution of their work. These difficulties are related to the lack of involvement in the existing art world (Becker, 2008, p. 270). The outliers, however, are important, as they bring fresh perspectives and stimulate the creation of the new art. In short, there is a network of operators that act based on the accepted rules or conventions, within each art form and the field in general. The ecosystem these relationships create impacts on individual artists and cultural professionals, as well as on art organisations. It is easy for professionals integrated into the art world to produce and distribute, but the new, ground-breaking ideas often come from outside of the established structure.

Becker (2008) also describes changes in the art worlds, specifically underlying the role of organisational support for artistic change to happen and last. Hence, the increased cultural diversity to take roots in the established art world would require organisational development. According to Becker, change in the art worlds is something inconvenient, characterised by the “troublesome reorganization of ... cooperative activities” (Becker, 2008, p. 304). The alternatives to the conventional way affect all the participants of the art world. It is often something that participants have to learn or do on top of what they already know and practice. Becker uses the example of violin players learning what it takes to perform works by John Cage, which does not mean forgetting the technique required for playing Mozart or Brahms (Becker, 2008, p. 308). Understanding “the process by which participants ignore, absorb, or fight change” forms the basis for assessing the seriousness and extent of the change. Becker

concludes that innovations last when art world participants include them in the “new mode of cooperation” or into the “ongoing cooperative activities”.

In summary, the art worlds are basically networks, their relationship to society is complex but present, and the art organisations have an important role in challenging the status quo. If we look at the art world structures as relational, then intercultural networking is one way of creating a more inclusive, accessible, and diverse ecosystem. The change is a slow process, but a small step of meeting one person at a time could be a transformative experience where a single human-to-human interaction may send ripples to society at large. For this step to take place the consistent organisational support is important, and so is the motivation of the art world participants to take this step.

2.1.3 From audience development to organisational change

In Finland, one of the *Avaus* report findings identifies that attracting new audiences is most often the area where cultural diversity is considered and incorporated in the strategies and practices (Lahtinen et al., 2020, pp. 97, 98, 102). This focus is not unique to Finland or Europe. Indeed, in the art field cultural diversity is often reflected in audience development and audience engagement programmes. This mostly has been connected to the rather homogeneous profile of the audiences which, in turn, brings into question the public value of the arts and cultural sector. A recent article researching the problem of audience diversification for arts organisations examines the factors promoting or hindering the increase in cultural diversity in audiences. It concludes that an organisation-wide, complex approach is required, rather than isolated efforts targeting cultural diversity as audience development or engagement programme (Glow et al., 2021).

Glow, Kershaw, and Reason (2021) compare the “policy-led” cultural policy of the United Kingdom and “action-led” cultural policy of Australia. The two frameworks provide different methods and tools to increase cultural diversity in the arts and culture sector. While the authors explain that history will show whether encouragement or injunction prove to be more successful, there is still a bigger concern that lies within organisations’ response to cultural policy and general understanding of how to diversify audiences (Glow et al., 2021). The top-down approach would not necessarily cause resistance to change, but in some cases, it does not help to promote it either. For example, among the cultural organisations taking part in the *Avaus*

research, less than half of the respondents which were legally obliged by the Non-Discrimination Act to have an equality plan in place admitted having one (Lahtinen et al. 2020, p. 5). There is not enough data to determine whether one approach is preferable over another in cultural policy. However, the “policy-led” approach within the organisations alerts to the resistance to change associated with cultural diversity and invites a discussion of whether motivation could be a better-suited tool than a set of rules.

There are other studies supporting the need for organisational change to mainstream cultural diversity and reach the aspired goals in audience engagement. Mandel (2019) questions the capacity of audience development to promote cultural diversity in German public art institutions. Mandel claims that the intercultural audience development strategies created by institutions when special funding was allocated between 2011–2013 are promising but not necessarily able to sustain change (Mandel, 2019, pp. 126–128). The three alternative approaches Mandel highlights are change management in institutions, quality arts education for children, and participatory cultural development planning. The conclusion is that to advance audience development in a sustainable way, organisational change and proactive cultural policy are required (Mandel, 2019, p. 132).

As we can see, changes in society promote changes in the art worlds. In turn, the organisations, as well as artists and cultural professionals already integrated into the art field, can influence the change. The initial attempt of institutions to address the rapidly shifting demographics has been focused on audience development (partially spurred by the cultural policies targeting social inclusion and funding tagged to it). However, the research increasingly points towards a need for an organisational transformation to stay current with the world that an organisation operates in. While cultural policy supports social inclusion and equality, the efficiency of strategies used remains to be seen. The same concern is applicable to the implementation of cultural diversity on the organisational level.

2.2 Cultural diversity: a gap between what and how

This section investigates the implementation of cultural diversity on an organisational level. There are benefits and challenges that cultural diversity may bring to a workplace. Looking into existing research on the implementation of diversity and cultural diversity, both on the

strategic and operational levels, I examine what is helpful and what is hindering for promotion and implementation of cultural diversity in organisations.

2.2.1 Diversity and diversity management

One way to understand what diversity in the context of diversity management means is to look over its various dimensions. Rijamampianina and Carmichael's (2005) idea of an iceberg builds upon earlier observations of multifaceted parameters of diversity. They suggest the following definition of diversity along with the three levels of dimensions: "The collective, all-encompassing mix of human differences and similarities along any given dimension." (Rijamampianina & Carmichael, 2005, p. 110).

Table 1.

Dimensions of diversity

Primary dimensions	Secondary dimensions	Tertiary dimensions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Race • Ethnicity • Gender • Age • Disability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Religion • Culture • Sexual orientation • Thinking style • Geographic origin • Family status • Lifestyle • Economic status • Political orientation • Work experience • Education • Language • Nationality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beliefs • Assumptions • Perceptions • Attitudes • Feelings • Values • Group norms

Source: adapted from Rijamampianina & Carmichael, 2005, p. 110

The dimensions influence each other and manifest themselves differently according to a situation (Rijamampianina & Carmichael, 2005). As Dörren matchmaking is based on the common work background between local and foreign-born professionals, the secondary diversity dimensions are the ones to pay attention to while keeping in mind how other dimensions might have an impact on the interaction itself. The secondary dimensions are primarily cultural rather than biological, meaning that they are being acquired rather than being born with.

Diversity and subsequently cultural diversity itself being a complicated concept makes

diversity management a difficult undertaking. Research into cultural diversity in the workplace emerged mostly from the field of international business studies in the early 1990s, and, over the first decade, the views of the researchers on cultural diversity and its benefits to organisations differ. A study by Stahl et al. (2010) is a meta-analysis of the research on multicultural work groups conducted to that date concludes that cultural diversity is a “double-edged sword”. Whether it is a liability, or an asset depends on the ability to effectively manage the process and the context within which the culturally diverse team operates. Other numerous studies indicate that culturally diverse teams can perform extremely well, however, they can equally perform poorly. Several studies suggest that the reason is not only in diversity itself but how it is supported, communicated, and embraced by the leaders of the organisation. Tillery and Rutledge (2009) argue that “the mere presence of a diverse work group may serve no more than meeting the driving forces that are imposed from the outside (Governmental requirements) on all” (p. 39). In 2021, Stahl et al. provided an updated review of the research into cultural diversity management, re-affirming the previous claim of cultural diversity as a “double-edged sword”, which is a view generally shared by academia at the time of writing.

Surprising observation by Stahl et al. (2021) shows the drastic difference between the overly positive management perspective on diversity and the dual nature of diversity established by academic research (p. 18). A simple example of Googling “Does diversity improve performance?” returns a range of popular articles and consultancy reports focusing on the increased performance due to diversity. (I tried this on 14 July 2021 and financial performance and creativity came up frequently in the top ten results.) Stahl et al. (2021) conclude that there has been insufficient dialogue between practitioners and scholars in this area and that more research is required. The “global tensions around immigration, refugees, prejudice, and pandemics at new heights” call for a deeper understanding of “how diversity is related to performance, in which configurations and which contexts diversity matters most, and, importantly, how the potential benefits of diversity can be unleashed while the frictions arising from diversity can be mitigated.” (Stahl et al., 2021, p. 18–19). This view is supported by Minbaeva et al. (2021) article inspired by Stahl et al. (2010) analysis. The future, Minbaeva et al. (2021) recommend, is in shifting the focus to how diversity is managed. Thus, the implementation, management, and context are of utmost importance for cultural diversity to have a positive impact on the organisation.

2.2.2 Strategy and implementation

Earlier I introduced several arguments suggesting that to reflect change in society and remain relevant requires art organisations to re-think and transform the way they operate. The organisational change required to, for example, diversify audiences is similar to the process outlined in the diversity management theories from the business sector. Only instead of audience development, the latter are concerned with the interconnection between the culturally diverse workforce, customer segments, and competitive advantage on the international level. Several ideas, covering both strategic and operational areas, provide an insight into how cultural diversity can be implemented most effectively. The focus is on cultural diversity management in the workplaces to reflect an organisation-wide approach required for embracing and facilitating change.

As a starting point, the organisation's board and management may consider how beneficial it is to adopt cultural diversity as one of the organisational values. Exploring the connection between strategy and cultural diversity, Ely and Thomas (2001) underline the importance of the perspective. Their study of the three firms that have both profit- and socially-oriented goals suggests that the integration-and-learning perspective provides the most sustainable benefits of cultural diversity in work groups and among individuals. This perspective views diversity as a resource to facilitate learning and change. The research follows a law firm that decided to diversify the at the time all-white staff to reach out to the new segment of customers (women clients of colour). Ten years later, the most striking difference was not only in the more diverse composition of the firm's personnel but in the change in priorities and character of the work itself. The mission of the firm did not change (economic empowerment of women), but the strategies underwent a radical transformation (Ely & Thomas, 2001, p. 241). The example of the practical application of this perspective in the study comes from a law firm, but it is easy to extrapolate its essence to the arts. On the other hand, access-and-legitimacy and discrimination-and-fairness perspectives on diversity highlight the differences in power and status that do not translate into the environment where people feel welcome to express and exchange ideas related to their cultural identities (Ely & Thomas, 2001, pp. 267–268). What follows is that an organisation risks losing the benefits of diversity if it is viewed merely as a box ticking exercise to address injustice or promote accessibility. Diverse staffing benefits organisations when organisational culture views it as a resource from which to gain new insights and ideas.

The strategy incorporating diversity needs to be consistent with external and internal environments and “it must be operationalised.” (Tillery & Rutledge, 2009, p. 38). The strategic considerations are followed by operational changes. The research, especially coming from American scholars, offers organisations ideas on how to implement practices supporting diversity. Roberge, et al. provide five areas of diversity-supporting practices: symbolic management, training programmes, cross-functional teams, communication flow, and fairness in human resource practices (Roberge et al., 2011). The key goal of the actions belonging to the five categories is creating a positive climate for diversity, and one factor that unites them all is the commitment of leadership to managing the diversity authentically, rather than superficially. The authentic commitment to the value of cultural diversity and clear communication about what it means in the organisational context contribute to the smoother implementation.

The multifaceted approach to the implementation of cultural diversity in art institutions resonate with the practices discussed above. In 2014, a working group of the European Union (EU) member state experts prepared a report outlining the role of public arts and cultural institutions in the promotion of cultural diversity and intercultural dialogue. While, of course, driven by the cultural policy directive promoted through the EU, the report features findings relevant for arts management and the practical implementation of cultural diversity. The report identifies five areas that need to be addressed by any organisation committed to the promotion of cultural diversity, the development of intercultural competence being a cross-cutting one. Other four interconnected and equally important areas are programming, staffing and boards, reaching out to the new audiences, and creating spaces for encounters (EU, 2014). For example, to ensure relevant programming that would assist in reaching out to the new audiences, the diversifying approach to staffing and/or advisory board is desirable. In short, the report encourages the development of the new operational methods to reflect the cultural identity of the groups in society the institutions wish to reach. This central idea has been reconfirmed since then by Mandel (2019) and Glow et al. (2021), their research discussed in section 2.1.

The report illustrates each of the four aspects (intercultural competences is the fifth area that is supported by the other four) with cases from the EU member states. There are advantages and challenges associated with the implementation of each aspect. This dual nature of the proposed changes corresponds with the generally accepted view of academia that cultural diversity in the workplace is a “double-edged sword”. The sections showcasing the real-life examples

across Europe contain a varied number of instances, re-confirming the previously mentioned findings that, in general, cultural diversity is considered only in certain operations of art organisations. For example, there is a notable lack of cases related to staff diversification. The working group acknowledges and highlights the importance of addressing this element together with others. Similarly, in Finland, one of the *Avaus* report's findings is that cultural diversity is represented unevenly across various operations of the arts organisations (Lahtinen et al., 2020, p. 101), being handled through projects rather than integrated into the processes. The imbalance in how cultural diversity is embraced and implemented underlines the complexity of introducing the change in the organisation as a whole and can explain the fragmentary approach currently widely present. As with any complicated matter, breaking the goal down into smaller objectives helps to determine a good place to start and identify the challenges that are the most crucial to address.

Several studies point to the role of implementation in determining the success or failure of diversity programmes. The studies, both around the “affirmative action” and “diversity programmes” analyse this connection. While the terms and reasons change overtime, in essence, both the affirmative action and diversity programme are the organisational activities that address inclusion. Fubara et al. (2008) suggest that strong organisational support for “affirmative action” and clear communication about it create much more positive attitudes of all staff members towards such “affirmative action” (p. 38), i.e., programme aimed at implementation of cultural diversity be it a new HR policy or training programme. Similarly, Grubb et al. (2009) conclude that together with the vision and clear communications, the organisational support overall has a direct effect on how a diversity programme is perceived by staff. Moreover, the success of diversity programmes is dependent on beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries alike, meaning that cultural diversity could be viewed, first of all, as an interaction between the cultures (Grubb et al., 2009). What transpires is the significance of empowering the existing staff to embrace the vision of cultural diversity that leadership promotes.

The importance of adoption by the existing staff is also reflected in the change management theory. According to Cameron and Green (2019), there are individual, team, and organisational aspects that feed into the change management strategy. This popular change management textbook is structured on the premise that to lead a large-scale organisational change, one needs to understand what the implications of the change are to the individuals. Similarly, the support of the staff is noted as one of the key factors for the successful implementation of the cultural

diversity programmes in art institutions (EU, 2014, p. 95). The change management discipline converges here with findings from diversity management and sociology, pointing at the role of individuals when all-encompassing cultural diversity programmes are being envisaged.

Another study offers further insight into what strategies prove to be effective in championing cultural diversity in the workplace. Dobbin and Kalev, in their 2016 Harvard Business Review article, analyse the diversity implementation programmes together with the most common factors of their success and failure. They found that obligatory training and policies do not yield the desired outcomes of increased diversity in the workplace. Instead, the staff's genuine interest in diversity and intrinsic motivation to act contribute to the success of cultural diversity programmes.

The specific methods directed at the implementation and promotion of cultural diversity also have their advantages and drawbacks. For example, the widely used diversity training, while helps to understand diversity, often lacks the actual experience. In intercultural communications, as in any other area, there is a distinction between understanding and feeling (Bennett, 2013). The research into the development of cultural intelligence suggests that active experimentation and real experience is more beneficial in acquiring effective intercultural communication skills by individuals (Presbitero & Attar, 2018). Overall, studies both within and outside of the arts and culture discipline discuss the role of intercultural encounters. For example, Aigner, in their research evaluating ethnic diversity management practices in Austria, recommends increasing the instances of intercultural training, mentorship, and focus on intercultural relations in the workforce (Aigner, 2014, p. 117). Chua et al. (2012) study on cultural metacognition, a reflective practice of one's own and other's assumptions when interacting with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds, highlights the importance of conversation for establishing mutual trust. The need for more opportunities for intercultural encounters is also mentioned several times in the *Avaus* report (Lahtinen et al, 2020). In short, meeting and talking with people of different cultural backgrounds can increase the positive attitude towards cultural diversity among the existing staff and enhance their intercultural competences.

Diversity networks are another common practice to promote organisational equality. However, the existing knowledge is focused on the perspective of minority members. For example, a recent Dennissen et al. (2019) study enquires into how exactly the diversity networks contribute to the promotion of equality within the workplace. They examine networks reflecting different

dimensions of diversity and the value the board members see in them. The findings showcase the benefits on individual, group and organisational levels, summarising that the networks are most beneficial for supporting inclusion and equality when they foster the feeling of belonging and treat diversity as the unique contribution of their members to the organisation. This re-confirms the advantage of integration-and-learning perspective on cultural diversity (Ely & Thomas, 2001) at the strategic level. While suggesting both theoretical and practical implications, Dennissen et al. (2019) confirm the general lack of research on diversity networks and a need for more studies that account for a variety of viewpoints.

