



ArtsEqual: Equality as the future path for the arts and arts education services

**UNIARTS
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Research grounded in the work of over one hundred scholars

Five universities and research institutes took part in the operations of the ArtsEqual consortium (2015–2021): the University of the Arts Helsinki (coordinating institution), the Center for Cultural Policy Research (Cupore), the Lappeenranta–Lahti University of Technology (LUT), the University of Turku, and the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health. The consortium included six research groups that have produced over 200 research publications to date. The research has also resulted in the compilation of 13 policy briefs and three info briefs. The research of the consortium has been supported by scholars from partner universities and research institutes both in Finland and abroad, and the project’s results have been shared in discussions with representatives of different fields. This report presents a summary of the results of the ArtsEqual project. For more information about the project’s publications, please visit the project’s website at <https://sites.uniarts.fi/en/web/artsequal/results>.



Sponsored pricing

Maintenance of class

Early spaces

A fairer perception of quality of life

Structures in practices

Stereotypes of peoples' interests

Social class related habits

Unequal distribution of educational

Subject matter

Carriers by artists themselves

Stereotypes of producers

Linguistic access in...

Producers lack of knowledge?

Active people that participate

Introduction: ArtsEqual - alternatives to inequality mechanisms

The arts are not just a privilege to be enjoyed by the elite. Instead, the arts belong to everyone regardless of their age, place of residence, language, nationality, ethnic, socioeconomic or cultural background, type of residence permit, gender, sexual orientation, health or ability to function, situation in life, or presumed “talent”. Personal involvement in the arts not only creates experiences that are meaningful to people; it also increases their cultural participation more generally. This has positive spill-over effects, such as improved well-being and a good quality of life, that will extend long into the future. It is everyone’s fundamental right to be allowed to participate in the arts and cultural activities, to make use of art and culture in communal and personal development throughout the lifespan, and to be able to express themselves without restrictions.

The right for everyone to participate in the arts will not be accomplished automatically, which is why the ArtsEqual project has worked towards identifying factors that may prevent people from participating in the arts. The project also made policy recommendations that could break the cycle of vulnerability through active measures and examined the existing policies and services within the field of arts from an ethical perspective. The research focused on the need for institutional change, outreach work, and the creation of individualised arts services for children, young people, immigrants, people with disabilities, older people, and prisoner

populations. Furthermore, the researchers investigated the development of intergenerational policies and the creation of activities and political processes that would help reduce the elitism associated with the arts.

The project posed the following question: “What if equality was adopted as the basis of all publicly-funded arts and arts education services in Finland?”

Multisectoral, multidisciplinary, and multi-methods research

The ArtsEqual project regarded activities in the arts and arts education sectors as a unique operational system from the perspective of cultural history; one that has been gradually shaped through social practices and which produces services in the arts and arts education sectors to people living in Finland. The project investigated problems related to this service system from a multisectoral, multidisciplinary, and multi-methods perspective. The case studies focused on several fields of the arts, such as fine arts, opera, music, dance, theatre, and circus art, as well as museum work. In addition to researchers working on questions pertaining to art studies, artistic research, and art education, the project members included researchers from, e.g., the social sciences, economics, behavioural sciences, legal research, and philosophy. The research was carried out from various perspectives, including human rights research, the sociology of the arts, indigenous studies, gender studies, cultural studies, physical education, neuroscience, organisation research, religious studies, social anthropology, systems research, public administration theory, and political science.

An extensive nationwide project

During the project, early-career researchers and doctoral students from different universities, as well as artists from various art organisations who had expressed an interest in the topics studied by ArtsEqual, were invited to take part in the project's activities. The project proved to be an attractive research environment, bringing together researchers, artists, and experts across different sectors and academic disciplines. At the start of the project, over 30 researchers were studying questions pertaining to the arts and equality. In the spring of 2021, by contrast, nearly 100 researchers, artists, and doctoral students contributed to the themes examined in the project.

The focus of academic and sociopolitical discourse on equality has gradually shifted to themes related to growing inequality and vulnerability. Research on inequality is by no means a new innovation in the field of the arts, but previous research has not attempted to consider the entire national service system as comprehensively as the current project. The research carried out in ArtsEqual included examinations of the grassroots-level work done by artists and arts educators, as well as more comprehensive, systemic investigations of individual case studies. ArtsEqual was the first project that not only identified unequal policies in the arts but also tried to find solutions to the question of how an individual nation's arts and arts education services can be developed from the perspective of equality. Although the project did not cover the entire arts and arts education service system in Finland, one of its goals was to increase our general understanding of the structural roots and consequences of inequality from the perspective of the participation and well-being of various groups, while also engaging in intersectoral work. The project adopted a holistic approach to the arts and equality, examining

the phenomenon at different levels. As a consequence, the research questions were formulated both from the perspective of the prevailing discourse in the arts (tendencies and attitudes) and the responsibilities of the arts institutions and people employed in them. The ArtsEqual project made use of systems thinking, according to which society is conceptualised as a complex system where different sectors can be investigated as interacting subsystems. These subsystems include, for example, the arts sector, the education sector, the healthcare sector, and the social sector. According to systems thinking, every social system will adapt according to the demands of time (social demands and trends) and place (human needs, demands of the environment and changes therein). Professions in present-day society have become increasingly specialised and divergent, and this has also decreased the level of interaction between people. The subsystems mentioned above are in a key position if we are to remedy the situation (e.g., Casciaro et al., 2019). The increased divergence of the different sectors in society continues to discourage interaction, communication, and collaboration across sectors, thus making it more difficult for people working in these sectors to reach common goals (Hatch & Cunliffe, 2013, p. 161).

A plurality of voices and tension

A civilised democracy promotes diversity and encourages a plurality of voices. It also allows us to adopt different perspectives when examining the question of what we mean by the arts and arts education. The field of arts is fragmented, the concept of the arts is divergent, and the professional identity of the artist is in flux, and yet the discussions concerning the central values of the arts frequently become polarised: some focus on the autonomous role of the arts,

while others argue that art should be actively used as a means for social change. In the ArtsEqual project, the researchers were particularly interested in critically evaluating how questions pertaining to equality and wide-ranging social and economic changes were manifested in the operations of institutions working in the field of arts and arts education. The research was informed by the experiences of the participants and the work done by the artists and arts educators who organised the activities. The concept of equality was defined, for instance, in relation to the individual's equal opportunity to function as a full member of society from their personal starting point (e.g., Sen, 1992), and as a need to develop new forms of solidarity and responsibility (Bauman, 2000).

ArtsEqual was one of the projects funded by the Strategic Research Council's "Equality in Society" research programme. The projects included in the programme were expected to provide answers to the question of what kinds of inequality mechanisms exist in present-day Finland and how equality could be promoted in connection with the restructuring of core public services and benefit schemes (Academy of Finland, 2014). In addition to disseminating the results of their research in high-quality publications, the research groups were expected to provide research-based policy briefs to support decision-making.

This was the starting point for the research carried out by the ArtsEqual project, where the researchers worked towards identifying the factors in arts and arts education services that discouraged participation, compromised equal accessibility, and which, from a more general perspective, could be argued to perpetuate inequality both between individuals and different population groups. The investigation was based on a recent development that presents complications from the perspective of the funding of the welfare state. The sustainability gap caused by factors such as the aging population

continues to increase, which means that the state and the municipalities must make funding cuts that affect many of their operations. Furthermore, they need to decide how public funding should be re-allocated on a regional level (Julkunen 2017). The project's research was also informed by the idea that increased inequality will lead to marginalisation, health problems, and political polarisation.

The project's research emphasised the perspective of challenging the prevailing, elitist attitude in the field of the arts and underscored the need for change. This approach occasionally caused tension between the members of the research group and the various agents in the different fields of the arts. Inequality was defined through elitism, because this perspective includes the idea that the elite deserves to be in a position of authority because they have the required cultural and social capital to make the necessary decisions (Higley & Burton, 2006). As project members, we acknowledged that in our work as researchers, artists, and teachers, we are also in a privileged position, and thus part of the institutions that reinforce elitism. The discussions that were based on the results of the research and policy briefs were intensive, even heated at times. From a more general perspective, the project established that services in the arts were not governed by a shared conceptualisation of equality, but rather by a tense co-existence between different interests, a willingness to embrace change, and resistance to change. The plurality of the views and interests presented by our collaborating partners also underscored the different conceptualisations of the role and functions of the arts and arts education. Exposing policies that increase inequality has not been without problems, as reaching this goal would not have been possible without questioning the activities of the established institutions and policies in the field. This critical approach even affected the career paths of some of the project's researchers.

How equal is ArtsEqual?

The project's research was carried out in collaboration with dozens of stakeholder groups: over the years, the project had over fifty official partner organisations. In the analysis of growing inequality, our partners included the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the Arts Promotion Centre Finland, the Finnish National Agency for Education, the Finnish Institute for Health and Welfare, the Association of Finnish Municipalities, the Association of Finnish Music Schools, the Finnish Association for Basic Education in the Arts, the Sámi Education Institute Sámi Musihkkaakademija, the Criminal Sanctions Agency, the Culture for All Service, Seta – LGBTI Rights in Finland, the National Arts and Health Coordination Centre Taikusydän, the Association of Finnish Children's Cultural Centers, the Finnish School Music Teachers' Union, the Finnish National Theatre, Zodiak – the Centre for New Dance, and the Regional Dance Centre of Western Finland.

To continue the discussion and to inspire it further, **this report presents an account of the inequality mechanisms in the service system of the arts and arts education in Finland that were identified during the project as well as the more general mental models that underpin them.** By inequality mechanisms, we refer to structures and policies that are in place in the service system of the arts and arts education which serve to maintain inequality while also preventing the objective of social equality from being achieved. These are practices of exclusion that either discourage people from accessing the services offered in the arts and arts education or which systematically exclude different groups of people from participating in these services. Because the mechanisms that increase inequality are systemic, self-perpetuating, and often inconspicuous in nature, it can be difficult to identify and to change them.

During the project, the COVID-19 pandemic provided us with dramatic proof of the fact that the future development of society cannot be predicted, and that rapid changes can also cause many challenges in the field of the arts. Nevertheless, it is possible to imagine how the arts and arts education will be like in the future and to devise alternative future scenarios. These can be used to reflect upon what is likely to happen, and what the preferred outcomes would be (Heinonen et al., 2017). When different options are taken into consideration, value debates must inevitably follow. In the final section of this report, we propose alternative scenarios for the future. These have emerged from the interpretation of the results of the project's research and systematic working processes (see, section 3). We hope that these scenarios will enrich the plans that are developed to ensure that the arts and arts educational services should be accessible to as many people as possible throughout the lifespan and in every situation in life.

This report has been produced by a multidisciplinary research group, with researchers from different fields of the arts as well as from other fields. The conclusions of the report are based on a systemic analysis performed in the Visions group, a meta-analysis of the peer-reviewed publications produced by the project's researchers, and the discussions between the project members over the years. In other words, this report is not intended to be a comprehensive summary of all research carried out during the project; rather, its purpose is to provide a coherent general account of the research from the perspective of the project's shared research questions.

We would like to thank all our researchers and partner organisations who have participated in what has been one of the most comprehensive research projects investigating the arts and arts education in Finland's history. Our special thanks go to the project's researchers who shared their comments on the manuscript of this

report. We also thank the Strategic Research Council of the Academy of Finland for their generous funding, without which a research project of this magnitude would have been impossible to accomplish.



Elinoloset tilat

Rahoitus

Elinin asema

Konventioiden tunteminen

Normaali yleiso

Ammattilaisuus ja siihen liittyva valta

Taiteen palvelujen tuotanto ja kaytto

Kasitteet

Koulutuksen laatu ja laajuus

Koulutus

Paaaykokeet

Puutteellisuus

Lahjakuus, osaaminen

Vapaa valinta, aktiivinen haakentuminen

jaan selman ulkopuolella

Tieto mahdollisuuksista

1. Conclusions: equality requires reforms and interaction

Basic services in the arts and arts education are not equally accessible to everyone in Finland, and people who do well in life benefit from them more than the rest of the population. The ArtsEqual project has sought to answer four questions: What are the factors that maintain inequality in the arts and arts education services? How could the arts and arts education services be improved from the perspective of equality? How will policies that increase participation in the arts affect people's well-being? How can we develop the arts and arts education services from a systems perspective?

We will now describe the structures of the institutions that currently operate in the arts and arts education sector from a systemic perspective: the relationship between different institutions, the inter-relationships between their parts, and the inequality mechanisms that have become embedded in them. The project identified three mechanisms that increase inequality (distanctiation, exclusion, and hierarchisation), which are perpetuated by the arts system, and two mechanisms that are external to the field of arts (gain and right).

Internal inequality mechanisms based on the preservation of quality

1. Distanciation: The different fields of the arts are governed by an elitist meritocracy (Piketty, 2014), whose primary goal is to identify new talent. People who find their way to artistic activities and arts education, and who are chosen to take part in them, are those who have the best potential to succeed under the conditions dictated by the system. Professionals in the field of the arts primarily offer arts education to those with artistic talent, while arts education services are provided to those who actively know how to seek them out. Consequently, differences in people's cultural capital, competence, and ability continue to grow, and the experts working in the arts become increasingly detached from the contemporary conceptions of the arts and agencies in the arts in society. Due to this distanciation process, the professionals working in the system are unable to recognise the problems in the realisation of people's cultural rights.

2. Exclusion: Exclusion is a phenomenon related to the uniform culture, where people shun or are apprehensive of diversity in society. One example of exclusion is "ableism", or disability discrimination, which is based on the idea of the abilities of a "normal" participant (e.g., Linton, 1998). In the arts, the ideal of normalcy pertains to a person who has fine-tuned senses, a body type that is perfectly suited to the artistic activity, and fine motor skills that are extremely precise. People who do not meet this ideal are regarded as useless or incompetent, and thus less worthy of participating in the arts or arts education. Consequently, various population groups, such as disabled people, older people, people with special educational needs,

and people whose bodies or senses do not reach the ableist ideal, are often excluded from the arts and arts education services.

3. Hierarchisation: Experts working in the field of arts (e.g., arts teachers, curators, artistic directors, and art critics) regulate and select the art that is presented to the consumers (the public) and the predicted special groups (e.g., children). Based on their professional expertise and status, these experts make decisions concerning the contents of the arts and arts education services on behalf of the end users. The current funding system, which is based on meritocracy, emphasises uniqueness and novelty, as well as the transmission of the artistic tradition, in the production of art. It does not pay sufficient attention to questions related to accessibility and democracy, which would guarantee that people have access to arts services and control over the form and content of the services offered to them.

Arts professionals justify their choices by emphasising the need to maintain high artistic quality. The gatekeepers in the arts define what is meant by "quality" in the arts so that the public can learn it and get closer to the inner circle of the arts, i.e., the elite. High quality is considered to arise either from the artistic tradition or from an innovation that radically challenges this tradition. Other dimensions pertaining to quality, such as communality, the kind of quality that arises from the needs of the audience, or the quality of art that has been integrated as part of other public services, do not meet the criteria for high quality as understood in "serious art" (Abbing, 2019).

Inequality mechanisms external to the arts

4. Gain: society measures the economic gain and value produced by the activity

Outside the world of the arts, art is increasingly evaluated, and its funding justified, by considering its immediate value to society. If the connection between the arts and the economy, or another kind of social value, is not clear, there is danger that art projects will not be able to secure new funding. Arts institutions can try to produce more social value by improving the accessibility of the arts, for example. This is done by engaging in projects that are not part of the “core operations” of the arts institution and which typically have irregular funding.