There are three key learnings this section provides. Firstly, the correlation between the strategy and actions. The leadership needs to understand why they include cultural diversity in the organisational values and believe in their decision. Once the course is set, the vision is worked into the new way the organisation operates. Secondly, the need for organisational support for incorporating change. There are several areas that would require attention and review to ensure they reflect the organisational value of cultural diversity. Lastly, the success of any change, including incorporating cultural diversity in the organisation's operation is reliant on the buy-in from the existing staff. The effective cultural diversity programmes are likely to be the programmes that people feel inspired to take part in, not the ones they have been told to participate in. This final point is in line with the sociology of the arts perspective that suggests that for the changes in the art world, the existing participants must incorporate into their activities the new way of doing things. In other words, the organisational changes associated with cultural diversity have a higher chance to be adopted and sustained if they start from individuals changing their thinking and ways of working. To facilitate such an attitude towards cultural diversity in staff, the leadership support includes communicating the genuine value of diversity for the organisation, engendering the atmosphere for learning, and increasing opportunities for intercultural experience, such as networking.

2.3 Intercultural networking

The research on networks used as a tool for addressing cultural diversity is focused on organisational equality in already culturally diverse workplaces (e.g., see the review by Dennissen et al. (2019)). To understand the use of intercultural networking for the implementation of cultural diversity, this section combines the ideas from cross-disciplinary research on social networks, knowledge management (as Dörren creates matches based on the

similar professional background), and intercultural communications (as the network participants come from different cultural backgrounds). Once the key concepts are discussed, the more general attributes of intercultural networking relevant for this study are presented.

Most books and articles use the term “network”, rather than “networking”. Here I understand “network” as an existing structure, while “networking” describes a process.

2.3.1 *A pattern of interactions*

Networks have been researched extensively and some findings even made it to the popular culture, such as ‘six degrees of separation’. Newman (2018) organised the existing research and methods of studying networks across different fields in the book *Networks*. He conveys that the “pattern of interactions can have a big effect on the behaviour of a system.” (Newman, 2018, p. 7), and such interest in network research is powered by the possibility to learn about the system through studying the interactions between its parts. There are practical implications too. One is the empirically proven small-world effect mentioned above that states that the distance between nodes in the network is short. Another one is the clusters or subgroups in the networks that can reveal the functional divisions within the network (Newman, 2018, pp. 10–11). There are some characteristics typical for all networks, even though the application itself is broad.

Newman proposes four categories of networks for organisational purposes: technological networks, information networks, social networks, and biological networks (Newman, 2018, pp. 1–6). In reality, many examples of networks would fit into one or two types. In each of the categories, the interactions can be represented by a variety of relationships between the nodes (Newman, 2018, pp. 49–50). For example, in this case study of Dörren and Culture Kids networking event, aspects of social and information network are present and the relationship between participants is a professional interaction. Sociology is the discipline primarily concerned with social networks research, which is also a very broad area. This study’s goal to explore the potential of intercultural networking for the implementation of diversity, and importance of the existing staff’s perception for a successful implementation, open up three possible directions to look at the individual experience of intercultural networking.

Firstly, the interactionist perspective in sociology delves into the meaning of relationships in

the network. Fine and Kleiman (1983) argue that understanding the relationships between individuals in the network and their behaviours can help to learn about social structures, as people's meanings would have consequences for people's actions (Fine & Kleiman, 1983, p. 98). The approach connects the interaction between individuals and the systems such interactions comprise, linking micro and macro perspectives. Importantly, it highlights the active role that engaging in a relationship affords, providing the "opportunities for expression and action" (Fine & Kleiman, 1983, p. 106). Focusing on interactions and their meanings allows a better understanding of how information, ideas, and other resources spread in the social systems (Fine & Kleiman, 1983). Consequently, it can be argued that intercultural networking itself is an active experience that generates meaning for its participants.

Secondly, intercultural networking is both an interaction between individuals and an intercultural experience. Sieck et al. (2010) view culture as shared knowledge. They distinguish cultural groups, i.e., people who hold similar ideas, and social groups, people who interact. Traditionally, and this is also something that can be observed in monoculture societies, these two groups connect in various spheres, including the professional occupation. Sieck et al. (2010) call these various spheres cultural domains, "the kind and topic of knowledge of interest" (p. 240). "High overlap in experiences ... clearly leads to shared ideas within a large number of domains. Hence, there was little difference between people's social groups and their cultural groups." (Sieck et al., 2010, p. 240). As societies grow more and more culturally diverse, the gap between cultural and social increases. Then the domains are the areas where ideas and interaction converge. In our case, intercultural networking uses the professional background in arts as a shared cultural domain to stimulate social interaction.

Finally, the strength of the relationship is another important element to consider. The notion of meetings leading to networks and networks leading to jobs is the integration blueprint behind the idea of Dörren. This relationship has been explained in a book titled *Getting a Job: a Study of Contacts and Careers*, published by Granovetter in 1974. The book is based on their earlier, seminal theoretical article on the value of weak ties (Granovetter, 1973), the idea which since then has been confirmed in many sociological studies. Granovetter (1973) supports the link between micro (individual ties) and macro (social structure) in sociological theory (pp. 1377–1378). The social diffusion of central and marginal occurs through the relationship defined as weak ties between individuals (i.e. acquaintances rather than friends. The latter falls into the strong ties category). Granovetter argues that weak ties facilitate more effective information

exchange between different groups in society than strong ties (Granovetter, 1973, pp. 1369–1376). While this may help newcomers to Finland to integrate through establishing relationships, it also may help art organisations and their staff to spread knowledge about themselves to the groups they are usually struggling to reach.

To sum up, intercultural networking based on professional background may contribute to the promotion of cultural diversity in society in two ways. First, it creates the weak ties that are known to be the most effective ties to spread information in society. Second, on a cultural level, it creates an opportunity to engage in a social relationship based on a shared domain, thus offering a chance for interaction. Keeping in mind this power of weak ties for spreading information and ideas, let's now look further into the intercultural component of Dörren networking.

2.3.2 Intercultural networks: attitude and environment

When we combine the ideas of network and intercultural communications, intercultural networking can be defined as a process of creating and establishing connections between culturally heterogeneous nodes. Smith (1999) proposes the intercultural network theory as a cross-paradigmatic approach that includes both objective (social) and subjective (individual) realities when studying intercultural relations. Smith maintains that as the social network perspective studies the in-between, i.e. the interaction, it suits the intercultural research well (pp. 630–634). The article utilises the approach to make certain assumptions about the process of acculturation which is not something I consider in this study. However, there are two ideas that are relevant to the research question, namely how intercultural networking can be used as a cultural diversity programme that the existing staff would be motivated to participate in. First, the “proximity in social space and contact opportunities increase the probability of social relations.” (Smith, 1999, p. 644) The assumption suggests that space and occasion are the conditions positively affecting intercultural networking. Second, the situated nature of networks, their embeddedness in an environment (Smith, 1999, p. 650). The environment does not necessarily mean a physical space. The social architecture, the behaviour and choices of others affect the individual's behaviour and choices.

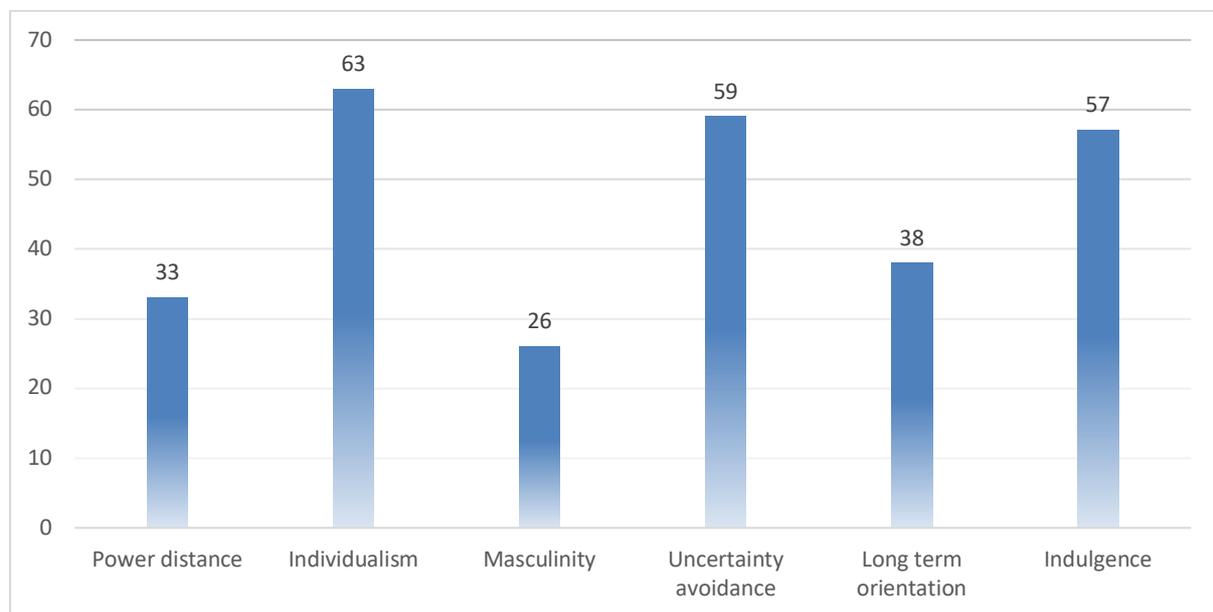
Smith (1999) acknowledges the human will and freedom of choice but also urges to take social structures into account. He states that individuals “cannot determine the composition of their

social environments nor control all of the social interactions that take place therein” (Smith, 1999, p. 651). We can investigate the environment not from the social but cultural side, based on the discussed earlier idea of culture as a shared knowledge (Sieck et al., 2010).

Looking into Hofstede’s six-dimensional model (Hofstede, 2001, 2004, 2005, 2011) could provide some insight into what values are specific to Finnish culture. The six dimensions of national culture, developed over the course of 30 years, are: power-distance, uncertainty-avoidance, individualism/collectivism, masculinity/femininity, long/short term orientation, and indulgence/restraint (Hofstede, 2001, 2011). The model has been used widely in intercultural communications and business management, including its application to organisational culture (Hofstede, 2011). The data aggregated on the Hofstede Insights website (<https://www.hofstede-insights.com/country-comparison/finland/>) allows a comparison of how different countries are measured on the six-dimensional scale. The scores, between 0-100, are relational to other national cultures.

Figure 2.

National Finnish cultural values



Source: hofsted-insights.com, based on the six-dimensional model by Hofstede, 2021

According to the scale, Finnish national culture is individualistic rather than collective. It scores low on masculinity and power distance. Meaning that caring for others is highly valued and control is disliked. The relatively high indulgence score indicates the importance of leisure and the tendency towards optimism. Finally, the most pertinent dimensions to link with the

previously touched upon themes of change management and implementation of cultural diversity are a combination of a low score on long term orientation and a high score on uncertainty avoidance. The former demonstrates strong respect for traditions and a suspicious attitude to societal change and the latter suggests the possible resistance to innovation and emotional need for rules regardless of whether the rules work or not (Hofstede Insights, 2021). Considering these specific cultural predispositions could help leaders and managers in organisations to strategise how to introduce and implement cultural diversity. However, it is important to keep in mind that the values of national culture presented by the Hofstede model are different to their manifestation on an individual level.

Continuing on the topic of environment, Barwick (2017) highlights it as a component aiding the intercultural connections in the urban setting. The built environment, so-called “third places” where the encounters between minorities and majorities can happen, contribute to the formation of heterogeneous networks (Barwick, 2017, p. 415). The role of environment also appears in the following example from the art and culture field. The Informal European Theatre Meeting (IETM) study on the Effects of Networking (2001) evaluated the value of an international networking platform. The report described the network as an ecosystem and the efforts of the IETM secretariat as actions aimed at creating an environment for communication (IETM, 2001, p. 33). This allows to conclude that the environment or atmosphere are among the conditions that affect the interaction between cultures and it can be created deliberately to empower such interaction.

There are other conditions that impact intercultural networking. Barwick (2018) research, grounded mostly in the discipline of urban planning and social studies, considers two ideas relevant to the present enquiry. First, a gap between how the enjoyment of cultural diversity is translated into action by the “native” middle-class (Barwick, 2018, p. 917). This finding is mirrored in the reflection by Martina Marti included in the *Avaus* report (Lahtinen et al., 2020, p. 114). She notes the change in attitude among some of the organisations when she approached them to schedule the training following the mirroring period. The positive feeling about cultural diversity, in general, was replaced by manifestations of discomfort, constant delays in planning the training days and cutting the training time to extremely short periods (30 minutes in some instances). Second, in the article examining the role of different factors on the formation of ethnically diverse networks, Barwick (2017) proposes the role of reciprocity from the majority group as contributing to homogeneity. Focusing their research on the Turkish-Germans living

in different areas of Berlin, Barwick discovers that rather than networking skills or an intention to integrate, the attitude towards diversity from native Germans, as well as their reciprocity when making connections play a significant role in establishing category-crossing ties. This resonates with one of the key ideas discussed in the section on cultural diversity management, namely, that the support of the existing staff and their attitudes towards change affect the success of the cultural diversity programmes.

In Finland, the theme of intercultural encounters from the implementation point of view has been explored mostly in mentoring in the fields of education and healthcare. The shortage of medical personnel promptly opened up employment to foreign-born professionals, creating an acute need for cultural diversity management. The research notes the challenges that are present in the arts and cultural field: “Awareness of strategies that enhance understanding, acceptance, and appreciation of cultural and linguistic diversity in any health care setting are needed.” (Pitkäjärvi et al., 2012, p. 5). Other findings state that empathy and support from superiors can reduce the “psychological and ethical strain” in cross-cultural encounters (Hagqvist et al., 2020, p. 6). Finally, mentors reported that the “fear towards unknown cultures, {...} was reduced through positive mentoring experiences and cultural encounters.” (Hagqvist et al., 2020, p. 5). Once again, the supportive atmosphere and environment have a positive effect on the experience of cross-cultural encounters, which in turn affect the attitudes of the existing personnel towards cultural diversity.

So, while national culture values are something to be mindful of, the organisations can facilitate the environment and attitude as two conditions for social interaction between culturally diverse individuals. Next, we examine what is known about the benefits of intercultural networking.

2.3.3 Knowledge networks: ideas and signals

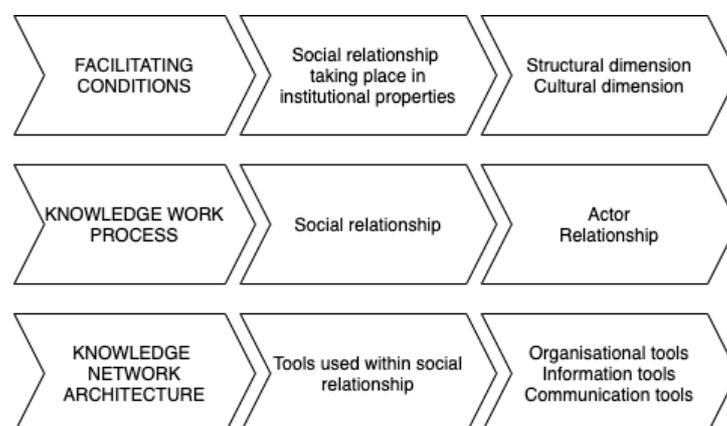
While the intercultural exchange is appreciated, encouraged, and actively sought after by individual art professionals and organisations alike, the situation transforms somewhat when it is no longer a temporary experience of cultural export or import. Often the cultural diversity and international work are linked, but the connection seems not to affect the organisational practices in the local context (Saukkonen & Pyykkönen, 2008, p. 58; Lahtinen et al, 2020, p. 103). The distinction between the two is that they are two separate networks. One describes interactions globally, another locally. A reason why the situation changes could be the perceived

lack of value in such activity. For example, Barwick illustrates that the social mixing debate usually presents members of ethnic minorities as actors whose ties are unlikely to be beneficial to others (Barwick, 2018). Looking at networking as a “flow of a variety of valued resources, ranging from work advice and new ideas to friendship and mentoring” (Chua, 2018, p. 1121) helps to consider value of intercultural networking in the local context. The two parameters in question are new ideas and creativity. Novel ideas represent the need for innovation to remain relevant and is connected to the learning-and-integration strategic perspective on cultural diversity. Creativity is highly relevant to the art field and is a widely researched benefit associated with cultural diversity.

There is a good reason why networking is beneficial for organisations. Seufert et al. (1999) argue that integration between networking and knowledge management is the key to encourage the short-term flow of knowledge and contribute to a company’s ability to learn and innovate in the long-term (Seufert et al., 1999, p. 184). The knowledge network, a cross-disciplinary approach they propose, is grounded on the three building blocks viewed from a micro level, in other words, a perspective of an organisation (Figure 3). The three building blocks of the framework represent enabling the environment for knowledge creation, the networking process itself as an exchange of knowledge between actors, and tools used within social relationships, including, for example, processes for cooperation (Seufert et al., 1999, pp. 185–187). Further to this, Seufert et al. (1999) emphasise the connection between the facilitation of conditions and the knowledge creation process (p. 187).