5. Right: limiting and excluding people’s cultural rights

People with special needs, such as those living in a hospital, care home, or prison, are excluded from the arts services. As was already mentioned above, different sectors and social institutions operate independently from each other for historical reasons. They focus on tasks that are strictly related to their respective fields and based on their professional specialisations, and they have little interaction amongst each other. Arts services will not be physically accessible to people living in confined institutions without intersectoral cooperation and a sufficient level of legal-governmental control, where a person is regarded as a psychophysical and sociocultural agent, whose life situation is affected by various factors. Furthermore, cultural rights are not equally realised for these people when compared to the rest of the population.

The main goal of the health sector is to promote people's health and to treat illnesses. The argument for the "objectivity" of scientific information and the "subjectivity" of culture (broadly construed) is a social construct. It serves to reinforce the lack of understanding of the relevance of the arts and culture within healthcare. This is true even though many kinds of cultural values, beliefs, and traditions, as well as artistic processes and products affect – and can be used to affect – people's health and well-being. The disregard for culture is regarded as one of the most significant obstacles in the promotion of health and well-being on a global level (Napier et al., 2014).

The core mission of the prison services is to carry out the sentence imposed upon the prisoner by excluding them from society. The imprisonment of criminals has also been a way to ensure that the rest of the population remains safe. Inmates have taken part in labour service since the 1910s, but it was not until the late 1980s that the first special institutions for the rehabilitation and vocational education of inmates were founded. Today, respect for human dignity and justness are listed amongst the values of the Criminal Sanctions Agency. This means that "fundamental rights and liberties as well as human rights are protected, the treatment of the inmates is humane, appropriate, and equal, all activities are lawful and comply with justice and fairness, [and] enforcement is carried out so that it supports the sentenced persons' individual growth and development as well as their intention to lead a life without crime" (Criminal Sanctions Agency, 2020). In practice, however, the inmates only have sporadic opportunities to take part in artistic activities, and their participation is firmly controlled.

Why have the policies that used to be considered acceptable become problematic?

With growing social divergence and changing demographics, the discourse on values and things that are considered to be important has become increasingly complex. Publicly funded arts and arts education services should pay due consideration to this social change and adapt to the required strategic changes in an agile manner. If the arts communities do not take active part in social discourse and engage in interaction with the other sectors, all demands for social change will come as a surprise. If this is allowed to happen, all challenges concerning the implementation of substantial structural changes may become insurmountable.

The ArtsEqual project has tried to increase the understanding of the services offered in the arts and arts education from the perspective of equality, accessibility, and well-being.

The research and development activities have had the following objectives:

Remove

- mechanisms in the present system which increase inequality and reinforce institutional barriers that have emerged because of narrow professional specialisation

Create and introduce

- new artistic, pedagogical, and institutional policies and social innovations which promote equality and cultural well-being and provide new opportunities for people who are normally excluded from the arts

Reinforce

- the rights of the older people, the marginalised youth, young people with an immigrant background, people with disabilities, inmates, and other special groups, as well as their opportunities to take part in artistic activities and arts education

Emphasise

- cultural well-being as part of the health and social services reform, where the organisation of health and social services is transferred from the municipalities to the so-called “well-being services counties”, which typically follow regional borders; also emphasise the development of new art-based services aimed at special groups as a collaborative effort between the arts, culture, education, social, and health sectors, and youth services

Promote

- vocational learning that crosses the boundaries between professions, sectors, and institutions as part of the equal development of the arts and arts education services, and
- vocational and higher education in the arts so that it would better meet the emerging needs that arise from social change and help the future professionals in the arts to be better prepared for new and more wide-ranging tasks and multi-professional activities that they are expected to perform in collaboration with professionals from other sectors.

Cultural rights belong to everyone in Finland: everybody is entitled to take part in cultural and artistic activities and in this way reinforce their cultural capital and well-being. In Finland, the challenge is to promote participation and the consequent realisation of people's cultural rights and well-being in a rapidly changing society. Current changes whose repercussions will extend well into the future have to do with restructuring projects, multiculturalisation, marginalisation caused by, e.g., increased inequality, psychological distress, health issues, the polarisation of politics, and political demands that pertain to changes brought about by the sustainability gap and competitive strength (Julkunen, 2017). If the decision-makers wish to have a say on how these changes come to pass, they must work proactively and adopt a more comprehensive, systemic, and intersectoral perspective to the changes affecting the welfare state.

According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UN), several human rights treaties Finland is a signatory of, and the cultural rights guaranteed by the Constitution of Finland, the organisers of public arts and arts education services should promote equality between people in all their activities (Rautiainen 2019). Furthermore, UNESCO emphasises the role of arts education in the resolution of social challenges and recommends that arts education should be part of lifelong learning. This recommendation concerns all member states.

On presence, the artist's professional identity, and human rights

Example: *Dance ambassadors* employed by the Regional Dance Centre of Western Finland visit older people either in their own home or in care homes in the Turku economic region once or twice a week. The activities are intended to promote the well-being of the participants through participatory dance. Presence, dialogue, and encountering the other person while listening to what they have to say are central elements in a customer- and needs-based work like this. This also makes the activity different from more traditional forms of dance pedagogy and treatment-based dance therapy (Lehikoinen, 2017; 2019a).

Example: *World in Motion* is a music group where over 20 people with an immigrant or refugee background made music together with students from Sibelius Academy, creating a musical space that drew its inspiration from various traditions (Thirdspace). *World in Motion* functioned as an experimental space that promoted reciprocal integration and change, and it was also a new kind of educational platform for the construction of professional identity in the music sector (Thomson, 2021).



Subject of music curriculum

Entire exams of music schools

Exist and practice

Social class related habits

Jargon

Exclusion of special groups

Users lack of knowledge

Unwilling to remain in the

Mainstream class of students

Eminent spaces

Additional perception of quality of art

2. When the mechanisms are identified, we can reduce inequality if we so wish

What is meant by inequality?

The ArtsEqual project critically examined manifestations of equality and inequality in Finnish arts and arts education services from various perspectives. In this report, we provide a limited analysis of the project's results by discussing them in the context of sociologist Göran Therborn's definition of equality and connecting them to the capabilities approach by Martha Nussbaum and Amartya Sen as well as Nancy Fraser's idea of the politics of need interpretation. According to the liberal conceptualisation of equality, all humans are equal by nature, everyone has the same right to live in freedom, and everyone is entitled to equality before the law (Young, 2002). Social institutions are bound by the requirement that fundamental rights belong to everyone and that all laws must be interpreted fairly, i.e., in a coherent and impartial manner (Rawls, 1999). However, formalised equality, which is either understood as a legal status, or in terms of rights and opportunities recorded as norms, may not result in factual equality in different scenarios and their outcomes.

The capabilities approach and the requirement of *the equality of capabilities* critically examine people's actual and equal opportunities and capabilities as they pursue what they consider to be a good life (Sen, 1980). According to Nussbaum (2006), some of the

essential prerequisites for well-being are the rights to life, health, and bodily integrity, which are complemented by the freedom to use one's senses, imagination, and thinking, the right to express oneself and to play, the possibility to live in genuine social interaction, to feel a sense of inclusion, to empathise with the position of another person and to care for them, and the possibility to respect oneself and to trust in the fact that people also respect the human dignity of others. In the capabilities approach, the opportunities in life require that people make active choices. These choices emphasise agency, which refers to people's freedom to act, their ability to improve by reaching and achieving new goals (Alkire & Deneulin, 2009; Sen, 1987), and their ability to create and share policies that promote human development and well-being.

From the perspective of the equality of capabilities, it is essential that the basic requirements for well-being are equal to all, which will help create basic capabilities for everyone and provide people with an opportunity to participate in the arts and arts education in every situation in life throughout the lifespan without being restricted for any reason pertaining to their person. However, inequality mechanisms may restrict, or even prevent, the participation of several groups of people from the arts and arts education, thus preventing equality from being realised. For the principle of equal capabilities to be accomplished in a complex society, society must engage in the "politics of need interpretation" and to make the needs of the underprivileged and marginalised people public (Fraser, 1997). This is the only way to influence systemic inequality, for which there is no consensus.

This report emphasises the importance of making these equality-related needs public and part of public discourse in the arts and arts education, where people's opportunities to participate are not equally realised, and where it is even possible to identify forms of inequality with the naked eye. According to Therborn (2014), there

are many types of inequality, but the term “always means excluding some people from something --- [and] excluding people from possibilities produced by human development” (p. 29). “Inequality is a violation to human dignity; it is a denial of the possibility for everybody’s human capabilities to develop” (Therborn, 2014, p. 7). It is created by unjustified hierarchical differences, which can be avoided, if we, as society, so wish (Therborn, 2012).

According to Therborn (2014, p. 67), there exist three different types of inequality in society:

1. **Vital inequality** refers to socially constructed inequality that pertains to the circumstances affecting people’s lives. Not everyone has the same opportunities for a dignified life, health, and well-being. Extreme inequality is lethal.
2. **Existential inequality** refers to inequality related to human dignity. Everyone does not have the same opportunities to be respected, to engage in personal development, or to lead an autonomous life.
3. **Material inequality** refers to the fact that people have vastly different economic, cultural, and informational resources at their disposal.

Therborn (2014, p. 77) discusses the following mechanisms that increase inequality:

Distanciation is a mechanism through which a person gets a head start in life (e.g., better initial circumstances, parental support, or a successful start at school with an encouraging teacher) in relation to another person, whose participation may be restricted by things such as lack of knowledge, an unreasonably long journey to engage in the arts as a leisure activity, lack of transportation, or health issues.

Exclusion is a mechanism that manifests itself when people are prevented from participating or from progressing in their careers, because the population is divided into in-groups, who enjoy more opportunities, and out-groups, who are not granted the same privileges. The mechanism of exclusion often presents itself in the form of discrimination and various kinds of obstacles.

Hierarchisation is a mechanism where social agents are placed in order according to a set of values that has formed over time, so that some are regarded as superior to others.

Exploitation refers to a mechanism where social agents are categorically divided into superiors and inferiors, so that the superiors reap the benefits of the activities of their inferiors.

What is meant by equality?

Therborn's definition of equality (2014) is informed by Sen's (1992) capabilities approach. According to Therborn, equality refers to the capability of an individual to function fully as a human being, so that they can reach their full potential. Juho Saari (2015), by contrast, regards the ability to function as the source of self-respect, and thus a prerequisite for a good life. Arts and arts education can either help a person reinforce their self-respect or, depending on the nature of the interaction, lower it.

The institutions operating in the arts and arts education can be understood as special, socially constructed communities in terms of their history and culture. Communities are guided by shared values and knowledge, and the reasons underlying their formation and the motivations affecting their choices have become institutionalised over time. In other words, they have become part of a reality where “things have always been the way they are”. Structures that have formed over long periods of time “resist” any attempts to change them (Kaidesoja, 2018; Berger & Luckmann, 1966). When it comes to the institutions in the field of the arts, their resistance in questions pertaining to equality stems from the fact that change will challenge the internalised beliefs, attitudes, policies, and the status quo within the field.

Inequality mechanisms within the arts system: should the arts only belong to those who are able?

Distanciation: maintaining high artistic quality

Professionals in the arts and arts education try to maintain and improve the standards in the arts by identifying people with artistic talent. The organisations operating in the arts, on the other hand, mostly target their services to those who actively seek them out. Arts education services are directed at individuals who, in the opinion of professional artists, are most likely to succeed and develop in accordance with the traditional criteria as defined by the experts. As a consequence, people with ability, motivation, and talent (as

measured in the traditional sense) become more distant from the rest of the population and people of their own age, thus forming a group of their own. Other people are excluded from this group by appealing to the primacy of tradition and the preservation of artistic quality – a position that regards all other quality-related criteria as secondary and relegates them to a role outside the system.

The idea of the special and elevated nature of the arts

In the arts and the humanities, cultural products have been hierarchically categorised since the 19th century (high culture, folk culture, popular culture). This conceptualisation of art, which has long been widely accepted in Finland, has shaped our understanding of the arts as part of civilisation and the cultural canon, and encouraged the field of arts to enforce the division of art into good and bad, or significant and less significant, art (Koivunen & Marsio, 2006). Moreover, the idea of clearly demarcated fields of study and professions, typical of the modern era, continues to be highly influential in the field of arts (Lehikonen et al., 2021). According to this idea, the arts system is considered to exist only for its own sake, and it only seeks to answer the kinds of questions that are relevant to the arts. The arts and arts education system can only renew itself from within (Väkevä et al., 2017). When set against this historical background, the arts appear as a special field of human activity, which is, first and foremost, the property of those with ability, and of those who have a strong motivation to produce and to appreciate high quality. People with the highest ability have no obligations or responsibilities outside the narrowly defined field of artistic activity.

The ethos of autonomy and freedom in the arts is also evident in the meritocratic assumption where people are thought to be free to participate in the arts and arts education whenever they like. This

assumption includes the idea that everyone can, in principle, become more civilised by taking active part in artistic activities (Laes & Rautiainen, 2018b). Many institutions in the arts service system try to promote the accessibility of the arts by engaging in outreach or accessibility programmes, for example. However, educational establishments (including vocational and higher education) still largely ignore people's physical, social, cultural, geographical, and economic challenges, and do not pay sufficient attention to the skills required from arts professionals in projects that are intended to improve accessibility (Laes et al., 2018a; Westerlund et al., 2021). The perspective of social responsibility has only recently been introduced to the degree programmes of vocational and higher education in the arts.

How: the production of "talent"

Inequality is an integral part of the western model that emphasises polarisation and conflict and directs the attention and resources of the different fields in the arts to people with "talent" and "ability". In practice, this means that those who have little knowledge of the arts and experience in artistic activities are not asked to participate in the arts or arts education services. If the person has not grown up in an environment where it has been possible to engage in artistic activities, it is highly likely that they will also think that the arts are not for them later in life. The meritocratic mechanism, with its associated elitism in the Finnish arts service system, directs both arts education and the production and consumption of arts services at people who are already interested in them. This creates a self-perpetuating mechanism, whose deconstruction requires special measures both because it results in growing inequality and because the increased distance between the art elite and the rest of the population threatens to obscure the relevance of the arts in society.

Examples: distancing in the arts and arts education services

- *The supply of arts services and arts education is geographically restricted to large population centres, and to the inner cities in particular.* It is more difficult for someone to participate in arts education and services when they live far away from these services or when the environment where they have grown up shows no appreciation for the arts.
- *Expert ability* is emphasised in education. Doing something as a leisure activity is regarded as a less worthy pursuit.
- *Professional specialisation is highly advanced, and western high culture is regarded as a measuring rod for all art according to the prevailing conceptualisation of the arts.* This meritocratic system promotes a narrow conceptualisation of the arts and excludes (intentionally or accidentally) those with a different understanding of the arts. Amateurs who do not share the professional majority view of artistic quality are also excluded.
- *Let us assume that participation in the arts is problem-free and that everyone can choose to do what they want with no restrictions* (Brando, 2016). The service system in the arts assumes that everyone interested in the arts or arts education can take part in these activities without any challenges and that this open-door policy will increase equality and promote inclusion.