Figure 3.

Framework knowledge networks



Source: adapted from Seufert, von Krogh, & Bach, 1999, p. 185

There are some ideas that we have already seen in the section on intercultural networking and diversity management. Namely, the significance of social relationships and fostering the organisational culture to encourage networking and information exchange, the supportive attitude of the organisation's leadership. The cultural dimension here reflects on the organisational culture and how on one hand, the networking itself needs to fit in organically, on the other hand, the organisational culture needs to be re-evaluated so it is welcoming for the information exchange. This harks back to the connection between the strategic perspective and the implementation of the cultural diversity discussed earlier.

Considering that the flow of knowledge is valuable for the organisations in order to learn and innovate, let's explore further the information exchange in a culturally diverse setting and its impact on creativity. Leung et al. (2008) in their article on multicultural experience and creativity discuss time pressure and the need for closure as factors affecting the experience of intercultural communication. Individuals with a need for predictability and order are likely to feel a need for firm answers rather than exploring the alternatives. The uncomfortable feeling of ambiguity is also tied to time. When there is a time restriction, even the more interculturally competent individuals prefer the firm answers and choose safer, known solutions. Surprisingly, Leung et al. find that individuals with more multicultural experience are even more cautious under time pressure. The researchers suppose it is linked to the awareness of such individuals of the possible cultural variations of the ideas and possible delays this might cause when accomplishing something within a time constraint (Leung et al., 2008, p. 178). To benefit from the positive effect of cultural diversity on creativity, the article emphasises the need for context that minimises the need for firm answers and allows time for interaction. Saying this, Leung et al. (2008) research also indicates that exposure to a different culture as short as 45 minutes can benefit the creativity in individuals (p. 181). This is pretty much how long the networking meeting takes.

There are also limitations to what extent intercultural networking can affect creativity. Chua (2018) study questions the connection between information flow and creativity in multicultural networks. They propose an alternative view to the theories suggesting that the creative effect of multicultural networks can be generalised for a wide variety of tasks (Leung & Chiu, 2008, 2010; Maddux & Galinsky, 2009). Chua (2018) argues that culture-related novel ideas, a primary resource exchanged between members of culturally diverse networks, do not work as a blanket solution for boosting creativity. To enhance creativity and come up with innovative

solutions, the received information must be domain-specific (Chua, 2018, p. 1124). Chua uses an example of a chef creating a fusion dish drawing on their knowledge of Eastern and Western traditions (domain-specific, culture-related ideas increase creativity), and a new way of peeling vegetables (unlikely to benefit from culture-related novel ideas). Following this logic in the context of an art organisation, intercultural networking could be an effective method for enhancing artistic development, programming, and audience engagement. Precisely the areas that often seek to address cultural diversity. The domain applicability principle is astonishingly relevant to an algorithm of professional networking discussed in this case study, where participants from different cultures are matched based on their professional background and industry experience.

Building upon the psychological theories and social network research Chua also reports findings showing that networks behave as a signalling mechanism (Chua, 2018, p. 1123). Participation in culturally diverse networking serves as a sign to network contacts that one is receptive to new ideas associated with cultural diversity. This prompts even the same-culture contacts to share and discuss culture-related information resources (Chua, 2018, p. 1137). The signalling mechanism aspect is supported by the arts management research. Skaggs (2020) analyses links between mission statements of the local art agencies in the United States and their stance towards equity. It argues the need to review and understand the existing organisational structures in order to eliminate structural racism and ensure that cultural equity is an ongoing priority. Skaggs (2010) uses the network approach to emphasise that organisations do not operate in isolation and use each other as comparable reference groups within a shared network ecosystem (p. 324). Intercultural networking, while bringing perspectives from cultures other than one's own at the same time manifests an open attitude of the local art field professionals and institutions to hear and learn. Thus, it presents a special kind of opportunity for implementing cultural diversity, strengthening the connection between diverse cultures and also within the field itself.

Once again, the need for organisational support appears in this chapter, detailing the significance of the environment and attitude. The benefit to organisations is evident as knowledge exchange is crucial for development and innovation. Three other ideas to carry forward are the information flow as a key resource of networks, domain-specific application of ideas emerging through intercultural networking, and finally, intercultural networking serving as a signal mechanism for shared values to the participants of the same culture.

2.4 Connecting the dots

The art worlds are part of society and are affected by changes in society. In order for a change to happen in the art world itself, it requires the majority of its participants to adopt a new way of operation. Organisational support is more crucial for change sustainability than the value of the change. Hence the role of art organisations is of utmost importance in promotion and implementation of any change, in this case the change necessary to implement cultural diversity.

On organisational level and in relation to the current cultural policy discourse, art institutions are mostly concerned with cultural diversity in terms of their audience engagement programmes and reaching out to various audience communities. However, research indicates that to successfully attract new audiences, diversity should be implemented across organisation's operations, making it a task of both cultural diversity management and change management. The "double-edged sword" nature of cultural diversity in organisation points at the role of management to enhance benefits and mitigate drawbacks. Several specific elements affect the success of implementation: the strategic perspective that embraces diversity as a source of learning, clear communications about its value, and organisational support that creates opportunities for intercultural encounters. The most effective cultural diversity programmes instigate change by action and encourage the existing staff's motivation towards the new course.

The potential value of intercultural networking as such programme is discussed through knowledge network and intercultural network theories. For organisations, facilitating networking to gain new knowledge is a strategy to achieve ongoing innovation. The specific knowledge that can be obtained through intercultural networking is connected to the novel, culture-based ideas that could be valuable, for example, in the areas of programming and audience engagement. Finally, networking based on a similar professional background creates weak ties between individuals. Such social interaction spreads the idea of cultural diversity as a source of learning and connects local art professionals and institutions with networks they are not part of otherwise.

What emerges from the conceptual framework chapter is an assumption that intercultural networking as an effective method for implementation and promotion of cultural diversity

starts with treating diversity as a source of learning and then aims to create an atmosphere to foster the relationship of trust and reciprocity between the individuals. On individual level, intercultural networking experience would affect local art field professionals in such a way as to increase motivation towards promotion of cultural diversity, provide culture-related novel ideas, and indicate openness to cultural diversity to other art field participants.

Next chapter elaborates the method to test these assumptions empirically.

3 Research method

The theories discussed in conceptual framework chapter highlight the role of management and staff motivation to successfully implement cultural diversity in organisations. Staff, however, is the end recipient of both managerial efforts and the activity itself. Thus, understanding the experiences of participation in intercultural networking of the local art professionals can assist in exploring the aspects of management and staff motivation in specific context. In other words, to answer the research question of “Why and how to use intercultural networking for implementation and promotion of cultural diversity?”, the perspectives of individual art professionals of Finnish origin with a recent experience of participation in intercultural networking can be examined. Merriam and Tisdell (2015) describe the enquiry into the interaction between individuals and their social worlds a “basic qualitative study” (p. 24). This study subscribes to the constructivist worldview of reality being weaved from many interpretations, which is often a central paradigm in the qualitative research methods.

3.1 Methodological approach and case selection

As the goal of this research is to contribute to the understanding of practical methods to implement cultural diversity in the art field, it was essential to select the methodology that would take into account both the views of participants in intercultural networking and the context. The specific interest in how the Dörren programme might work in practice in the art field guided the choice of the design approach for this research to the case study. Creswell (2007) explains the existing views on the case study ranging from Stake’s who claims the case study not being a methodology but rather a choice of what to study (Stake, 2005, as cited in Creswell, 2007, p. 7) to Merriam’s and Yin’s view of a case study as a strategy for comprehensive research enquiry (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2003 as cited in Creswell, 2007, p. 7). Creswell summarises that the case study is qualitative research approach where the object of the study is the “bounded system” and involves in-depth data collection from multiple sources. This study utilises a combination of approaches to qualitative case study, consulting mostly Merriam and Tisdell (2015) and Creswell (2007), as more aligned with the constructivist paradigm, on design, validity, and transferability. The study combines the analysis of the networking event itself with a specific focus on the experiences of the local art field professionals participating in it (purposeful sampling as it’s called in Merriam and Tisdell (2015, p. 96). According to Stake, this research type can be viewed as instrumental case study,

selected for the purpose of focusing on a specific aspect (Stake, 1995, as cited in Creswell, 2007, p. 74).

The choice of the case also contributes to discerning what is it in intercultural networking that can assist in implementation and promotion of cultural diversity in the art field. Despite triangulation being criticised as unsuitable for use in the interpretative studies, Merriam and Tisdell (2015) believe it to be crucial for improving the internal validity of results in qualitative research (p. 244). The use of varied data collection methods and data sources allows for more confidence in internal validity of the case study results. The networking event selected as a case afforded observations in real time and assisted with access to interviews. As Culture Kids actors represent different art organisations in Helsinki metropolitan area, the variety of participants interviewed was greater than if they had been working for the same organisation. To account for the element of management, the additional interviews with Culture Kids team and Dörren Event Coordinator have been conducted.

This qualitative case study adopts two strategies to promote the transferability of the findings: rich descriptions and variety in sample selection (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015, p. 259). The inclusion of detailed description was possible to provide due to the observations throughout the entire process of intercultural networking event from preparing and organising through facilitation, to debriefing. The interviewed participants represented art organisations of different art forms and sizes, the diversity of their professional networks differ, and they have had both positive and negative experiences of the intercultural networking event. These two transferability strategies adopted in the case study present a reader with an opportunity to decide how applicable the findings could be to their own situations and contexts.

3.2 Data Collection

The data set includes interview records, observation notes, presentations, website material articles about Dörren and Culture Kids, and reports. The data collection started from examining the materials related to the work of Dörren, to determine the best way to explore intercultural networking in the art field. Between May and August 2020, I discussed the research angles with Dörren (in Finland since 2018) learning more about the project. I also benchmarked by looking into similar networking initiatives: Yrkesdörren (offered in Sweden since 2015 and inspired Dörren) and National Connector Programme (initiative offered in Canada since 2009

that influenced the Yrkesdörren). Additionally, on 11 August 2020, we tried to get some ideas on the local art professionals' views on intercultural networking at the Morning Coffee at Globe Art Point. There, Gerd Norrgård, Dörren Project Manager, presented the work of Dörren and I outlined the research proposal, then we held a discussion on intercultural networking in general and local field professionals' motivation to participate in it. Between September and November 2020, in cooperation with Dörren, I approached cultural organisations in Helsinki to test the concept in the field of art and culture. As a result, Culture Kids networking event was confirmed as a case study. Once I had the case, the documents and websites related to the Culture Kids were added to the data set. Then, the observations took place during the meetings between Dörren and Culture Kids arranging networking event, during the networking event on the 5 March 2021, and during the Culture Kids and Dörren debrief meeting on the 15 March. Finally, the interviews with Dörren Event Coordinator, Culture Kids team and local art field professionals who participated in the networking event complemented the data set. Among the variety of data analysed in the case study, interviews and observation notes serve as primary data sources.

Table 2.

The data collection timeline

2020 December 15	observation at the Culture Kids x Dörren planning meeting
2021 January 14	observation at the Culture Kids x Dörren planning meeting
2021 March 5	observation at the networking event
2021 March 8	interview with Tony Khalil, Dörren Event Coordinator
2021 March 15	observation at the Culture Kids x Dörren debrief meeting
2021 March 18	interview with the 3 members of the Culture Kids team
2021 April 29	interview with Anna Finnilä, Helsinki City Museum
2021 April 29	interview with Lauri Pokkinen, Finnish National Opera and Ballet
2021 May 4	interview with Jarkko Lehmus, Cirko – Center for New Circus
2021 May 6	interview with anonymous cultural professional who participated in the networking event
2021 May 24	interview with Pirjetta Mulari, Annantalo
2021 May 24	interview with Annika Kukkonen, Helsinki City Orchestra

To ensure that the research was conducted in ethical manner, all the participants were given the

information about the research, data collection process, data use, and who would have access to the data. The participation in the interviews was voluntary. The information about the research was provided to the interviewees and consents were obtained. The interviewees had a choice to stay anonymous if they wished to. The interviewees knew about the interviews being recorded and the option to review the interview transcripts. Some of them opted in doing so.

Finally, due to the COVID-19 restrictions, all observations and interviews were conducted online. However, as all these activities run in real time, they were as close to the in-person interactions as possible, and subject to the very similar strengths and weaknesses as the in-person observations and interviews would have been.

3.2.1 Observations

For this method of data collection, I shifted between modes of participant as observer during the meetings between Dörren and Culture Kids, and observer as participant during the networking event itself. Such a mix is not uncommon (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015, pp. 144–146). Both Dörren and Culture Kids teams were aware of the research and during the networking event my presence was made known to all participants as well. While there were certain aspects of the process that required my input during organisational meetings, my rather passive presence at the networking event assisted in focusing fully on observation. It was impossible to attend the individual meetings during the networking event, but the atmosphere, the opening words and the concluding discussion were useful in understanding better the structure and immediate effects of conversations that happened between professionals of local and foreign backgrounds. A sample of observation notes is presented in Appendix 1.

3.2.2 Interviews

The networking event was followed by semi-structured online interviews. The interviews were conducted during March – May 2021 and lasted between 45 to 60 minutes. All the interviews were in English language and recorded for transcription. Three out of eight interviewees chose to review the interview transcripts. All the interviewees were sent their quotes used in the thesis together with my analysis for comment to ensure the accuracy of interpretation. In addition to the interview transcripts, the notes taken during the interviews on the impressions they made were considered during the data analysis.

Interviewing process started within the two weeks after the networking event with the Dörren Event Coordinator and the Culture Kids team members. The goal was to obtain data that would contribute to better understanding of both Culture Kids and Dörren programmes, and their roles in organising the networking event. These two interviews have been comprised of the mixture of knowledge, opinion, and experience questions (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015, pp. 118). While, there were many yes/no questions in the interview with Culture Kids team, they aided in triangulation of certain ideas emerging through the observations and review of existing theories presented in the conceptual framework. Also, some of these questions have been answered in detail and where necessary it was possible to follow up with a clarifying question.

The interviews with local art field professionals who took part as “door openers” in the networking meetings have included mostly experience, feeling, opinion and value questions. The list of questions transformed throughout the course of the entire process of data collection from interviews. Some questions were slightly re-worded to make more sense to the interviewees, and two more questions were added for the last two interviews to reflect and explore data obtained through the earlier interviews. Not all the interviewees have been satisfied with their experience of the networking event, which afforded a greater variety in collected data.

The three sets of interview questions and samples of interview transcripts are presented in Appendix 2 and Appendix 3.

3.3 Data analysis

The data analysis took place alongside data collection, as a preferred way in qualitative research (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015, pp. 195–198). The initial ideas derived from the existing theories from cultural diversity management and networks research helped to narrow down the focus of enquiry. The observation notes and documents provided context and sensitised some topics that were explored further in the interviews. The interviews with Dörren and Culture Kids team members informed the choice of some questions for participants in the networking event, and each interview with participant caused slight amendments in the subsequent ones.

The arts management stance of the study guided the analysis and report production, assuming a general approach to data analysis and representation in case studies by Creswell (2007, p. 163). It included the depiction of details, the “facts” of the case, aggregating categories, and

establishing patterns between them. These steps preceded the formation themes and decision on the presentation of findings. Keeping in mind the intention of making the case study useful for practicing art managers as well as providing some ideas for future research, the results are reported alongside the theories where they resonated strongly or in an unexpected way with existing research.

The metaphor of trees for codes and forest for the main aim of the study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015, pp. 207–208) helped to maintain focus during coding. To develop the categories and derive meaning from the interview data, the study applied the thematic analysis method. The process followed the stages of the categorisation by Constan (1992) as summarised in Vaismoradi et al. (2016, p. 102) and the theme development as proposed in Vaismoradi et al. (2016, p. 103). The data obtained through personal observations supplemented and provided context for the emerging themes.

The set of criteria was used in the coding process of the interview transcripts to determine information relevant to the scope of the research. These included:

1. Background details affecting the perception of the intercultural networking event
2. Descriptions of the individual's experience of the intercultural networking event
3. Opinions on the role of Dörren in the process of organising intercultural networking event
4. Opinions on the role of Culture Kids in the process of organising intercultural networking event
5. Views about the professional matchmaking in general
6. Thoughts about the intercultural networking events as a way to promote cultural diversity

In each interview, the descriptions falling in the above criteria were highlighted and split into the units of meanings. The key words used by the interviewees served as initial labels in the categorisation process for the individual units of meaning. These labels provided a starting point in the coding process and the development of categories. The example of labelling is enclosed in Appendix 4.

Themes were developed through the repeated mind mapping exercise. Scrutinising categories against the theories of what makes a successful cultural diversity programme, thinking about

the most relevant categories from the angle of arts management, going back to data sources, and re-arranging some categories comprised the process. The examples of mind mapping exercise used for finding and questioning interactions between categories and identifying themes are copied in Appendix 5.