Examples: educational outreach, intersectoral work, cooperative planning, constructive interaction

- Active outreach work concerning the arts and arts education is aimed at different user groups (Turpeinen, 2018; Turpeinen et

al., 2019). Employers organise activities related to the arts and arts education at the workplace.

- Diverse pedagogical methods are applied in education, and services that develop different forms of artistic activity are created (Ansio et al., 2017; Juntunen, 2018; Laes, 2017; Nikkanen et al., 2019; Seppälä et al., 2020; Sutela et al., 2020; Sutela et al., 2021).
- Boundaries between different sectors are crossed in order to make artistic education and arts services an integral part of the functions of society. Examples include art as part of elderly care, using art to alleviate the negative effects of unemployment (Lehikoinen, 2017; 2019a), arts in parish work or the activities of religious communities (Ansio, 2019), the integration of health-care and arts services into the treatment of older people with a long-term illness (Koivisto et al., 2020), art-based, low-threshold events intended to provide young people with an opportunity to pause and think, and which allow multiple voices to be heard (Pässilä & Owens, 2017), and music education for children and young people who are at risk of becoming marginalised (Väkevä et al., 2017; Westerlund et al., 2019b).
- Special groups are included in the arts services with the help of a culture companion or transport services (Lehikoinen, 2017).
- Inviting the residents of the municipality to take part in the planning, development, and testing of the services, and in this way increase their influence and social responsibility (Ahokas & Heikkilä, 2017). Inviting the residents to participate in development projects in a museum (Hirvonen-Nurmi, 2021).
- Cross-cultural dialogue will be reinforced in the context of leadership in arts organisations and educational establishments,

the education of artists and art educators, and the planning and implementation of related activities (Anttila et al., 2018; Hirvonen-Nurmi, in press; Kantonen, 2019a, 2019b; Kantonen & Kantonen, 2017; Thomson, 2021), as well as in the curriculum of arts education in the comprehensive school, which at present needlessly reinforces presupposed ethnic group divisions and the opposition between the Finnish culture and other cultures (e.g., the Sámi culture) (Kallio, 2017; Koskela et al., 2021).

- Art-pedagogical work that promotes cultural participation and active involvement in school communities will be supported (Anttila et al., 2017). In one case study, for example, artist-teachers engaged in long-term collaboration with a class teacher in preparatory education at a comprehensive school. During the project, they created an experimental activity that combined dance with the Finnish language and thus managed to develop new pedagogical expertise that was grounded in the artistic process. The experiment also promoted the students' active agency, as the activities developed by them were implemented more generally throughout the school (Nikkanen et al., 2019; see also, Anttila et al., 2019).
- The collaboration between arts teachers and class teachers is promoted to support social interaction in schools. For example, in a comprehensive school located in the Helsinki metropolitan area, first-grade pupils and special-needs pupils took part in a dance-pedagogical intervention, where the collaboration between the arts teachers and the class teachers resulted in observations about changes both in the teachers' pedagogical activities and in the physical activities and mutual interaction of the pupils (Turpeinen, 2018).

- Artistic activities and high-quality pedagogy that respect the autonomous agency of the participant will be supported. This makes it possible for people to engage in respectful encounters and to become involved in shared artistic experiences.

For example, in a doctoral dissertation on the ethics of participatory dance pedagogical activities for disabled adults, and in a collaborative impact campaign coordinated by the Lyhty Association, “A Human is a good thing”, it was found that campaigns are a good way to introduce pupils to disabled people who are experts by experience, and that this will also inspire discussions on disabilities (Jaakonaho, 2019). On the other hand, the EVIVA project (‘Pre-emptive stimulating leisure time’), organised by the City of Turku, was directed at children and young people who are in danger of becoming marginalised, as well as at other “passive” residents who were excluded from the services. The project established that participation in cultural services and physical activities can be promoted by intersectoral cooperation, which will also decrease inequality. These outcomes were accomplished by engaging in long-term regional activities that were introduced as part of the residents’ everyday life in low-threshold locations, such as libraries, youth centres, and care homes. The residents were informed of the activities through various channels, such as notice boards of housing cooperatives, local newspapers, different social media outlets, and the city’s website. The residents were also offered the Kimmoke wristband, with which people receiving social assistance, labour market subsidy, or basic allowance could purchase cultural and sports services at a discount (Ahokas & Heikkilä, 2017; Laukkanen, 2017; Laukkanen et al., 2017).

Rationalising art through “talent”

- *distanciates* by categorising people into those with talent and those without talent
- *excludes* those who “do not wish to learn” to operate in accordance with the tradition
- *hierarchises* by allowing the art elite to define talent and to decide who is talented
- *exploits* “untalented” people by distributing the resources to “talented” people.

Exclusion: only to the able

“Ableism” is a way of thinking that is used to define what is meant by a “normal” participant, who will not disrupt the status quo of arts institutions and who does not require any special measures to be included in arts education. The ideal of an able and “normal” artist includes fine-tuned senses, a body type that is perfectly suited to the task, and delicate fine motor skills. The “normal” audience, on the other hand, is able to follow specific cultural behaviour patterns and to act according to the expectations in the context of a performance. If a person’s body type does not conform with the optimal body type, or if they are disabled or functionally challenged, they are perceived as deviating from the “norm”, and consequently as being unable, incompatible, or of lesser worth. These qualities are used to exclude people with disabilities or functional challenges, as well as everyone else who deviates from the ideal, from active participation in the arts and the consumption of arts. People and groups of people can therefore be excluded from arts education services and the

arts as a profession. Because the acknowledgment of disabilities and functional challenges requires special measures that are in conflict with the definition of artistic quality in the production of art, deviations from the ideal body type, as well as any challenges caused by disabilities, age, or illness, are regarded as undesirable abnormalities. While Finnish culture may initially seem quite uniform from an ethnic perspective, its nation-centred outlook on the world also promotes the exclusion of people with a different cultural background or colour of the skin.

Mental model: from an expert to an expert

Art should be made available in special places that are dedicated to art an sich, and it should be enjoyed and evaluated by people with prior expertise in the arts. The most important task of the arts education system is to maintain and develop high artistic quality. Meagre resources should be spent on those with a “natural” aptitude to become a top-level professional or to understand the artwork “as it was intended”. People must be familiar with certain conventions, such as the correct form of behaviour in art events, in order for the art experience to reach its high standards. People should also react to the arts in an appropriate manner so that the work of the artists, and the experience of the rest of the audience, will not be disturbed. The quality of art emerges through the interaction between the arts professional and the expert audience. The art experience of various groups, such as those suffering from progressive memory disorders or people with disabilities, is not appreciated, and their opportunities to take part in arts services is not regarded as an individual dimension of quality pertaining to the service.

How: the absence of the group is not even noticed

The idea that a non-ideal body type, disability, functional challenge, or cultural deviation are signs of inability, or of a lesser worth, leads to a rhetoric that justifies this exclusion. The motivation, interest, and “talent” of those who do not meet the traditional criteria for “ability” are not investigated nor developed. In other words, people “without talent”, people with disabilities or functional challenges, and those with a different cultural background have no access to the group of “normal people”. Indeed, the existence of these groups is not even recognised, which means that their exclusion will also go unnoticed.

Exclusion makes the status of the elite (the artists with talent and the expert audience) secure. Members belonging to the other groups, on the other hand, are not usually encountered in the spaces reserved for the art elite, nor are they typically paid any consideration in the decisions concerning artistic activities, let alone included in the planning and decision-making processes. The arts and arts education institutions lack knowledge about equality and accessibility, and these themes are not sufficiently considered in the budgetary allocation of core funding. Indeed, the principles of core funding should be amended so that the operations of different institutions would be based on the idea of inclusivity. This is in contrast to the way in which institutions use short-term project funding to organise “special” activities for special groups, such as disabled people, people with functional challenges, or immigrants.