The analysis process promoted reflections about the research process and the role of the researcher in it and pointed at limitations.

3.4 Critical Reflections on the Research Process

The case itself and the Finnish art professionals' experiences of intercultural networking were explored primarily through theoretical, arts management lenses. No interpretive perspective was utilised in this research. However, the master thesis work was conducted by one emerging researcher and lacks the investigator triangulation, often used to improve the quality of the coding process and balance possible effects of the researcher's personal experiences and backgrounds on the coding and analysis process. Consequently, the case study presents a degree of sensitivity to the issue of positionality (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015), more commonly considered in the critical approach.

I considered the insider/outsider perspectives (Merriam et al., 2001). My cultural background and English rather than Finnish being the main language for research might have contributed to being perceived as an outsider to the culture of the group whose experiences and perspectives were the focus of the research. This didn't limit the access to interviewees but might have affected how freely the opinions were given in some instances. On the other hand, shared professional background in arts management and in several cases shared educational background introduced the multidimensional aspect of the relationship, where the insider / outside status has been negotiated throughout the interviews. There are advantages and disadvantages to both positions, that while not necessarily directly contributed or detracted from this study results are none-the-less part of the reflection.

As with any other case study research, the transferability of results would benefit from more cases, considering that each case has its own unique context and substance. The case selected has had a certain brief and a question that Culture Kids hoped to find an answer to – how to make the Culture Kids programme appealing to all families living in Helsinki. The aspiration

to reach specific ethnic and language groups was present. The case, an intercultural networking event, invited the representatives of several art organisations in Helsinki and was not a single workplace activity. The level of homogeneity in the professional profile of the local cultural field professionals and their overall open and positive attitude to cultural diversity also offer a narrower opportunity for transferability.

Additionally, even though in this instance, the focus was on the local cultural field professionals and their experiences in participation in the intercultural networking event, the dyadic nature of the meeting between two professionals is not covered by this study. While it is important to understand the perspectives of local art field professionals to support the field through the change set in motion by the ongoing transformation of the Finnish society, it would be valuable to research in-depth the relationship formed through intercultural networking following the dyadic approach and thus gaining a better understanding of the effect on both local and foreign-born professionals.

The geographical scope of the study is limited to Helsinki and not representative of the entire country. Additionally, while the spread across different art forms is varied, half of the interviewed cultural professionals are employees of the Helsinki City Council.

5 ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Between thought and expression. Lies a lifetime.

Lou Reed, Some Kinda Love

This chapter covers the findings that help to answer the question of why and how intercultural networking can be used as a practical step towards the implementation of cultural diversity in arts organisations. The findings arise from the case study examination, a networking event organised and facilitated by Dörren and Culture Kids team for the Culture Kids' actors. The relevant theories are mentioned alongside the findings, where applicable, to place the learnings from this case study in a wider context.

Having a reader in mind, an arts manager who is interested in implementing cultural diversity in their organisation, the report aims to assist determining how applicable the results might be for any other circumstances and situations. The first two sections are focused on answering the “how” part of the research question. It starts with contextualising the findings with a description of the key stakeholders, Dörren and Culture Kids, and the networking event. This first section describes the role of strategic perspective on cultural diversity implementation. Then, I move to the practicalities of implementation and consider the organisational support, in particular, how the facilitation affects the creation of space for intercultural networking. The final section answers the “why” part of the research question and focuses on the individual experiences of local art field professionals. It unpacks the potential of intercultural networking to inspire change as a platform where learning from and about cultural diversity is happening.

The description of the case study and its findings provide a glimpse into the space “between thought and expression”. Or, harking back to the background section of this research, the exploration of the intercultural networking event offers an insight into how to address the gap between open attitude to cultural diversity in general and resistance to the change it brings. Switching from poetic to managerial, the chapter suggest how an active experience of intercultural networking creates conditions affecting an individual choice of moving from idea to action.

5.1 The context of the intercultural networking event

To set the scene for the subsequent findings, I include the background information on Dörren and Culture Kids programmes, outline their roles in the organisation of the networking event, and conclude with a detailed description of the networking event itself. Both Dörren and Culture Kids are addressing the increasing cultural diversity in society through their work, although one works across many fields, and another operates in arts and culture. The service of Dörren assists integration by putting professionals of local and foreign backgrounds together across fields as varied as education, health, and technology. Dörren helps professionals of foreign background to establish local networks and works with organisations interested in exploring practical benefits of cultural diversity. The Culture Kids is a programme that works with art organisations in Helsinki to promote well-being and create accessible cultural events for all families living in the area. If looked at from the art organisation's perspective, it can be considered an audience development programme. Cooperation with either initiative could be a practical step for arts organisations that are interested in the action-driven implementation of cultural diversity.

5.1.1 Dörren

Dörren, a part of Luckan, the Finland-Swedish Information and Cultural Centre in Helsinki, is a programme that creates meetings between newcomers to Finland ("participants") and local professionals ("door openers") in the same field. Anyone who is over 18-year-old and living in Uusima region can register with Dörren. Otherwise, the programme deliberately does not target any specific demographic to be as accessible and inclusive as possible. Similar programmes have been successful in other countries, where the attempts to address cultural diversity in society have started earlier than in Finland. Dörren uses the networking algorithm developed by Swedish service Yrkesdörren, adapted, in turn, from the National Connector initiative from Canada. This is how it works: a foreign-born professional meets for one hour with a local professional in the same field. At the end of the meeting, the local "door opener" can provide additional contacts that might be helpful for the newcomer to expand their local networks and further career development. The theory of change (Rosenau, 2018) provides context for understanding the Dörren and Yrkesdörren programmes. The explanation of how the essential requirements for the desired changes in the society are identified and put into action, formulated in the ÖppnaDörren activity report:

...meetings lead to networks and networks lead to jobs. We believe that the physical meeting is one of the most important keys to understanding people and a prerequisite for breaking increasing segregation in Sweden. (Author's edit of the Google translation from Swedish, ÖppnaDörren, 2020)

The matchmaking part is at the core of every one-on-one networking meeting and every networking event organised by Dörren. A matchmaking process takes careful considerations to provide the best possible chance for a mutual understanding of the matched professionals. The computer algorithm that is the first step in the matching process still requires human overseeing as the information provided through registration is not always sufficient. The compatibility on three levels creates a good match between professionals. The same sector, sub-sector and then the actual role title provide an ideal context for the professionals to meet. Tony Khalil, Dörren Event Coordinator, explained that a lot of thinking goes into the matching process to ensure a good match. It is also better to have no match than a bad match (T. Khalil, personal communication, March 8, 2021).

In autumn 2020, Dörren announced a cooperation programme for organisations. It proposes different options for participation, including hosting networking events or engaging staff in meetings with foreign-born professionals. This approach offers organisations to take a more active role in using intercultural networking to achieve their goals related to cultural diversity. The work of Dörren entails the initial meetings to agree upon the objectives of the networking with an event partner (Culture Kids, in this case), administering registrations, matchmaking, promotion, support and facilitation during the event to the last debrief session where the outcomes are discussed.

Even though Dörren started offering networking events between professionals of local and foreign background only in September 2020, they have organised eight events until the programme stopped matching in May 2021 (T. Khalil, personal communication, March 8, 2021), due to the funding coming to an end. The offering of networking events in addition to the core service of the matchmaking of individuals proved to be popular, despite the short time it existed. One of the reasons could be the integrity of Dörren in providing an experience that is meaningful and positive to both door openers and participants, which also includes saying “no” to matching and networking just for the sake of matching and networking.

There's a lot of work happening behind the scenes that makes Dörren's role

valuable in having the result as satisfying as possible... there's a consecutive follow up till the end to make sure that everything reaches the aspired result. That is what you want in the end... I feel that this is what makes Dörren stand out from anybody else because we don't believe that a bad match is better than a no match. If it is not a good match, we don't match. – Tony Khalil, Dörren

Tony Khalil, Dörren Event Coordinator, explained that there are many ways to organise a networking event based on the organisations' requirements. The Dörren team usually tailors the structure based on the objective that the organisation sets. It can be short meetings with Human Resource managers to aid diversity in recruitment or a networking event for the company employees to support in practice the value of diversity in an organisation.

The logistics and matching for the networking event are not quite the same as for the individual meetings between the door openers and participants. The meeting between individuals is still, of course, at the heart of every networking event. However, the networking event offers an opportunity to establish links to more than just the person one has been matched with. As everyone receives each other's contacts after the event, it serves as an icebreaker to continue the conversation or reach out. Findings also suggest that the event setting contributed to the intercultural networking being a signal mechanism for the participants of the same cultural background

While Dörren is not an organisation that operates exclusively in the art field, it has valuable expertise in matching individuals of different cultural backgrounds together with an existing pool of foreign-born professionals who wish to expand their networks in Finland. The international benchmarking provides confidence in the approach Dörren uses. The networking events option for organisations is a low-threshold opportunity to introduce cultural diversity in the workplace. In the art field context, it presents a possibility to expand the knowledge-base and reach of the audience development programmes.

Dörren was funded by the European Social Fund and Svenska Kulturfonden until end of September 2021, however, the work continues. In May 2021, the Ministry of Culture and Education awarded Dörren funding to build upon the experience of intercultural networking event described in this case study and tailor networking event concept to the cultural field. Dörren aims to support networking that is reciprocal and thematic, and serves foreign and

local cultural professionals as well as cultural institutions. (G. Norrgård, personal communication, September 3, 2021).

5.1.2 *Culture Kids*

Culture Kids is a programme administered by Helsinki City Council. It can be considered a project for audience development and engagement. The idea behind the Culture Kids work is summarised in one of the programme’s presentations: “Every child born in 2020 or after and living in Helsinki is sponsored by a cultural operator. The sponsor will invite the child to fun cultural events. The events are designed to support the child’s development and the well-being of their family. All Culture Kids events are free of charge.”. Local and national cultural institutions based in Helsinki (“actors”) have signed up to participate in the initiative. The Culture Kids project is guided by the values of accessibility, equity, and cooperation. The special focus is on celebration of increasing diversity in Helsinki (Culture Kids, 2020). The shared values have been discussed and accepted jointly by organisations participating in the Culture Kids programme.

There are currently 35 cultural institutions that “adopt” children born in the capital area and offer them and their families free participation in age-appropriate artistic events. Each child and their relatives have an opportunity to build a close relationship with a “godparent” institution during the first years of their life until the child goes to school. The programme was tested in 2000, and then for the second time when Helsingin kaupunginorkesteri (Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra) invited all children born in Helsinki in 2012 to free events and concerts. The second edition resulted in sign-ups from 3400 families (Valtari, 2019). Helsingin kaupunginorkesteri became a “godparent” again in 2020 with different institutions developing a project plan for the Culture kids programme for the coming years:

Table 3.

Culture Kids programme schedule

Year & art form focus	Participating actors
2020 music	Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra

2021 theatre	Helsinki City Theatre, The Finnish National Theatre, Swedish Theatre, Theatre ILMI Ö, Q-teatteri and Puppet Theatre Sampo
2022 dance, circus, performing arts, photographic art and food culture	Dance House Helsinki, Cirko – Center for New Circus, Theatre Museum, Finnish Museum of Photography, Dance Theatre Hurjaruuth, Hotel and Restaurant Museum
2023 cultural heritage	Helsinki City Museum, National Museum of Finland, Design Museum, Museum of Finnish Architecture, The Association of Cultural Heritage Education in Finland
2024 word art and exercise	Helsinki City Library and City of Helsinki Sports Services
2025 visual arts	Helsinki Art Museum HAM, Finnish National Gallery (Ateneum, Kiasma and Sinebrychoff Art Museum) and Amos Rex
2026 opera and ballet	Finnish National Opera and Ballet
2027 music	Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra will launch a new round for children born during that year.

Source: adapted from the Culture Kids presentation at 2020 WHO European Healthy Cities Annual Conference

As audience development is the area where cultural diversity is considered most often by the arts organisations, it is not surprising, that many institutions joined Culture Kids as part of the audience engagement tactics. If we look at the Culture Kids model through the organisational lens, its role is in supporting the organisations in reflecting the increasing cultural diversity in their work and developing relationships with new audiences. The Culture Kids programme does push its actors outside of their comfort zone. Firstly, the young age of the audience, starting from a newborn is unusual. Secondly, the question of representation and cultural diversity is challenging for the actors. The participation in Culture Kids programme enhances the organisations' efforts in representing the society they operate in and serves as a forum to discuss with each other the themes of inclusion, equality, and accessibility as part of the programme development. The actors are actively seeking ways to ensure the Culture Kids programmes are easily accessible. Still, and despite its popularity, the programme and cultural

institutions experience difficulties in reaching certain communities whose perceptions differ significantly from the western canon of what arts and culture are. To facilitate the process, Culture Kids organise workshops and discussions that address a variety of challenges, including the most pertinent to the topic of this case study – “Whose culture?”. To build links with the diverse communities in Helsinki, Culture Kids hired a cultural diversity agent in 2019. The cultural diversity agent is a specially trained professional in Finland who helps organisations to implement cultural diversity through training, advice, and outreach. Their work was disrupted by the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. The issue of reaching out to specific communities is still present.

Consequently, when approaches have been made to various cultural institutions in Helsinki (including Culture and Leisure Division of Helsinki City Council) to arrange a Dörren networking event and participate in this research, the Culture Kids team expressed interest in creating an event for the staff of the organisations participating in the programme.

5.1.3 Culture Kids x Dörren networking event: learning from cultural diversity

At the initial conversation in December between Culture Kids and Dörren, the overall goal of the event was discussed together with some practical parameters, like date, running the event in Zoom, marketing, possible structure. Then a more detailed preparatory meeting took place in January where the parties agreed upon the date and a concrete plan of action. The communications to the Culture Kids actors were drafted collaboratively and sent by Culture Kids. Culture Kids actors were invited to take part in the networking events through the Culture Kids organisation, but Dörren took the registrations as all participants needed to be in Dörren database for matching. The communications with the registered participants, marketing to the foreign-born professionals, and matchmaking was looked after by Dörren. One of the Culture Kids team members acknowledged in the interview that it felt unusual for them to not have control over the event logistics but that they had a nice experience with Dörren organising the practicalities.

Many cultural professionals representing their organisations in the Culture Kids programme are cultural producers or art managers. This is a broad category of the professional profile of individuals who took part in the networking event. The interviewed local art field professionals came from different organisations and as a result had a different level of exposure to or practice of cultural diversity. Some were communicating across several languages daily, some were

mostly communicating in Finnish. One interviewee was actively considering cultural diversity in their role, others focused on the matter from project to project. This variety of backgrounds as far as cultural diversity was concerned contributed to differences in how intercultural networking was experienced by individual participants.

On 5 March 2021, the Culture Kids x Dörren networking event gathered cultural professionals to network and discuss how the Culture Kids programme could be further developed to attract varied audiences. The objective of the networking event between Culture Kids actors and culture professionals of the foreign background was a collective effort to answer the question: “How can we make Culture Kids attractive to all families living in Helsinki?”. A total of 40 local and foreign-born professionals took part, with 16 networking meetings during the event. Due to the COVID-19 restrictions, it took place in Zoom. The event was run in English, and no information was recorded about what languages were spoken during the discussions in the smaller groups and pairs, as these were private. The local professionals who took part represented both national and local public institutions as well as associations and private organisations. Observing the name tags in Zoom showed quite a variety among the represented art organisations. The members of the Culture Kids and Dörren teams were naturally present as well. The event was facilitated by the Dörren Event Coordinator.

The programme of the event started with a short introduction by the Culture Kids team and a motivational speech by Laurie Griffis from Luckan on the topic of cultural diversity. Then the participants were split into small groups of 2-3 people. There were more registrations from local cultural field professionals than from foreign-born professionals. Dörren accommodated this by having several groups with three or four people. Each group had a professional of foreign background and one or two local cultural field professionals. The networking itself took 40 minutes after which everyone returned to the main group for a concluding discussion. Most participants remained for the conversation after the networking in small groups. Before the concluding discussion, Dörren Event Coordinator ran a poll to obtain immediate feedback on the networking event experience. The 75% were satisfied or very satisfied with the event overall, and 81% were satisfied or very satisfied with their networking meeting.

In addition to networking between individuals, another introduction that took part during the event was an introduction of the Dörren programme to the local art field professionals. Most of the interviewees have never heard about Dörren, even though some of them were familiar

with Luckan. One interviewee, while heard once about the Dörren programme didn't quite understand what it was about. One reason for that could be that Dörren was not actively marketed to art organisations as a way to promote diversity. An alternative explanation suggests the existence of subgroups in the wider art field network in Finland that have little interaction with each other. The subgroups could be divided by language, for example, Finnish or Swedish. Similarly, the division lies between local and foreign-born professionals. The underlying assumption is that foreign-born professionals are more likely than their local colleagues to learn about Dörren, as the information about its services and their usefulness for foreign-born professionals is passed by the word of mouth. What follows is that in Finland local and foreign art and culture field professionals are often members of very different networks that, in turn, provide access to very different sets of information and ideas.

Through interviews the role of Culture Kids as the organiser and “endorser” of the intercultural networking with Dörren became apparent. For the majority of the interviewees, the fact that the invitation came from Culture Kids played a prominent role in their decision to participate. Only one participant with significant professional experience in cultural diversity accepted an invitation because of the general curiosity about the new ways to promote cultural diversity in the art field. Otherwise, a common reason was the existing engagement with the Culture Kids project. The role of Culture Kids in introducing Dörren reflects also on the networked nature of the art field and how new methods of implementing cultural diversity that are coming from outside of the field are best adopted when one of the current art field players introduces it:

We are invested in the projects with them. So, essentially, I have said yes to all the events that Culture Kids organises. You had a kind of predisposed yes already. ... I would go even further by saying that I felt an obligation to participate because it came from the Culture Kids. – Jarkko Lehmus, Cirko – Center for New Circus

This process of disseminating knowledge about the programmes open for cooperation in addressing cultural diversity takes time which needs to be factored in when new initiatives are explored and information about them is spread.

Cooperation with Dörren for organising the intercultural networking event generated excitement among the participants and was perceived as a positive step by Culture Kids. It

could be that the need for new ways and active approaches to cultural diversity is in the air. The work of Dörren thus serves as a very practical example of what is possible when thinking outside of the box. Addressing collectively the current challenges makes intercultural networking events a powerful method to connect professionals of local and foreign backgrounds. Several interviewees expressed enthusiasm about Culture Kids opening intercultural dialogue and increasing the opportunity for shared discussion with a concrete step. Surprisingly, as a method for implementing cultural diversity, it appears to be quite innovative in comparison to other approaches in the art field, such as trying to make direct contact with audiences or associations that represent certain audience segments:

I think widening the network is the only way... If we haven't been reaching families before we can't just have a status quo and continue with the existing project. We need to open up the existing model and reach out to the families that we can see are non-existent in the project and if we are aiming to have more inclusion then something needs to be done. I think Dörren is one of the options to widen up and reach out to the individuals who can help to reach this goal. – Lauri Pokkinen, Finnish National Opera and Ballet

The overall positive feedback from local art field professionals regarding the use of intercultural networking aligns with the existing research that the strategic approach to cultural diversity as a source of learning has a positive impact on the perception of cultural diversity (Ely & Thomas, 2001). It could be that at the moment accessibility and inclusion are the key drivers pushing art organisations to address diversity. While the aim of this study wasn't to explore the matter from the strategic angle, one irregularity became apparent in the interviews. When the first four participants were asked about their organisations' work on implementation and promotion of cultural diversity in general, the cooperation with Kulttuurikaikille on diversity training or participation in the government-facilitated workshops were mentioned. This discovery led to asking the last two interviewees about which organisations exactly they cooperate with or would think about cooperating with on the projects where cultural diversity is considered. Kulttuurikaikille was not mentioned, but when asked directly about it hence it was noted frequently in earlier interview, it appeared that Kulttuurikaikille was linked to accessibility and inclusion rather than cultural diversity. It might be a coincidence, but it also could be an indication of how the cultural policy and advocacy for inclusion and accessibility on macro level affects the attitude to cultural diversity in art organisations on micro level. Still,

keeping in mind that the cultural diversity in organisations is a “double-edged sword” and the reaping of benefits and mitigation of drawbacks requires management, the perspective treating diversity as a source of learning is worth considering on the strategic level for art organisations, rather than approaching it only from the position of accessibility or inclusion.

5.2 Creating space for intercultural networking

Moving from strategic to operational, I consider facilitation as a form of organisational support towards intercultural networking. The behind-the-scenes work here is a process of creating a space or an environment where connections happen and develop. This function is like the role of the network’s secretariat to create the environment for communications discussed in the IETM report (2001). In a single workplace, it could be labelled the *facilitating conditions* part of the knowledge network framework (Seufert et al., 1999). The environment plays a role in the formation of heterogeneous networks (Smith, 1999; Barwick, 2017) and the findings point at how the facilitation and environment interrelate in this case study. The role of organisational support is explored further by looking at how intercultural networking can assist the implementation of cultural diversity in art organisations of different sizes.

5.2.1 Facilitation & environment

The Culture Kids team hoped to bring new perspectives of professionals of foreign background to the development of the programme and the demand from the actors, local art field professionals, was high. Having more registrations from door openers than participants for the networking event seemed unusual as frequently there are more registrations from participants than door openers. On one hand, it shows an eagerness to enter the dialogue and learn, on the other, it might be an indication that the organisational support lowers a threshold for participating in an activity such as intercultural networking. The conversation during the Morning Coffee at Globe Art Point in August 2020 included the topic of motivation for local art field professionals to join Dörren as door openers. Interestingly, one of the reasons hindering them was a lack of confidence that they would be able to help. Thus, organisations can play an empowering role for individuals by offering intercultural networking as part of their cultural diversity implementation work.

Many interviewees acknowledged that the event was facilitated well. During the event, the support of Dörren, guiding the participants through the event, explaining what to expect, recapping and announcing was observed. Having a system that has been tried and tested was viewed as an important factor contributing to the positive experience of intercultural networking. Echoing Dobbin and Kalev (2016) findings that motivation is a significant factor for the successful implementation of cultural diversity programmes, the organisers also linked the effectiveness of such working methods to their capacity to trigger intrinsic motivation:

It is very important that you have the tools and the working methods to make it right. So, it doesn't happen from somebody telling you from above, but instead being facilitated by the people's activity. – Culture Kids team member

The networking event provided a safe and positive setting. Overall, the structure and time allocated for each part of the meeting were perceived as sufficient, an important indication as time pressure affects the experience of intercultural encounter (Leung et al., 2008). The adjectives, like “good”, “laid-back”, “easy” and “relaxed” were used consistently across all interviews to describe the atmosphere. The environment encouraged the free flow of ideas and open, respectful conversations:

It was very friendly. ... and well-organised in the sense that I'm sure that everybody felt welcome, everybody had the possibility to comment. – Pirjetta Mulari, Annantalo

The shared discussion at the end of the event worked well and offered extra time for reflecting and sharing opinions after the networking in small groups. As Tony Khalil remarked in the interview, many people stayed for the concluding discussion at the Culture Kids networking event, even those not fluent in English. Several people mentioned that it was beneficial and enriched the overall experience. Some interviewees, notably with the match that was not as satisfying as they expected, even expressed a belated hope for a longer concluding discussion.

The contradictory views came up when interviewees linked the atmosphere to the cultural diversity present at the meeting. On one hand, the cultural diversity of all participants was noted as mild, because the common ground of shared professional field played a strong unifying factor. Considered from the angle of audience development agenda, this shared perspective was also perceived as not helpful in advancing the desired goals for outreach:

It was relaxed, easy. Clearly, the participants who were there were already invested in culture and the arts. So, in that way, we had a common ground. And I think that's the nature of this kind of events that the people who are already interested would take part. From the perspective of trying to reach people that we don't already reach, it didn't really serve that purpose. – Jarkko Lehmus, Cirko - Center for New Circus

Yet, another interviewee remarked that despite the good atmosphere and focus, the common goal seemed to be missing from the discussion due to the element of diversity introduced to the group. Interestingly, the diversity here meant not just the cultural diversity, but the variety of professional backgrounds represented in the meeting, and the new people, in general, introduced to the otherwise familiar mix of Culture Kids actors:

... Maybe because it was so diverse across the fields that people were coming from. It was a kind of totally different group than the cultural operators, theatres, museums, doing the Culture Kids project. So, it was more diverse, and I think that there was maybe a little bit too little trying to get to a common ground before the event. It would have been beneficial to have more conversation about what we're going to do here and what we are trying to achieve and what is the goal here. Because I felt that it was pretty much left to me to get an idea of what is supposed to come out of this. Now I think, maybe it is connected to this that I felt that I didn't get enough information beforehand. – anonymous interviewee

Another connected aspect that emerged is a degree of uncertainty in the networking event. Not knowing beforehand who one was about to meet created the sense of being open to what might come and not having the pre-conceptions about either meeting or each other. Coming as equals to avoid prejudice from either side is what the respectful interaction stems from. However, there seemed to be a peculiar interconnection between the laid-back, easy, and friendly atmosphere of the event that fostered connections and the guiding that appeared to several interviewees as too soft:

The aim of that meeting wasn't quite clear to me when I came... Because we, as cultural professionals joining and having very busy schedules and coming to a meeting, we kind of demand this agenda and very strict thing. On the

other hand, it gave laid back feeling also to the discussion... it was all about giving time and meeting each other and actually finding there in the discussion what we were interested in. So, in that sense, it didn't matter whether we didn't have this [agenda]. – Annika Kukkonen, Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra

Two other interviewees wished for more precise instructions and emphasis on familiarising themselves with the guidelines and tips for networking before the event to get the most out of it. This highlights that in the setting of intercultural events participants can require a stronger accent on following a certain protocol as part of creating a safer environment for interaction. An example here highlights a need for communicating the necessity of preparation ahead of networking:

It would have been a good idea to have more structure. And,... I don't know, it's hard to explain because there was information given beforehand, but there was not enough prompting to get to know it. Because when the information was given, it said that this is not obligatory and you can look at this, but you don't have to. So, you know, if someone says that to me, then I think, OK, I don't have time now, I will look at it later and when the event is coming, they will give me the info again that I really need. So that was what was needed. – anonymous interviewee

One explanation could be the individual differences in interviewees, their expectations about the event, and previous experiences with cultural diversity. In general, the individuals with a need for predictability and order would feel a greater need for firm answers in intercultural setting (Leung et al, 2008). It is also possible that the emphasis on what to expect and how to prepare might be required more when the national culture of local participants has a higher rate of uncertainty avoidance (Hofstede, 2011) in general, which applies in this case. Alternatively, the busy schedules of art and culture professionals call for some competition for attention. As the case doesn't represent a single organisation, the differences in views expressed by interviewees could also be due to them representing a variety of organisations and institutions. Still, it seems that there might be an expectation for a certain protocol or a formal agenda that would help to go through a potentially uncomfortable social situation. This finding was surprising, as observation during the event as well as familiarity with the correspondence that went to the participants prior registered strong support from Dörren as a facilitator and clear

communications and support from Culture Kids as an organiser. The challenge that emerges is balancing the appropriate level of support and appropriate guidance for participants without compromising the freedom of conversation flow.

5.2.2 *Cost of organisational support & benefit of cooperation*

Considering the effect of organisational support further, the capacity to implement and promote cultural diversity on the organisational level was linked to the limited resources, especially in the small organisations, by four interviewees. The organisational challenge of establishing links with diverse communities is that it takes time and consistency of engagement. Still, it was pronounced as important by an interviewee with extensive experience in matters concerning cultural diversity. Despite the effort it may take, it was perceived as a worthwhile activity for organisations aiming to walk the talk:

A networking process might take 10 years when you really make connections and there you need to have time for that, so it can't be just 5% of your job ... also [need] to have tools for networking, to have resources for that. So, it's really resource-heavy, but ... it's also very efficient resource-heavy because it always brings results I would say. – Pirjetta Mulari, Annantalo

This finding is within the Finnish context, however, the fact that smaller organisations have fewer resources is, in general, part of the art and culture field operations worldwide. Hence, those in charge of implementing cultural diversity in a workplace can have a concern about the facilitation of intercultural networking being a resource-heavy activity. The lack of resources can be detrimental to the relationship development, however, the networking event examined here presented an alternative opportunity that would not require significant investment or additional funding. A cooperation with programmes like Dörren and Culture Kids creates an accessible opportunity for art organisations of any operational capacity to take a step to explore cultural diversity:

It was nice having... a facilitated discussion when somebody else does the admin and the management of putting the context together and organising the discussion. ... The threshold of participation was very low. – Jarkko Lehmus, Cirko – Center for New Circus

The lack of resources can be compensated with collaborations with existing programmes that have the know-how and networks to help organisations to further their work in the implementation of cultural diversity. Regardless of whether they operate exclusively in the arts and culture field or not. In this case, Culture Kids partnership with Dörren opened access to expertise in intercultural networking and the knowledge of the team that specialises in creating an environment for communications and opportunity for connection. In addition to being approachable for smaller organisations, it also reminds of the “third spaces” that Barwick (2017) calls the environment for intercultural encounters. What it means is a neutral space. Or, when considering the facilitation, a neutral party, a mediator, such as Dörren in this case, that can support art organisations in their work on promoting and implementing cultural diversity in a very practical way. One interviewee, when considering the use of intercultural networking for promotion and implementation of cultural diversity, suggested:

It would be very good if you can have this kind of face-to-face discussions in person with this experience. That's something that I hope we could have more after the pandemic. And, I don't know, maybe Luckan can be one coordinating this. Coordination is important and having an organisation that could bring people together. – Anna Finnilä, Helsinki City Museum

However, there are nuances, afforded by the complexity of the art field. Putting the puzzle together for the Culture Kids networking event was more difficult than anticipated based on the vast variety of art forms, departments, and roles in the cultural field:

...when we started getting the registrations, I started really going deep into how many industries we're talking about. Writers, musicians, art teachers, painters and then the list goes bigger and bigger. – Tony Khalil, Dörren

The multi-faceted nature of the art field can present a challenge for matchmaking based on the shared professional background for intercultural networking. Especially for the smaller, niche art disciplines:

we, as a really small organisation, what can we get out of meeting people through networking like this? We would start to think that, OK, do you have the people or the contacts that we would be interested in. Because I think that many of the people who are in [this niche], they probably, if they come

to Finland, they would try to contact [relevant network] organisations here and we are in connection with those organisations. So, I think that it might be so that we get that contact from there. So, then the question is what would be the benefit from networking event organised by Dörren and what other things it could give us if we think of kind of artistic work and all of this. – anonymous interviewee

On the other hand, the benefit for large cultural organisations that have vast international connections also presented a similar question of what can be gained from intercultural networking locally:

I think that we would definitely benefit from it [intercultural networking]. Of course, we are kind of tied to the classical music genre and we are present in various international networks. If I think of international networks, we have foreign people there with whom we discuss things on a day-to-day basis. So, then we need to think who in Finland as professionals meet up to those international standards in our genre. – Annika Kukkonen, Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra

One aspect that came up in the interviews and contributed to understanding the value of intercultural networking locally was the gap between internationality and diversity in local networks. It helps to grasp why even though cultural diversity and internationalisation are often linked, the connection does not necessarily affect the operations of the organisations in Finland (Saukkonen & Pyykkönen, 2008, p. 58; Lahtinen et al., 2020, p. 103). They are two separate matters. There is a difference between international connections and contact with professionals of foreign backgrounds living in Finland. This difference emphasises the current structures influencing the operation of institutions and their staff and suggests that there is room for more interaction.

The combination of internationalisation not being the same as cultural diversity and the communication that is perceived as not flowing in both directions (discussed in more detail in 5.3.1) is tied to the role of representation. In the local context, the representation is probably a closer concept to cultural diversity, than internationalisation. The distinction is articulated well in this quote that comes from the concluding thoughts in the interview after the intercultural networking event and its role for cultural diversity were discussed. What follows is that an

organisational benefit of local intercultural networking is in the shared context of living lives in Finland:

I would say that in many ways I think Opera is naturally really international. We are international and culturally rich as an organisation. But it does not automatically mean that we are reflecting the society around us. I think it's a question of how we, as an organisation, as an art form, how do we represent the stories and the society that we exist in. – Lauri Pokkinen, Finnish National Opera and Ballet

To conclude, Culture Kids team's support of learning from diversity (learning and integration perspective described in Ely & Thomas, 2001) and Dörren's flexibility in tailoring the events to the needs of an organisation or a project in this case formed a good predisposition for the event. The case study further revealed the connection between facilitation and the environment for intercultural networking. It is following the diversity management theories about the role that organisational support plays in creating a space for intercultural networking. Special attention to communicating the agenda and what to expect may be required to mitigate the low tolerance for uncertainty which intercultural networking can be a cause of for some participants. The way Culture Kids programme organised a networking event for their participants suggests that collaborative approach where several organisations join forces in organising intercultural networking events for their staff is worth thinking about. Where the organisational capacity or resources associated with the implementation of cultural diversity are a concern, cooperation with a programme like Dörren has the potential of lowering the threshold of considering cultural diversity in the operations.

If we zoom out and consider field development in general, what stands out is the role of an art organisation as a change maker. The findings discussed in this section are closely linked to the ideas of changes in the art worlds (Becker, 1982), outlining organisational support as being instrumental in bringing change to the field. The role of organisations can be, as this case study findings suggest, in facilitating the environment where heterogeneous professional networks can form and in empowering individual art and cultural professionals to learn from diversity. Intercultural networking is one way of active participation and learning. Cooperation with an initiative such as Dörren is consequently one very practical way of bringing change, as the existing research conveys, and the example of this case study testifies to.