Examples: wide-ranging dialogue, needs of the participants, self-criticism, ambassador activities

- The concept of the service standard in the arts should be made more varied. It should contain different ways of including various

population groups as dimensions affecting the overall quality of arts services (Laes et al., 2021).

- The concept of a “normal” audience should be abandoned in favour of an active, wide-ranging dialogue with a variety of different groups. New groups that have fallen outside the net of the arts services, as well as their particular needs, can power the reform process, which at its best can serve to reduce the distance between artists and their audience. This also allows for the inclusion of new, relation-based dimensions in the quality standards of art (Lehikoinen, 2021).
- Special pedagogy should be more comprehensively integrated into the service system of arts education (Laes, 2017).
- People who take part in the service activities are shown genuine respect, so that arts services are produced on the basis of the needs of the participants (Ansio et al., 2016; Lehikoinen, 2019a; Koivisto, 2021).
- Research traditions (e.g., focusing only on those with the greatest talent), which serve to perpetuate the ableist mental models of arts professionals, should be deconstructed (Odendaal et al., 2020).
- Interventions should be staged in the pedagogical training in the arts so that the artists could identify the ableist policies and their consequences and learn to fight against them in the future (Laes & Westerlund, 2018).
- The education of artists in vocational and higher education should be developed in a way that professional artists would also engage in the production of art in contexts that offer a departure from the traditional contexts of the arts during their studies (e.g., in care homes for people with disabilities or dementia,

and other contexts not associated with the arts). Furthermore, students should come in contact with audiences who are not familiar with the established forms of artistic performance and its reception, and who can consequently help them identify established practices in the arts and engage in a critical evaluation of them (Westerlund et al., 2016; Gaunt & Westerlund, 2021; Westerlund et al., 2021).

- Integrative policies, where people from different groups come together to engage in collaboration, should be developed (Hautsalo, 2021; Jaakonaho, 2019; Nikkanen et al., 2019; Thomson, 2021; Turpeinen, 2018).
- New forms of participation and active agency should be created for different kinds of learners, such as disabled or elderly people, who have traditionally been excluded from being active agents in the performing arts (Kivijärvi & Poutiainen, 2019; Laes, 2017).
- Professional dance artists should be educated to work as dance ambassadors in care homes and the homes of elderly people. By engaging in these activities, they can provide the older people with dance-based welfare services that increase their physical, social, and cognitive activity levels. These activities also provide company and a sense of joy and refreshment to the everyday lives of the elderly people (Lehikoinen, 2017; 2019a).
- The learning of pupils with special needs should be supported by providing them with suitable learning materials and equipment and by adopting an appropriate pedagogical approach (Hasu, 2017; Kivijärvi, 2018; Kivijärvi & Väkevä, 2020; Sutela et al., 2016). Their active participation in music should be promoted through the use of alternative working methods, such as embodied activities that combine music and movement (Sutela, 2020).

- Special learners and musicians should be integrated into the pedagogical training in the arts, which allows the arts to expand the concept of professionalism and to redefine what is meant by inclusion (Laes & Westerlund, 2018).
- Technology and embodied working methods should be used to promote participation and to increase motivation. This would make it possible for pupils who have no prior music skills or have no interest in traditional music education (which is based on playing and singing music) to engage in music activities and be active agents in music production (Juntunen, 2015; 2018).

Targeting arts services and arts education to people assumed to be "normal"

- *distanciates* people by categorising them into "normal" and "abnormal" people
- *excludes* "abnormal" people from participating in arts services and arts education by imposing physical obstacles or policies based on tradition
- *reinforces the hierarchical structure* where the concept of "normalcy" is used to justify the actions of the elite
- *exploits* "abnormal" people by transferring resources to "normal" people.

Hierarchies: it is better to let the professionals decide

Professionals regulate and choose the artistic contents for the consumers of the arts, that is, for the audience and special groups, from their own perspectives that are based on their personal values and conceptualisations of the arts. In arts education, different audiences are taught to receive art that is defined by the experts, and which is

based on tradition. Interaction is one-sided: the professionals produce and educate, while the role of the audience is limited to the grateful reception of the arts. The role of society, on the other hand, is to provide funding for the arts. It is only under exceptional circumstances that the audience, or society more generally, can engage in equal interaction with those who produce art.

Mental model: to an appreciative audience – or as projects

Active agency is in the possession of artists and the gatekeepers of the arts (e.g., art critics, curators), whereas the participation of the audience is restricted to the role of a consumer with a limited understanding of the arts. An appreciative recipient has cultural capital, which they have acquired through education and a highly developed personal relationship with art, which allows them to appreciate the same qualities in the arts and arts services as the arts professionals. Students are socialised into adopting the prevailing values and ideals in arts education establishments, where the teachers, in their roles as arts professionals, transmit what they consider to be the correct conception of art to their students.

To increase the level of variation in their activities, the service systems in the arts and arts education occasionally produce targeted services to special groups in the form of projects. In these projects, it is typically the case that the activities are based on the personal background of the participating artists. The wishes and suggestions of the special groups may be heard and considered, but people who participate in these activities typically have no say on the kinds of services they would like to be offered and how these services could best be organised from their perspective. When high artistic quality is the only criterion steering the activity, the art that is produced will always be a compromise from the perspective of the special group. This, in

turn, will diminish the value of the art. Communal art projects that pay due consideration to the background and interests of the community are often regarded as dubious from the perspective of artistic quality, and they may be opposed in the name of the hierarchies that are based on high culture, the autonomy of the arts, and elitism.

How: the concept of quality as the determining factor

According to hierarchisation, the decision-making power (e.g., those who have the power to define what is meant by “quality”), belongs to the elite, which reduces the variability and flexibility of the services and makes it harder to accomplish genuine interaction with people who participate in arts services. People who are not part the elite have little choice but to accept this concept of quality and the provided services, or else they are excluded from the services altogether.

What enables the existence and longevity of the mechanism?

- The current educational system provides the different agents in the field of the arts (e.g., teachers, service providers) with a *legitimised identity*, which is based on the assumption that the institutions that were founded in the 19th and the 20th centuries, and which enjoy great national prestige (e.g., concert halls, the opera house, theatres, and art galleries), should comprise the primary forum, and the most valuable form, of the presentation of art for the future professionals in the arts. The experts who are in possession of this power try to reinforce their own position by deciding which concepts are used to define “quality” and by specifying the locations where high-quality art can be made in the first place. They also make demands concerning the proper

behaviour of both the producers and the consumers of art, as well as the strict, hierarchical demarcation between professionals and amateurs, for example. People placed higher on the hierarchical ladder are also eager to transfer the decision-making power concerning the available resources (grants and subsidies in the arts) and artistic contents (applications) to themselves.

- Basic education in the arts is founded on a meritocratic idea of development (Elmgren, 2019), where the service is based upon the student's potential professional career in the arts. Consequently, there is no justification for including adults or pensioners in this kind of linear system of professional development (Väkevä et al., 2017), as their involvement would not include a promise of future professionalism (Laes, 2017; Laes et al., 2018b).
- Even though several foundations have recently provided support to artistic projects with a social dimension, and in this way promoted inclusion, people responsible for deciding on the public funding of the arts continue to ignore inclusion as a valid criterion in the decision-making process. Furthermore, arts institutions do not typically consider actions promoting inclusion (e.g., the inclusion of linguistic or cultural minorities in the decision-making processes), as part of their core operations (Kallio & Länsman, 2018; Lehikoinen, 2021).

Examples: collaboration, accessible participation, diversity

- *Artists and arts educators* should be trained in various communities and institutions in society, which allows the artists to gain a sense of belonging in a variety of physical spaces, acquire a natural collaborative relationship with different kinds of partners, and realise the importance of including the perspective of social

inequality in their own practice (Ansio et al., 2018; Westerlund & Gaunt, 2021; Westerlund et al., 2021).

- The professional education system in the arts and arts education should provide the different agents working in the field of the arts with *collaborative skills*. These skills allow for an innovative provision of arts and arts education services in collaboration with various professionals in the field of the arts (Kallio & Länsman, 2018; Laes et al., 2021; Westerlund et al., 2019b).
- The *accessibility* of arts education and arts services *should be improved* by diversifying the range of channels through which these services are offered (e.g., by streaming artistic and musical performances to cinemas and care homes, reinforcing the Finnish Model of leisure activities, and implementing the “Arts on Prescription” project on a national level), by developing peer services (e.g., culture companions, art ambassadors in Helsinki, and art and culture companions in Jyväskylä), and by providing transportation to art events. Inclusion should be recognised as a criterion in the core funding of the arts, and the understanding of the relevance of inclusion and diversity as part of art and cultural activities should be reinforced amongst the directors and personnel in the arts service sector through further training (Lehikoinen, 2021).
- Access to arts education was re-examined in the Floora project, where students’ access to teaching was made as easy as possible. In the project, social workers selected which students were to be taught, and teaching was organised outside music schools in collaboration with the comprehensive school (Väkevä et al., 2017; Westerlund et al., 2019b).
- As part of their studies, students of physical education at the University of Jyväskylä taught Finnish to culturally diverse

groups through physical exercise and dance. The possibility to carry out field work in a previously unknown context initiated a transformative learning process for many students. This process effectuated holistic, embodied changes, which also resulted in emotional engagement. Field work with culturally diverse groups has become a well-established part of the degree programmes in physical education (Anttila, 2019; Anttila et al., 2018; Siljamäki & Anttila, 2019; 2020).

- A group of four artists investigated and experimented with how the hierarchical nature of agency could be deconstructed and how the preconditions of equal decision-making could be improved. The group did not want to take part in the cult of the individual artist, which is why they adopted a collective name for themselves. They have also tried to increase the equality between the artist and the participant through shared artistic activities. The group's work has produced new, deeper insights into the question of agency in communal art (Ajauksia, 2019).
- A collaboration between a refugee orchestra and master's students in music promoted reciprocal understanding in a culturally complex society, which is a prerequisite for social integration (Thomson, 2021).
- *Toinen koti* ('another home'), a theatre production by the Touring Stage of the National Theatre, introduced the artists' freedom of expression in different countries as a topic of public discussion, gave people with a refugee background an opportunity to perform on a stage that carries national prestige, and criticised the way in which the Finnish Immigration Service had processed artists' asylum applications (Karttunen et al., 2017; Lehtonen, 2017).

The hierarchy that exists between the elite and the audience

- *distanziates* people from the arts by emphasising the status of the elite
- *excludes* opinions that do not fit within the tradition
- is plainly visible because in a *hierarchy* the elite will decide what will be produced and to whom
- *exploits* the audience by funding the activities valued by the elite

Inequality mechanisms outside the arts system: Should the arts operate only according to the system's conditions?

Economy: The relationship between the arts and public funding

Basic public services, such as day care, comprehensive school, healthcare, and elderly services, have traditionally enjoyed state protection in the Nordic welfare state. Culture and arts services have also been regarded as an important basic service that receives both public and private support. However, the arts are increasingly evaluated, and their funding rationalised, according to economic and other instrumental values, as well as the gains they produce (e.g., Houni, 2018). For instance, a news story is certain to be published if it discusses art as a form of treatment for elderly people or as a method for promoting pupils' communication and learning skills, because this helps them become more efficient citizens. This mental model is based on economy, and its proponents do not have a clear understanding of the fact that people's possibility to participate in the arts is a fundamental right (Westerlund et al., 2018). According

to this mental model, the selection of those who are offered arts services in the first place is based on the idea of whether the government can reap financial gain by organising these services.

Mental model: benefits that are quick and easy to measure

Those responsible for the allocation of resources evaluate the arts according to their social, and in particular, their projected economic benefits. These benefits must be concretely measurable, so that the exact input/output ratios that describe the efficiency of resource allocation can be formulated. In other words, it should be possible to show that the arts have a positive effect on a variety of things, such as innovativeness, stress control, health, productivity, or brain activity, either by improving the existing resources or making the processes more cost-effective. In a world like this, it makes no sense to spend resources on the arts if they do not produce direct and immediate benefits to society. The decisions are based on quantitative indicators of economic efficiency, which are considered to provide the political decision-makers with sufficient information to allocate the resources of society to different arts institutions. The directors of the funded institutions will then decide how the resources are distributed within the institution.

How: money to be invested in infrastructure

Access to the arts and arts education services is not unequivocally regarded as beneficial to society and the economy, which means that they do not need to be equally accessible for everyone. According to this idea, the possibility of a child or a young person to engage in circus art as a leisure activity depends on the person's place of birth and whether their family can afford to pay the market price for

the activity. Access to the arts services, as well as their production, mainly depends on the choices that were made in the age of the welfare state, when investments were made in the infrastructure of the arts services, for example. Public funding for the arts is currently decreasing because there is no conclusive evidence of the effectivity of the arts, and because people are not willing to relinquish the benefits they have acquired. Consequently, the increasingly meagre resources are directed at artistic contents and productions that are regarded as “bullet-proof”: they are intended for the well-established audiences of the forms of art that have traditionally enjoyed high prestige, with the aim of attracting large audiences and maximising the profits. New initiatives, by contrast, are typically short-term projects that have modest outreach, and which are only launched when separate funding becomes available. These projects only reach a small number of people, who often belong to a special group (e.g., older people, people suffering from an illness, people of another gender, those who are in some way different from people with a Finnish background, etc.) Because projects like these are used to offer customised services to special groups, they increase the distance between audiences and active agents in the arts and end up increasing the level of social segregation in our society.

- When public discourse is based on economy, all other social operations and objectives are ignored. The same is true for research, where – either by accident or on purpose – the mission of the arts and arts education is related to financial discourse and the discourse of efficiency that supports it (Westerlund et al., 2018; 2019a).
- Projects working in arts institutions with separate funding focus on “special” groups, and their activities are not expected to have an impact on the core operations of the institution, targeted at “normal” audiences.

- Arts institutions are incapable of keeping track of social developments or engaging in interactive work with different sectors in order to achieve social change. Instead, they define their mission narrowly and according to their own interests. The codes of conduct that guide the operations of the arts institutions are monitored only by the institutions themselves (Björk & Heimonen, 2019; Juntunen & Kivijärvi, 2019; Kallio & Heimonen, 2018).
- According to the discourse of efficiency, efficiency is the most important measure in the operations and policies of various social institutions, such as hospitals and universities. In this discourse, the arts are not regarded as part of meaningful life; rather, the arts are confined to being a vehicle for promoting economic efficiency both in society and in the life of the individual (Koivisto et al., 2020; Odendaal et al., 2018; Westerlund et al., 2018; Westerlund et al., 2019a).

Examples: fundamental rights, well-being, increased visibility

- The realisation of cultural rights is constantly monitored both regionally and at the level of different population groups.
- People's holistic well-being is regarded as a multi-dimensional phenomenon with interrelated direct and indirect effects.
- Holistic well-being and meaningful life are established as central objectives in society, and they should also be pursued in basic services in the arts and arts education.
- The resources available for cultural education and services are reallocated through taxation, social security, and other forms of income redistribution.

- The consequences of the systematic, decade-long decrease of arts education in the comprehensive school are brought into public debate (Anttila et al., 2017; Juntunen, 2017; Juntunen & Anttila, 2019).
- A practice of cultural profiling is introduced. Cultural profiling refers to the documentation of the cultural views, needs, and hopes of the older people, and it is used to follow the realisation of cultural rights in the context of services for the older people (Siponkoski, 2020).