5.3 Understanding cultural diversity through personal experience

While the previous section was focused primarily on the organisational side, this one explores in detail the meaning of the intercultural networking event experience to the local art field professionals. The findings here specify what intercultural networking can do for cultural diversity implementation. As already stated earlier, at the core of the networking event is a meeting between individuals. It prompts a subtle change in individuals, bridging an idea of cultural diversity and a motivation to act upon it. Rather than learning about cultural diversity, it is an active way of learning from cultural diversity. However, the findings described here are a result of the choices made earlier in the process, starting with adopting a perspective on cultural diversity as a source of learning (Ely & Thomas, 2001). On this strategic premise, I see intercultural networking as a practical step that follows naturally.

5.3.1 *Interacting as equals*

Reciprocity from locals is one of the main factors influencing the establishment of diverse networks (Barwick, 2017). The interviewees attributed value to their experiences of intercultural networking event. The value was associated with establishing connections and interacting as equals. The interviewed local art field professionals felt that they took as well as gave in the process. The feeling of reciprocity also assured an important component of interaction between different cultures – equality of the parties. The event offered a possibility for professionals to discuss together the shared challenges and try to find answers to a shared question. Meeting as individuals and as equals took a prominent place in the interviewees' responses about their experience of the Dörren and Culture Kids networking event, including organisers:

I think it is much better when people come face to face with somebody. It's totally different, you are on an equal level, this way where people really can feel that they are equals. – Culture Kids team

Establishing connections with colleagues of foreign background was perceived as beneficial. On one hand, the existing personal professional networks were described by interviewees as “global but Eurocentric”, “very diverse”, “not very diverse”. Despite a variety of how personal networks were described, one similarity that became apparent was that the networks where art professionals of Finnish and non-Finnish origin circulate differ. For example, an interviewee

who described their multiple connections, including the international links, continued to explain a network that appears quite homogeneous:

When I talk about cultural diversity, all of these connections and the field in Finland, where a person of my age and background and so on is mingling and going around, it's probably really white and really Finnish-speaking. – anonymous interviewee.

Additionally, interviewees acknowledged that it is not easy to meet colleagues from different countries who are residing in Finland, unless the organisation is specialising in the promotion of cultural diversity, e.g., Caisa, Globe Art Point or accessibility, e.g., Kulttuurია Kaikkille. Forming ties where usually the connections are hard to make is what makes the service offered by Dörren stand out among other ways to implement and promote cultural diversity. Encounters, otherwise unlikely, were perceived as an advantage of intercultural networking:

I don't know how, in normal life, I could have ever met a person like Anne. We live in so different realities; I am in the museum reality and she's as a student. So, I think we need more of this kind of possibilities to meet and discuss. – Anna Finnilä, Helsinki City Museum

The current lack of interaction was mentioned by another interviewee as well. They were in contact with a colleague matched with during Dörren and Culture Kids networking event to arrange an introduction to the person responsible for their Audio and Video production. The instance appeared as unusual in general working practice:

...there are not that many possibilities also for people with different cultural backgrounds to offer their work for us... – Annika Kukkonen, Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra

From the current position of limited opportunity for interaction stemmed comments outlining why intercultural networking was valuable to local art field professionals. On a personal level, the widening of networks in general was perceived as a win-win situation:

I think it's wonderful that you can widen your own network with these individuals and contacts, but at the same time you can open up the connections and dialogues. Because we all gain from that. We all gain from widening up our networks and learning from other backgrounds. – Lauri

Pokkinen, Finnish National Opera and Ballet

Another, more specific finding suggests that drawing on contacts with colleagues of foreign background residing locally presents a potential to provide greater insights into hard-to-reach audiences. Quite often cultural producers in Finland are utilising their personal connections when developing the projects where the cultural diversity aspect needs to be considered (Culture Kids, personal communication, March 18, 2021). The representation challenge of audience development that Culture Kids actors are working to address is where networking with foreign-born professionals could offer support. In this case, the professionals of foreign background were perceived as “door openers” who shared information and offered ideas:

I think that participants joining besides our Culture Kids actors were really open and ready to share their thoughts and ideas and experiences as well. So, I think they were more in a hot spot than us. Because they were presenting themselves and their points of view, talking with representatives of organisations working in the Culture Kids. So, it could have been a bit more unbalanced than what it actually was... I think it was very equal, the discussion that we had. – Annika Kukkonen, Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra

An opportunity to speak about cultural diversity at a professional level with a mutual understanding of the challenges and dynamics of the art field helped to communicate perspectives that differ because of cultural background. It was not the same as a discussion with an audience member, for example. The perceived value of different opinions discussed in a shared context and domain was a strong testament to the benefit of intercultural networking for local art professionals. Intercultural networking offered two-way communication for art organisations. On one hand, giving an opportunity to “listen more to what people want, including people who haven’t been always living in Finland” (A. Finnilä, personal communication, April 29, 2021). On another, sharing information about the current diversity programmes run by the institutions, which in this specific case led to a co-operation in the Afro-Helsinkiläiset project run by Helsinki City Museum. The reciprocal relationship this example describes aligns with one of the key drivers behind the Culture Kids project: “how to make different people feel the ownership of the Helsinki cultural life, show that it's for everybody.”. (Culture Kids, personal communication, March 18, 2021).

The case study also offered a glimpse into what is on the opposite side of the spectrum from the feeling of disconnection. Interestingly, the interaction that happened during the networking event prompted a feeling that speaks more about field development. It reminded me of the concept of *mondialité*, where a free exchange of ideas across cultures is a part of the way communities live. The intercultural networking event supported the feeling of belonging:

All in all, it kind of shook us as a group. Also, when we had a person coming in our group who thought and looked at what we were talking about from another perspective, she has had a career in various countries, and that was really nice that we can open up our discussion also, feel that we are not in a bubble, not in Helsinki bubble here, but we are actually working and living in a global world. These kinds of encounters help us to remember that. – Annika Kukkonen, Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra

In summary, the reliance on personal connection makes intercultural networking a useful tool for advancing the ideas that stem from cultural diversity, such as knowing about the different networks in Finland and the ability to navigate them. The interaction between cultures, i.e., “an action between” implies two-sided communication and active involvement, which is what has happened in the setting of intercultural networking event. What is more, the reciprocity of interaction that transpired in the interviews is beyond the programmes targeting the audiences that currently are hard to reach, it is about weaving what the organisation does into the ever-changing fabric of society. This interaction is a live embodiment of the connections in the cultural diamond illustration of the ties between art, production, audience, and society (Alexander, 2003).

5.3.2 *Planting seeds*

Several interviewees perceived the networking meeting between culturally diverse professionals as not an isolated occurrence, but a part of the bigger transformation. From the changes that are happening in the field in terms of cultural diversity, the event appeared as “reinforcing a process that's already started” (J. Lehmus, personal communication, May 4, 2021).

The practical novel ideas were mainly linked to the differences in cultural backgrounds, even when the cultural difference was perceived as relatively mild, i.e., difference between cultures

of Western countries. It appeared that the art organisations in Finland are in search of new connections and new ideas to reach out to the communities they are not reaching currently. The understanding of networks is relevant to the outreach work and how the communications with different audiences could be built. The learnings that came from the interaction with a colleague of foreign background were about information sharing. This is in accordance with a notion that information is a primary resource being exchanged in the intercultural networks (Chua, 2018):

I gained some practical network ideas, like who should we contact, where do the communities of people who don't speak Finnish meet each other. What is the social network that the person that I was paired with was part of, but I, for example, wasn't? – Jarkko Lehmus, Cirko - Center for New Circus

The domain-specific and culture-related nature of such information also appeared across the interviews. The insights gained from this exchange contributed to broadening the approach towards, for example, audience outreach:

It was very nice to have a discussion with her [participant of foreign background], but I noticed that she had never been to Helsinki City Museum. She didn't know so much about the museum field in general. It's not so easy to reach interesting people if they don't come with some group, or with teachers and that's a question we were talking about in relation to Culture Kids. That can be a problem if the museums are not known to the families. How would they get interested in coming? And we had a good discussion about that. – Anna Finnilä, Helsinki City Museum

The Culture Kids team, while noting that the event did not reach many professionals of Somali or Arabic background, also viewed the outcome as a starting point in the context of the Culture Kids programme and the institutions taking part in it:

... what we wanted was to start a process with these people and I think it's going to happen during their work when they have more of these thoughts, that's been activated now. – Culture Kids team

This “planting the seed” perception of intercultural networking also transpired in a surprising variety of responses about the exchange of ideas within the context of the event. While some interviewees left the event with practical ideas to implement, i.e., which channels and

languages to use to attract the audiences, others felt the discussion was of a conceptual kind, touching upon the topics of representation and expanding the understanding of cultural diversity in the Culture Kids project in general. The relatively small pool of interviewees and variety of their takeaways make it hard to assess the exact impact of the intercultural networking experience on the participants, as the effects are both direct (i.e., a new project or participation in the activity that can be traced back to the encounter during the networking event) and indirect. This answer to the question about gaining new ideas as a result of the intercultural networking event illustrates the indirect effect:

What I really like about good meetings is the good discussions and I might not take them on immediately ... but there are some kind of seeds that come into my mind and then start growing and maybe blossom one day as an actual doing. And if we are able to produce this material what we were talking with her [participant of foreign background] after our meeting that really could benefit the accessibility of Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra. That would be just a perfect example of this, what came out of it. – Annika Kukkonen, Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra

One more striking example of “planting the seed” came up during the interview with the Culture Kids team. One member expressed a wish for “...this kind of meetings, one-to-one or small group meetings that Dörren does would be happening more often. That somehow it can continue with the same people.”. This sparked more comments from the team members, resulting in the idea quoted below. It considers the peer-to-peer, personal interaction between individuals of diverse cultural backgrounds as an approach to develop the programme together. It is an example of a novel, creative idea that draws upon the connection between individuals which is a common occurrence in the art field but sounds innovative in the context of social inclusion and cultural diversity:

In a way, this changes the whole idea of a network into being something different from these sorts of official networks, something much more flexible, non-official. A network that is based on individual contacts instead of a wide network. It might be interesting to see where this grows, but, basically, it's a network from people to people. All these relationships there interacting, more flexible, more free feeling instead of being a kind of an “official member” of the “official network”. It might be much nicer for people also, to be

connected on this personal level first. – Culture Kids team

Several interviewees were actively thinking about the practical ways to promote and implement cultural diversity and how intercultural networking can help with it. When asked about continuing the discussions started during the networking event, many interviewees replied that these are likely to continue within the Culture Kids project. So, it seems that the objective of organisers to start a process has been met as far as the interviewees' opinions attest.

Overall, the findings discussed in this section align with the growing body of research suggesting that audience engagement is not something to be tackled separately from other organisational areas. The ideas that were exchanged in the context of intercultural networking event appeared to be domain-specific and culture-related. However, information acquired through participation in intercultural networking event had both direct and indirect results, which makes it hard to assess the effect of a single instance of intercultural networking.

5.3.3 Sharing ideas and fears

Surprisingly, the role of intercultural networking as a signalling mechanism appears to a greater extent in the case study than it being a source of novel ideas. The event served as a signal system to indicate to the professionals of the same cultural background who else is interested in cultural diversity. The ideas gained from cultural professionals of the same cultural background were mentioned often. An interviewee who has had a disappointing experience commented as follows:

There were some interesting points at the closing discussion from one participant from another cultural institution. I don't know if anything else stuck to me as an idea to put forward. – anonymous interviewee

Another aspect confirming the role of the networking event as a signal system emerged in comments about who was missing from the event. One interviewee suggested that it would be beneficial for those with the decision-making power within the organisations as well as artistic staff to take part in the intercultural networking. Two other interviewees from organisations of different sizes and art forms expressed the same view. This puts in focus the need for the change to come from the leadership of the organisations and be supported on strategic as well as operational levels within a single workplace:

It's a wholesale change in the attitude of how the organisation works. In many ways, this is up to the director and the board, they are the actual people who need to be convinced that this is important. They are the people who structure the strategic process. I can affect it, but I do not make the decisions.

– Jarkko Lehmus, Cirko - Center for New Circus

What's more, in addition to the presence of individuals, it seemed important for several interviewees to see what other organisations were represented in the networking event. There was a hope for more participation from other institutions involved in Culture Kids. An interviewee from a city organisation was happy to see that a national institution was there and also wished that more representatives of large institutions and private organisations attended networking events. This goes together with the view that the larger art organisations are in a better position to act as champions for cultural and language diversity as far as the resources are concerned (P. Mulari, personal communication, May 24, 2021). The notion harks back to the role of organisational support discussed earlier.

Another view emphasised a need for a space where a shared discussion between organisations going through the process of implementing cultural diversity could happen. Culture Kids is one such platform, where cultural diversity and target age group of children are connected. As the very young age of the kids makes it important for the programme to work for the entire family, and this is where the question of cultural diversity comes in. In this case, the intercultural networking also offered a platform for discussing cultural diversity within the Culture Kids project:

... a possibility to discuss with the people participating and I mean not only with the people from other countries but also with other cultural institutions, museums, theatres and so on. It is very important that we share our ideas and fears. Because this is such a new thing for all of us... It's a learning process for all of us. – Anna Finnilä, Helsinki City Museum

The attendance by itself and seeing each other at the intercultural networking event highlighted to the participants their peers with similar interest in cultural diversity. The prompts about who else should have been present testify the same. Again, this corresponds with the theory that participation in intercultural networking strengthens the dialogue about cultural diversity between the representatives of the same culture (Chua, 2018). The institutions of various sizes

and levels of operation are looking at each other's investment in cultural diversity. This was one side of the event that revealed an unexpected value of intercultural networking event as a space for local art field professionals to expand their understanding of how their colleagues from other institutions view the changes prompted by the increasing cultural diversity. While cultural diversity training (I use this as an example of a common way to start implementing cultural diversity on an organisational level in Finland) is generally offered within a single workplace, the flexibility of the intercultural networking approach allows for more cooperation within the field itself, creating an ecosystem of shared values (Skaggs, 2020), including cultural diversity.

5.3.4 Inspiring change

The final section revisits a prerequisite of implementing successful diversity programmes considered both in diversity and change management. The findings describing intercultural networking as an activity to get the existing staff on board with implementing cultural diversity emerge from the comments around two forces: resistance and motivation.

Culture Kids team affirmed that the resistance towards cultural diversity in the art field if it exists is unintentional. Some possible sources of resistance came up in the interviews. Resistance to change in the close-knit group of people was named as an issue that smaller organisations might face. A situation when creative ideas are coming from someone outside of the group created anxiety about the unknown outcome and was perceived as a loss of control over the production process. Another interviewee, almost quoting from the change management textbook, stressed the importance of staff motivation to accept and feel positive about the alterations. The views of the existing staff who might not always be in favour of the change should be taken into account as part of the process of implementing cultural diversity on an organisational level. Peculiarly, resistance manifested itself indirectly too. Across the interviews, the degree of motivation that arose from the intercultural networking appeared to be affected by individuals' experiences with diversity and the perception of whether they were already doing as much as they could. These opinions evoked the point that intrigued me at the very start of work on this study, namely that openness towards cultural diversity might be existing in the Finnish art field alongside the resistance to changes the implementation of cultural diversity brings (Lahtinen et al., 2020).

It was comforting to observe the hints of how resistance to change manifested itself in the interviews, as its presence is very human, something anyone can relate to. Other feelings that showed in response to the experience of participating in intercultural networking offered ideas counterbalancing the resistance. One is the inspirational potential of intercultural networking. An interviewee shared that their key takeaway was a need to be pro-active in instigating change and that every single individual had a capacity and potential to be a changemaker:

A personal finding that came out of the Dörren experience was the fact that every single person involved in the Culture Kids needs to make the effort or is able to make an effort. Everybody should take a step forward discovering and developing the diversity and inclusion of the project... that's only a personal reflection, but I thought that it was really good showcase to understand that each and every single one can be a change-maker in the process. – Lauri Pokkinen, Finnish National Opera and Ballet

The networking event, being an active experience, created a sense of motivation to continue being active. It offered an alternative example of how cultural diversity could be promoted through individual action. In short, it seems that on an individual level, intercultural networking affected the attitude towards change from something that is happening to us to something that we are making happen:

I think that we have to be more active, and I have to push my colleagues, other educators and curators to be more active to find out the different kinds of ways that the city can offer; and the other organisations can offer. We have to be more active in this area. That's the thing. We can't wait for somebody else to tell us that now you have to do this or that. We have to be proactive in this. That's the big idea I got after the networking event. – Anna Finnilä, Helsinki City Museum

The second component feeding into the topic of attitude and motivation highlighted the perception of intercultural networking as an experience with an ability to drive the change from within. Intercultural networking puts a face on the otherwise abstract idea of cultural diversity:

...any change needs to come from the inside. Any change needs to be informed by personal experience. We can understand the need for something on an intellectual and conceptual level, but to see the value, to feel that it is

actually important, that needs to stem from a personal experience. That's what I believe in. Hence why the intercultural networking is important because it facilitates personal experience. – Jarkko Lehmus, Cirko – Center for New Circus

I also wish to point at the distinction between motivation inspired by intercultural networking and an impetus for local cultural professionals to participate in intercultural networking. The latter was described in the section about interaction. However, it turned out that gaining something practical from the networking experience is not necessarily the reason that made the process itself satisfying. Harking back to the role of shared professional background, this distinction is explored through the notion of a “good match”. As the interviewees who sounded very enthusiastic about the event and those who were mildly pleased based their emotional responses to the experience on how successful they perceived their match was.

In the context of the Culture Kids networking event, the participants who left satisfied haven't expressed any alternative ideas or wishes about the process of matchmaking itself. What is more, a participant who has had a rewarding experience suggested that intercultural networking could work well even for people who do not share a common professional background. On the other pole is an interviewee who stressed the importance of matching “right people in the right fields”. They left the event disappointed, partially because they felt it was not much that they could offer to their counterpart:

We had a nice conversation, was interesting to know about her background, and I told her about my background and so on. But I didn't feel that I had much to give her, and I don't know if she found interesting what I've been doing. In a professional way that we could help each other and give each other contacts, I don't think that we have anything really in that way to give each other. – anonymous interviewee

Both these examples point at the importance of match for intercultural networking, reaffirming that a no match is better than a bad match. What is more, in this case, the experience of the matchmaking was either satisfying or not and the unsatisfactory match was the match that was perceived as an interaction where parties could not give anything to each other. It could be that the difference in professional interests was a main reason to account for such an interaction. However, it also transpired that the perfect professional match might not be necessary to create

a rewarding intercultural networking experience. Even when the matched professionals came from different art fields, the positive feeling of being able to help, the possibility to share contacts or arrange introductions provided a gratifying experience:

I think it's wonderful that we have this kind of networking possibilities like Dörren. It's like what happened with me. There is a lot that I can give to the individual who is coming from a different field than I am, as, of course, as a native working in the creative arts sector, I have connections that matter to this person. I was really happy to open up my connections and to introduce this person to my contacts. – Lauri Pokkinen, Finnish National Opera and Ballet

There is not enough data to explain the differences in individual's perception of the match. It could be down to the notorious "click" between people, or reciprocity that in case of an unsatisfying match might have been perceived as lacking. What follows with more certainty, however, is that the ability of intercultural networking to motivate change can be, in a way, attributed to its ability to promote solidarity and shift the focus from differences between the subgroups to the wider network that the art field is.

In addition, these examples strengthen the idea that the individual networking experience affected the perception of the overall event experience. Which led to further inclination or disinclination to participate in intercultural networking and share the experience with others. For example, one especially happy interviewee wanted to have the networking event organised for their colleagues at work and spread the concept of intercultural networking by Dörren. In instance, when the participant hasn't enjoyed their experience much, they expressed caution in suggestion intercultural networking as something that could be done within their workplace.

Finally, across all interviews, the notion that the interaction occurring within the intercultural networking was a key for understanding cultural diversity appeared strongly. In the words of one of the participants, the strength of intercultural networking lies precisely in the interaction it creates and understanding it provides:

It's really about the people and connections, so networking is this key thing in understanding diversity and cultural differences. – Pirjetta Mulari, Annantalo

Interaction as an essence of intercultural networking aligns with the Grubb et al. (2009) view of cultural diversity as an interaction between cultures and reminds of Édouard Glissant's concept of *mondialité* where "establishing relations with the other" (Glissant, n.d., as cited in Obrist & Raza, 2017) is the opposite of globalisation-induced distancing.

6 CONCLUSIONS

In the final chapter, I answer the research question and outline a model that links intercultural networking in art organisations with audience development and changes in society based on the empirical findings of this case study. In line with this study's approach and epistemological perspective, there is no absolute objectivity. My view comes from a standpoint of an art manager and a person who believes that small but regular actions are the building blocks of impressive and powerful changes. As this research is bound by limitations associated with the case study methodology and the findings have not yet been confirmed by other studies, the readers will have to determine how transferable the results are for their specific circumstances.

6.1 Benefits of intercultural networking

The starting point of the research was to explore why and how to use intercultural networking for promotion and implementation of cultural diversity in art organisations. The “why” part of the question addresses what exactly intercultural networking can offer as an activity supporting cultural diversity. The review of the existing studies provided two ideas for answering the question. Firstly, by considering the organisational benefits of implementing cultural diversity. The existing research emphasises more and more the connection between success in reaching out to diverse audiences and implementing cultural diversity in an art organisation's operations. The pragmatic explanation of this connection is based on the knowledge network framework that explains how the information flow leads to an organisation's ability to learn and innovate. In the context of art and culture field, this is related to the question of representation and how an organisation maintains its relevance in the changing society. The case study afforded a perfect combination to explore this angle, as the Culture Kids and Dörren networking event gathered art field professionals of local and foreign backgrounds to discuss together an audience development question: “How can we make Culture Kids attractive to all families living in Helsinki?”. The results indicate that intercultural networking event provided culture-related novel ideas and encouraged dialogue and exchange of information between representatives of different cultural backgrounds. The findings also captured the indirect effect of intercultural networking, labelled by one of the interviewees as “planting the seed”.

The second part of answering the “why” question was focused on the notion that getting the existing staff on board (local art field professionals in our case) is a key to implementing

organisational change, including change associated with cultural diversity. As an effective method for implementation and promotion of cultural diversity, intercultural networking would affect local art field professionals in such a way as to increase motivation towards promotion of cultural diversity and foster the relationship of trust and reciprocity between individuals. In the setting of the Culture Kids and Dörren networking event, the participants came together on equal terms and the element of reciprocity was present. The experience of intercultural networking instilled motivation in the local art field professionals to take further active steps to promote cultural diversity. Several interviewees referred to intercultural networking as a personal experience that drove change from within.

There are two themes that emerged from findings regarding the effects of intercultural networking on individuals.

- **Valorisation of interaction.** The social networks theories are examining the nodes and interactions between them, but what the findings showed was the value attributed to the interaction. The case study re-affirmed it is likely that art professionals of local and foreign background are often members of very different networks. However, there is an interest and willingness to broaden the networks. Encouraging weak ties (Granovetter, 1973) between individuals of diverse cultural backgrounds, intercultural networking plays a role in how the information is distributed not only between individuals but also between different networks they are part of. The experience was perceived as inspiring by the local art field professionals. Interestingly, while the experience depended upon the perception of the match itself, the similarity of professional experience could be accounted for a good match just partially. The feeling of reciprocity rose from whether the participants felt that there was something they could give professionally to their match and whether their colleague of a foreign background expressed interest. The idea that the interaction itself was a valuable element of intercultural networking contributes to the case for facilitation of change stemming from activity, rather than from a top-down directive.
- **Local art field as a culturally diverse ecosystem.** The opportunity to explore the case where the networking event was organised for multiple organisations developing the Culture Kids programme revealed a value of a shared space where ideas and concerns about cultural diversity could be discussed across organisations that differ in size, scale, and location. Considering the role of peer support in the art field (Skaggs, 2020) and

the interest participants expressed in who else was present, the intercultural networking showed its capacity in strengthening the dialogue on the topic of cultural diversity between the representatives of the same culture (Chua, 2018). What is more, the event created environment for art professionals of diverse backgrounds to address a question of cultural diversity in the context of audience development. The event served as a reminder that everyone operates in the same art field and the increasing diversity in society is a factor that influences everyone who lives in Finland. Fostering a shared ecosystem, where cultural diversity is accepted as a source of knowledge and development is a benefit of intercultural networking.

To sum up, intercultural networking in the context of the Culture Kids and Dörren networking event showed the properties associated with a successful cultural diversity programme and appeared to encourage information flow and exchange of ideas. Intercultural networking event manifested itself as a place where ideas and interaction converge (Sieck et al., 2010), where weak ties between individuals, known to be more effective than strong ties for spreading information, are created (Granovetter, 1973), and the participation overall is an active experience for participants (Fine & Kleiman, 1983). What is more, there seemed to be a connection between interaction within the setting of intercultural networking event and the motivation to promote cultural diversity that this experience enhanced in some participants. The opportunity that intercultural networking afford is in how it affects individuals. And, as a psychologist Harriet Lerner wrote in *The Dance of Intimacy*: “Although the connections are not always obvious, personal change is inseparable from social and political change.”

6.2 Organisational support for interaction

Now I answer the “how” part of the research question, drawing on the elements of organisational support necessary for cultural diversity implementation. While the effects of intercultural networking on individuals present a potential for getting the existing staff on board, the organisational support is what makes the changes last. Recalling the “double-edged sword” metaphor describing the diversity in the workplace, findings organised here are relevant to how the intercultural networking event created effects described in the previous section. On the premise that the interaction between art field professionals of local and foreign backgrounds is what makes intercultural networking valuable, the organisational support should be aimed at

creating the conditions where the interaction could happen and be experienced in a satisfying way.

The findings highlighted the importance of understanding what cultural diversity can bring to the project in the long-term, which is aligned with the existing research that any implementation must start from planning, understanding and commitment on the strategic level (Grubb et al., 2009; Tillery & Rutledge, 2009; Roberge et al., 2011). The Culture Kids and Dörren networking event created open and relaxed atmosphere with a low threshold for participation. The event served as a good example of collaboration in addressing cultural diversity. The case also indicated a potential of lessening the capacity constraints associated with implementing cultural diversity by cooperation with the existing initiatives. The findings highlighted the role of Culture Kids' strategic perspective on diversity as a source of learning (Ely & Thomas, 2001) and the potential of collaboration with networking programme such as Dörren. The case study also showed a connection between facilitation and the environment of the event. The latter, a pre-requisite for the interaction between cultures (Barwick, 2017). The connection was not surprising, as the existing knowledge indicates the importance of facilitation for implementing cultural diversity. Then, the elements such as structure of the event and communications about the event appeared as more concrete examples of how the experience of interaction can be facilitated. In this case, the common discussion at the end worked well for sharing ideas talked over in pairs and small groups and touching upon the topics that missed from some of the smaller groups conversations. The commentary about the communications pointed at the role of mitigating uncertainty that the experience of intercultural networking event contains.

The practical implications of the findings stem from two themes:

- **Strategic perspective on cultural diversity.** Cultural policy, focused on the social benefits of art and culture, approaches cultural diversity from a different standing than an art organisation might or should. Looking at the implementation challenge through the lenses of the strategic perspectives on cultural diversity in organisations (Ely & Thomas, 2001), it is more likely that accessibility and non-discrimination perspectives are driven by the political action. These perspectives reflect the societal change, but not necessarily specify why or how art organisations can develop and implement cultural diversity within the workplace. The micro and macro levels get confused. On an organisational or project level it is beneficial to explore an alternative perspective which

co-exists with the important cause of advocating equality and addressing structural racism. However, its goal is not political, but practical. The findings of this case study suggest that looking at cultural diversity as a source of knowledge is a strategic view that offers an organisation or a project team clarity on what value cultural diversity brings on organisational level. This perspective serves as a starting point of introducing change to the existing staff, communicating and promoting cultural diversity as organisational value rather than societal value. Intuitively, approaching cultural diversity as a source of learning feels more agreeable than having to address it because of the requirement to be accessible and inclusive. The change in perspective is empowering too, turning the implementation of cultural diversity into a practical action that is within the control of organisations.

- **Mitigating uncertainty.** In societies where national culture scores high on the Hofstede avoidance of uncertainty scale, mitigation of this factor might require more consideration and thinking. This aspect of facilitating intercultural encounters appeared in the previous research in Finland that found that support and sympathy from leaders helped to lessen the strain in cross-cultural encounters (Hagqvist et al., 2020). However, as the benefit of intercultural networking lies in its effects on individuals, the variety of backgrounds, attitudes and perceptions the individuals bring to the intercultural networking with them also influences the experience they have or the insights they gain, rather than the generic attributes of the national culture. This variety makes mitigation of uncertainty a tricky task for the organisers of intercultural networking. Understanding who will take part in the networking event is one way to come up with the mitigation strategy. Several factors that are likely to affect the experience of participation in the intercultural networking event rose from this case study findings: previous exposure to or experience with cultural diversity, the expectations about the event itself including its structure, goals, and length, and the expectations around the communications. Knowing the participants would help to determine the required balance between the freedom that comes with the element of uncertainty and comfort that could be achieved by firmer guidelines. In any case, establishing the common ground between the participants should take extra care when the intercultural networking events are introduced in either organisations or projects. Allowing sufficient time for networking itself, emphasising the clear goals for the event, familiarising with guidelines for participation and preparation ahead of the event can offer individuals a degree of predictability.

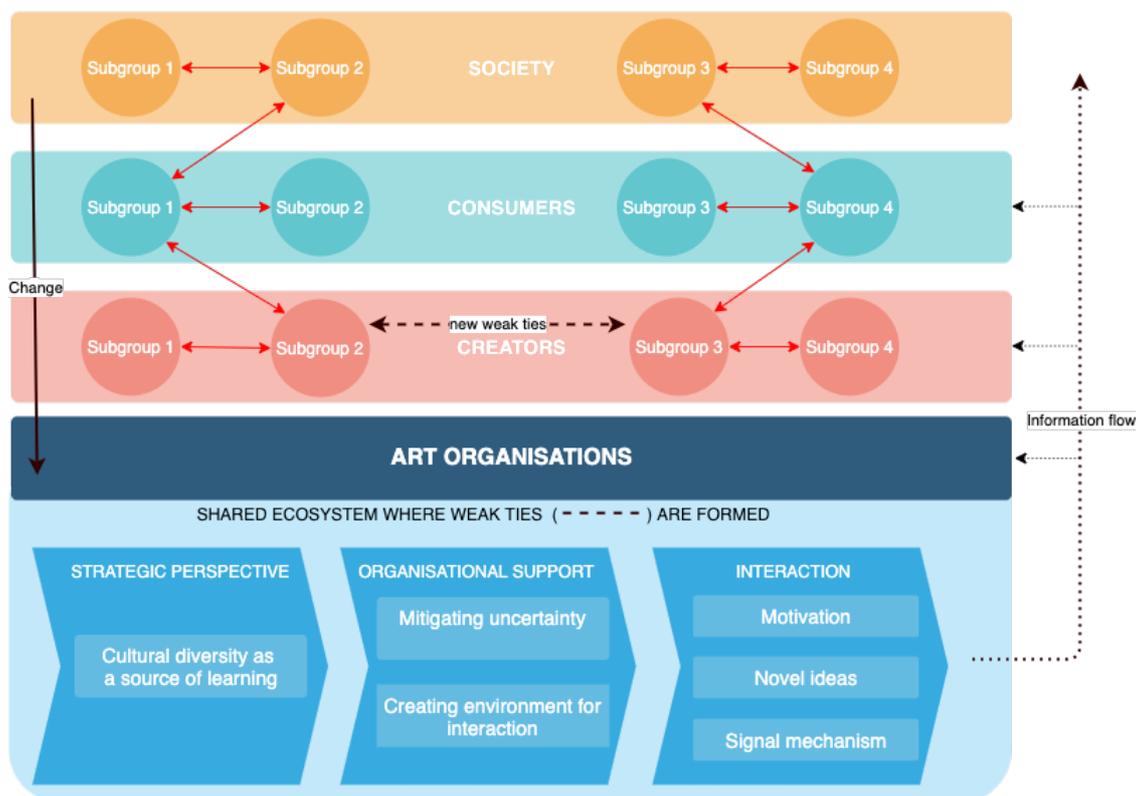
To sum up, both strategic and operational conditions identified in the existing research as favourable for fostering interaction between cultures were manifested in this study. The perspective on cultural diversity as a source of learning on the strategic level, communications, facilitation, length, and structure of the intercultural networking event that balance mitigation of uncertainty and freedom all feed into the creating a space for intercultural networking that enables the flow of ideas and open discussion between the professionals of diverse cultural backgrounds.

6.3 Intercultural networking in the art field model

The model visualises the connections between the themes discussed in this case study. It is organised in layers that influence upon each other, and their nature is complementary rather than hierarchical. As a framework, I used the knowledge network (Seufert et al., 1999) and cultural diamond (Alexander, 2003) models, complemented by several other theories (Granovetter, 1973; Ely & Thomas, 2001; Chua, 2018) that found reflection in findings.

Figure 4.

Intercultural networking in the art field



The cultural diamond (Alexander, 2003) outlines the connections between society, art, creators, consumers, and distributors. However, each of these large segments consist of many subgroups. In turn, some of the subgroups interact more between each other (represented with red arrows), others have limited interactions. The model schematically illustrates the gap in communication between different subgroups in SOCIETY, among different audience segments (CONSUMERS), and in the art field (CREATORS). The distributors are presented in the model as ART ORGANISATIONS. While art is not included as a separate segment, it would be affected by and would affect the interactions that the model depicts. The change in society that calls for transformations in art organisations is represented by a solid line arrow. It cuts through CONSUMERS and CREATORS layers to show that the change affects these segments as well.

The knowledge network in the context of this case study is an approach that art organisations can take to address the change. It follows from the “Strategic Perspective” on cultural diversity as a source of learning. The actions aimed at mitigating uncertainty and creating an environment for interaction (“Organisational Support”) support the strategic perspective. An art organisation creates a shared ecosystem to foster interaction between art professionals of diverse cultural backgrounds as a way to gain knowledge, exchange ideas, create information flow and, in the long-term, be able to innovate and remain relevant in the changing society. The strategic perspective and organisational support provide a setting for what is happening within the intercultural networking event.

An interaction between representatives of subgroups that otherwise are unlikely to meet is what the intercultural networking facilitates. The “Interaction” box represents the essence of the event, which is the meeting between individuals and, as the case study findings suggest, holds a potential to motivate change. It also reflects the dual effect of intercultural networking as a source of creative novel ideas springing from cultural diversity and a signalling mechanism (Chua, 2018). The interaction within a shared ecosystem forms the so-called “weak ties” (Granovetter, 1973). The weak ties (represented by the dashed line arrow) are an effective type of relationship between people to spread information across different subgroups. The relationship is reciprocal and generally mutually beneficial. The professionals of foreign backgrounds establish relationships locally, increase their exposure to the local art field and chances for meaningful employment. The professionals of local background widen their networks as well and increase the probability that their projects and the programmes of their art organisations would be known to networks the foreign-born professionals they met are part

of, but they are not. The model illustrates how new weak ties, formed as a result of interaction between individuals, create a new connection between subgroups in the CREATORS layer, in turn establishing a link between subgroups in CONSUMERS and SOCIETY layers.

The case study findings around the exchange of information suggest three roles that intercultural networking event can play to support promotion and implementation of cultural diversity within a single workplace or project, art field or even among audiences. These three possible avenues are represented by the “Information flow” dotted arrow. Firstly, as a platform to exchange ideas and information, that both have direct and indirect effect on creativity and working practices (dotted arrow to ART ORGANISATIONS). Secondly, as an outlet where art field professionals of local and foreign backgrounds could discuss ideas and concerns about cultural diversity (dotted arrow to CREATORS). Finally, as a way of developing programmes together, where art professionals regardless of what their cultural background may be tackle shared challenge of living and creating art in diverse society (dotted arrow to CONSUMERS). In short, the flow goes from creating a space for encounters where the exchange of ideas happens through the core of networking, an interaction. In the point where interaction is happening the cultural diversity manifests its value and that’s where the potential to channel it back from the art field to society exists.

6.4 Further Research

This case study only scratched the surface of research in intercultural networking as a method for promoting and implementing cultural diversity in the art field. There are many directions that further research can take. Considering intercultural networking events from a broader perspective recalls the ideas of Smith (1999) regarding the influence of individuals on the social context and the simultaneous impact of social structure on individuals. Therefore, an intercultural networking event as a case study affords an opportunity for learning about the influence of individual and social aspects on, in this instance, cultural diversity in a particular setting, organisation, industry, or country.

For example, these are the ideas that stem directly from this case:

- conduct several more case studies of intercultural networking events for implementing cultural diversity in the art projects to tests and compare findings

- a study of intercultural networking event effects in the setting of a single workplace to assess how it might work in the organisational context rather than in the scope of a project
- conduct a follow up study with the Culture Kids programme to see if the ideas stimulated by the intercultural networking experience came to fruition and if so, how they developed overtime.

The study explored one benefit, associated with cultural diversity, creativity. It would be interesting to explore how cultural diversity in the context of an art organisation might affect another parameter often associated with it, financial performance. How intercultural networking could be used as a starting point for developing artistic activities, programming, and audience development is another avenue.

To explore the effects of intercultural networking on the local art field professionals further, it would be interesting to dig deeper into what makes professional match satisfying and explore factors affecting interaction. Further research into intercultural networking with a dyadic approach to interaction where both sides of the story could be explored would provide a fuller picture as well.

Finally, the strategic perspectives on cultural diversity in art organisations can be explored and whether it is indeed affected by the cultural policy discourse. Considering the significance of strategic perspective on micro level, it would be valuable to map the current situation and see whether and how practices change when the perspective changes.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Observation notes – Dörren networking event

Culture Kids networking event by Dörren. 10:00-11:25, 5 March 2021, in Zoom

Many people have their cameras on. Facilitator, who explains how the programme is going, what to expect, creates a safer space for people to interact.

Importance of introductions to facilitate the encounters (like, when at OTS (Office of Treaty Settlements) we went to meet Maori groups with a mediator, or when you are looking for new connections in the cultural field, you ask those you know for recommendation. Same here?)

Meeting is fully facilitated by Dörren Event Coordinator, Culture Kids and other Dörren team members are also present. Altogether there are 37 people, 29 of them will be matched to have discussions in smaller groups.

Many organisations present: Amos Rex, FNOB, Svenska Teatern, Tanssiteatern.

Dörren provides support with their facilitation for both Culture Kids, as a hosting party, and participants. Important factor to keep everyone on the same page, letting people know what to expect during the event – TK does this consistently throughout the event.

TK provides the brief overview of the day and what happens next.

Then Culture Kids give a brief presentation of their programme and pose a question they hope everyone to discuss after the individual networking – How to make Culture Kids attractive for all families in Helsinki?

Then LG from Luckan gives a little inspirational speech about importance of meetings between people based on what they have in common: parenting and music in his example. Lucia celebration in Finland is already a testament of how culture can merge and create a beautiful festival experience – cultures mixed together in a unique celebration of Lucia – and incredible example of meeting between people.

After the speech by LG participants split into groups for networking.

In the main group, Dörren and Culture Kids teams having a little debrief. Meanwhile TK and another Coordinator from Dörren are keeping a close eye (both in Zoom chat and their phones) in case anyone needs support. There were still last minute confirmations, and also some people haven't turned up despite confirming.

TK says it is unusual when there are more door openers than participants, which is the case in this event. This might mean that there is a wish in cultural field to build links?

TK confirms the numbers: 5 groups with 3 people, and 7 groups with 2 people in them.

A asks about the conversation guide provided by Dörren and G explains the questions that help matched pair to engage in the conversation, noting that, of course, it's also about chemistry, spontaneity and getting to know each other for the most part.

Then TK explains to Culture Kids how matches are made:

Dominant sector was culture and cultural information, and ideal match is based on sector-subsector – profession. Some matches today writers / musicians / comms & marketing / arts & crafts.

The meeting has great energy – TK keeps the ball rolling with ensuring people feel welcome, heard and informed about what's coming next.

After everyone comes back to the main room, the group photo has been taken (those who did not want to be on the picture could turn off their cameras.

Then quick poll has been shared as a temperature check for how the meeting has gone.

The discussion ensued that went on for about 25 minutes, around the question posed at the start of the event: How to make Culture Kids attractive for all families in Helsinki?

Predominantly door openers shared their thoughts, but several participants also expressed their views.

At the ends there was a wish from door openers to exchange contacts with participants and continue conversation after the networking event. – TK promised to share contacts with pairs via e-mail.

Meeting has had a good energy to it and finished with many thank yous and smiles

Appendix 2. Interview questions

Questions for Dörren Event Coordinator:

1. How networking events are different from individual meetings between DO & PA?
2. What are the most challenging aspects in relation to matchmaking process for intercultural networking?
3. There are different ways for organisation to engage with Dörren, in your opinion, what factors affect which way is chosen?
4. What are the goals organisations have when approaching Dörren to organise networking events?
5. For networking events, how do you see the role of the organisation itself to contribute to the outcome of the networking event?
6. What is the role of Dörren as facilitator?
7. How important in your opinion the organisation's commitment to the value of cultural diversity to the positive outcome of the networking event?
8. What other factors could be important?
9. How was organising networking event for arts & culture professionals different from other industries/fields?

Questions for Culture Kids team:

1. What is the profile of cultural professionals who represent their organisations in Culture Kids programme?
2. In your opinion, do you think the cultural organisations in metropolitan area recognise the demographic change and a subsequent need for an organisational change?
3. Do you think there is a resistance towards the change in cultural institutions?
4. Do you feel that art organisations are getting out of their comfort zone to implement the diversity programmes?
5. In your opinion, what effect does Culture Kids has on the cultural organisations in their efforts to increase cultural diversity?
6. What was the key outcome of the work undertaken by the diversity agent?
7. Do you know how Culture Kids actors network with the organisations that represent minority groups in Finland?
8. What are, in your opinion, the most challenging aspects in relation to creating spaces for intercultural networking /encounters in cultural field?

9. How in your experience the challenges you have mentioned been mitigated/facilitated by Dörren?
10. What role did Culture Kids play as an organiser of the networking event?
11. Do you think it was important for the actors that the invitation came from you?
12. Were Culture Kids key goals for the networking event fulfilled?
13. How important in your opinion the organisation's commitment to the value of cultural diversity to the positive outcome of the networking event?
14. What other factors could be important?
15. How would you compare professional intercultural networking to other activities promoting cultural diversity in the arts and culture field in Finland?

Questions for local cultural professionals who have participated in the networking event by Culture Kids and Dörren:

1. How diverse is your existing professional network in Finland?
2. How was your overall experience during the Culture Kids networking event?
3. How would you describe the atmosphere of the networking event?
4. How was your match?
5. How important for your overall experience was the support provided during the whole process of registration, participation, and following up on the networking event?
6. How did you feel afterwards?
7. Have you gained any new ideas or perspectives through your participation in the Culture Kids networking event?
8. Any ideas that could contribute directly to your work?
9. How would you continue conversations with any colleagues who you met during the Culture Kids networking event?
10. Based on your recent experience, how do you see the role of professional intercultural networking for promoting and implementing cultural diversity?

Added for the last two interviews:

11. In your opinion, who else should have been present at the intercultural networking event?
12. What organisations do you use and see as partners for implementing and promoting cultural diversity?

Appendix 3. Interview transcript samples

Interview [TRANSCRIPT]

18.03.2022

10:00-11.10

in Zoom

What is the profile of cultural professionals who represent the organisations in the Culture Kids programme, what are their roles within their organisations?

- It depends on the organisation and its size. In bigger organisations, they are usually people who work with audience development, in smaller they are the project managers. Many organisations are represented by their directors, like in Tanssin talo or Cirko. The titles are different, it varies organisation to organisation, whether it is a museum or whether it is an orchestra. Usually, they are people who we call tuottaja (producers) in Finnish (project managers or coordinators in English).

Do you think the cultural organisations in metropolitan area recognise the demographic change and subsequent change that might happen to the organisations themselves?

- Yes, when we started to talk to these organisations about the Culture Kids programme that was the number one thing that was at stake, the change that is happening in Helsinki and that this is one of the ways how Helsinki is trying to stay on top of the development. So, they definitely have been thinking about it when they have been joining the programme.

There seems to be a lot of goodwill for the change to happen, but do you think there is a resistance from cultural institutions towards the change?

- Not intentional, I would say.
- That is very well said, yes, not intentional. There might be that the further away you go from the directors, as the directors see the big picture, they know why we have to be here, but the further you go, you can see the attitude change sometimes.

Implementing diversity programs is, in a way, getting out of one's comfort zone. Do you think participation in the Culture Kids programme pushes the organisations outside of their comfort zone?

- Yes, I think for many it does
- It is also not only about the diversity, but also the age range that we have here that encourages stepping to new areas. Many organisations have never worked with babies before.

Interview [TRANSCRIPT]

29.04.2022

9:00-9:45

in Zoom

How diverse is your existing professional network?

It's not so diverse. I think the most important group of citizens from other countries I am interacting with are students. They are coming to learn Finnish language, so we have this selkosuomea guided groups and workshops. It's a popular activity for students to work on something with their hands and learn basic Finnish. We also have some cultural coffee programmes at the museum. But mostly we interact with the students and it's mostly in a way that we are teaching them something. Not so much that they are sharing with us, and we are listening to them. That's something that I hope we could do more.

How would you describe the overall experience of the networking event in your own words?

I think it was a very good event and I think it is seldom we have a possibility to meet so many different people from different countries. I have had a very nice discussion with my partner, Anne, a student from Nigeria. She had been studying and working in Tampere, and then the pandemic happened, and she could no longer work there, so she moved to Helsinki. She has been studying Finnish language here, but her main topic during the studies was related to culture. Marketing, if I remember right. It was very nice to have a discussion with her, but I noticed that she had never been to Helsinki City Museum. She didn't know so much about the museum field in general. It's not so easy to reach the interesting people, if they don't come with some group, or with teachers and that's a question we were talking about in relation to Culture Kids. That can be a problem if the museums are not known to the families. How would they get interested in coming? And we have a good discussion about that with Anne.

Have you gained any new ideas or perspectives through the participation in the event and networking?

I think there are some ideas, in the other groups as well, that we have discussed with Anne about the Culture Kids. It would be very nice if there could be some people in the different kinds of community groups, we talked about the Somali or Arabic groups, for example. So, there could be some people who community members really trust and would listen to, who could be like kummisetä, kummi (godparents). Who could show that it is very easy to go to the exhibition, that this is something that doesn't require one to be or behave in some special way. One doesn't have to know much about it or wear special clothes or something. People can have many kinds of questions, like what do I have to do when I go to a place like that? And it's very good if there is a person who can tell and who would be trusted when saying that Culture Kids events are matala kynnyks (low threshold). And another thing that we were discussing was that as the programme is for very small children, it should be made so that the language is not so important. It's more about other things: music and drama and showing pictures and items and playing, having a nice time together. And using words only a little bit. Yes, that kind of things.

Appendix 4. Samples of the categories' development process

Current network

JL 1. My professional network is global. But that said, it is still quite Eurocentric. So, to be honest, not very diverse.

AF 1. mostly we interact with the students and it's mostly in a way that we are teaching them something. Not so much that they are sharing with us and we are listening to them

Match

JL 3. For the actual one-on-one discussion, I was paired with a person from Holland, from the Netherlands and, in a way, we share similar cultural backgrounds. So, from that perspective the only diversity aspects that we were talking about were language barrier and networks. Where do a person who has moved from another European country find the cultural events that they decide to go to? So, from that perspective it was quite narrow

AF 3. I have had a very nice discussion with my partner.

AA 15. we had such different interests. We had a nice conversation, was interesting to know about her background, and I told her about my background and so on. But I didn't feel that I had much to give her, and I don't know if she found interesting what I've been doing and so on. In a professional way that we could help each other and give each other contacts, I don't think that we have anything really in that way to give each other.

LP 16. It's like what happened with me there is a lot that I can give to the individual who is coming from different field than I am, but of course as a native working in the creative arts sector, I have connections that matter to this person. So, I was really happy to open up my connections and to introduce this person to my contacts and the person got real connection with the person on the list. So that was in a way an active tool,

Support during the event

JL 4. The facilitation was good. It was easy.

PM 22. I think all the information before hand was very efficient it really got me interested.

AA 6. As a whole, it left me a bit confused and a little disappointed. Because first of all there was not much info given to us about how it was supposed to happen and the info that was given to me before the event was just saying that if you want to, then you may look at this info beforehand, but it's not compulsory. At least that was the idea that I got from it.

Structure of the event

JL 5. The open discussions were interesting as well. They brought a little bit more of questions of diversity and representation that didn't really figure in the one-on-one discussion that I had with the person I was matched with.

PM 11. As you could find towards the end, it was actually people started really having questions. So many times it is that first hour might be a bit slow and then you know once it gets going. So, I feel like there could have been even more discussion in the end.

Atmosphere / common ground

JL 6. It was relaxed, easy. Clearly, the participants who were there were already invested in culture and the arts. So, in that way we had a common ground. I think that's the nature of this kind of events that the people who are already interested would take part. From the perspective of trying to reach people that we don't already reach, it didn't really serve that purpose. Preaching to the already converted.

Planting the seed

JL 7. I gained some practical network ideas, like who should we contact, where do the communities of people who don't speak Finnish meet each other. What is the social network that the person that I was paired with was part of, but I, for example, wasn't. So that was interesting. Many practical questions of how many languages and which channels can be used for communicating. Those were some ideas. But also, how can we make Cirko as organisation more accessible and more representative of the citizenship and the demographics of Helsinki as a city. I was processing those questions but still don't have any practical answers to them. At least, the discussions facilitated the process of thinking about those questions which is a very good thing.

AK 19. But the most important maybe for me was the sense of excitement. That was coming out of our discussion. there are some kind of seeds that come into my mind and then start growing in my mind and. Maybe blossom one day as an actual doing. And if we are able to produce this material what we were talking with her after our meeting that really could benefit the accessibility of Helsinki Philharmonic Orchestra. that would be just a perfect example of this, what came out of it.

Appendix 5. Mind maps of theme development process