An economy-based policy

- *distanciates* those who receive financial support from those working on a voluntary basis
- *excludes* forms of the arts and arts education that do not lead to apparent financial gain
- is *hierarchical*: those deciding on the allocation of resources work according to their personal interests
- *exploits* the resources reserved for the arts by using them to meet the needs of the economy and forces arts professionals to justify their work from the perspective of financial gain.

Exclusion: unconnected institutions

A person living in a hospital, a care home, a prison, or another confined facility is systematically excluded from the arts and arts education services. On the one hand, the “institutionalised population” will not be able to participate in the services because the services

are not physically accessible to them. On the other hand, the professional policies in these institutions and the underlying objectives and directions concerning the control of the “institutionalised population” will determine the ways in which cultural rights are implemented with respect to these population groups.

Mental model: a narrow understanding of the mission

- Institutions that have been founded on the basis of the needs of special groups (isolation, treatment, punishment) are intended to operate strictly within their remit.
- Society allocates a great deal of resources and expertise to these institutions, which guarantees the realisation of people’s basic needs according to Maslow’s (1943) hierarchy of needs, such as physiological needs (survival) and security. However, in this approach, people’s needs related to participation, their right to be respected, and their right for self-expression are paid less attention.
- The arts are regarded as something difficult, laborious, or impossible for people who are too sick, weak, or old to be part of “normal” society.
- If an individual is punished for their actions by excluding them from society, this means that they should also be excluded from participating in artistic or cultural activities.
- Forms of art that support treatment and promote recovery are regarded as therapeutic and start to be called “care art” or “hospital art”, for example. As a consequence, professionals in the high arts, people in higher education, and the elite audience will regard these activities as being of lesser value, and do not include them as part of their own activities.

- The operations of arts institutions and vocational and higher education in the arts are defined by narrow, quality-based thinking.

How: let everyone stick to their last

When planning their activities, arts institutions do not systematically try to make their productions accessible or suitable to excluded target groups. Different art intervention projects may reach a small minority of these groups, but their effect is only temporary. The worth of an individual person to the arts institution, and their value as a member of the audience, depends on their physical ability to reach the location where the artistic activity is organised.

- The identity of the arts institution is connected to their main building. Funding agents provide resources to the entire operations of the institution, and the maintenance of the building and the related technological infrastructure consumes a substantial part of these resources (e.g., the National Theatre, the Finnish National Opera and Ballet, the Helsinki Music Centre). After these considerable investments have been made, the occupancy rate must be kept as high as possible. There are few resources available for activities that are organised outside the building.
- People who have been excluded from society through imprisonment, and patients in high-security psychiatric hospitals, are distanced and made part of marginalised groups through legal measures. These people are either serving their sentence or they pose a risk either to their own or to other people's health or security. This makes them non-autonomous agents who are excluded from the arts services. In this hierarchy, the directors of the facilities represent society and decide upon how individual members of these special groups can be allowed to participate

in social activities, what they “deserve”, and how they can be “rewarded”.

Examples: respecting people and a new way to think about quality

- Arts institutions should respect people as much as they respect artistic quality.
- The wishes of the audience are as important as the views of the professional elite.
- Arts institutions should regard challenges related to accessibility as part of their own high-quality operations.
- Professional training in the arts should be radically reformed.
- Fundamental cultural rights and expertise in cultural well-being should be reinforced by training the personnel and management of high-security institutions (e.g., prisons, psychiatric hospitals, care homes).
- Arts workshops should be organised in immigrant reception centres. For example, in one of the project’s studies, language workshops that were coupled with physical activity allowed the asylum seekers to have an experience of participation. The interview data gathered during the study included descriptions of reduced prejudice, experiences of being accepted, rewarding and positive forms of interaction, and the observation that participation was constructed through small, everyday experiences. Furthermore, the asylum seekers’ early experiences with the original population in Finland may have an impact on how they think about participation and opportunities to participate at later stages of integration (Ponkilainen, 2016; Siljamäki et al., 2017).

- Art interventions are organised in prisons. For instance, an art activity project that was carried out in a high-security prison resulted in a theatre performance that made use of research papers on the ethical policies of performing prison arts as well as both institutional and unofficial power relations. The study foregrounded factors that were the source of inequality in the recruitment process of art projects in prisons. Four prisoners took part in the performance (Koskinen, 2019; Koskinen & Valo, 2020).
- Art projects are organised in collaboration with people with a prison background. For example, the documentary theatre project *Vapauden kauhu* ('The Horror of Release') by the Touring Stage of the National Theatre and the Kiasma Theatre focused on the theme of life after prison. The performance was produced together with prisoners who were about to be released from prison, people with a prison background, and substance abuse outpatients (Lehtonen, 2016; 2017). During the project, the project members founded *Porttiteatteri*, a theatre run by arts professionals based in Helsinki. The goal of the theatre is to make people who are soon to be released from prison committed to theatre activities and in this way provide them with an opportunity to let go of their criminal identity (Porttiteatteri, 2021).

Arts activities aimed at special groups, such as elderly people, asylum seekers, or prisoners, can be examined from the perspective of the realisation of cultural rights, but also in terms of the potential policies of biopower. Philosopher Michel Foucault talks about biopower as a historically particular method of subjugating human bodies and controlling populations as part of economic and political regulatory activities. Discipline and biopolitics are the central techniques of biopower. Discipline refers to micro-power directed at human bodies. It makes use of control, checks, registration, and reports, and it is geared towards efficient production. Biopolitics, on the other hand, relates to macro-power, which uses different kinds of interventions to control and regulate the biological processes of the population, such as the length of the lifespan, health, and working performance. In other words, the question is about politics that promote production by fostering life and protecting society, which is used to justify the exclusion, oppression, and even elimination of people who are perceived as threats or risk factors (Foucault, 2003; 2010).

Separated institutions

- *distanciate* by identifying special groups from the general population as targets for art-based activities whose objective is social rehabilitation and improved working performance
- *exclude* special groups from "normal" artistic activities; however, these groups are sporadically offered art-based activities by individual projects
- *hierarchise* by dividing the population into people who need to be "rehabilitated" and those who are "socially acceptable", who will then be offered art activities on different grounds
- *exploit* people undergoing "rehabilitation" by depriving them of the right to participate in the arts just for art's sake; this is done by emphasising the therapeutic aspect of the art-based activity.



Perinteinen taiteen laamkäsitys

Koulutus

Pääsykokeet

Vapaa valinta, aktiivinen haetutuminen

Tutkimus, ohjattu, ohjattu

tule, kultani, joudu jo
-ai-ai, kun on ikävä. X2
Elä sinne mee, tule tänne vaan
kanssani piiriin tanssimaan. X2

KULTANI

5.
Nuoren tyt
ai-ai-ai, kun
Kuink

3. Possible roles of the arts and arts education system in the future - an agile, active social agent or a quality regulator?

As the world changes, the arts will endure, but the art systems will change

The inequality mechanisms that have been identified in arts and arts education are the result of structures that have formed gradually over time, and which have served the objectives set for the arts in their day and age. Central to these objectives are the ideas about quality, global cultural competition, and meritocracy that were engendered in the modern era. Ideas related to equality have not typically been part of this discourse. However, the structural and operative changes required by our present-day society, where the (factual) realisation of human rights and equality are central objectives, require a lot of time and systems development. Indeed, an arts institution whose operations mainly rely on public funding should formulate long-term plans for development and create a strategy that will help them reach the goals that are deemed to be essential in future operations. Planning for the future is particularly necessary when the operational environment is characterised by a high degree of uncertainty and where the future may look substantially different from today. One of the objectives of the ArtsEqual project

was to produce ideas and information that would help in the reformation of the structures and policies that are expected to increase inequality in the future. In the previous sections, we have described the inequality mechanisms that we identified together with their enabling factors. In this section, we discuss four alternative structural scenarios for the service and education system in the arts, where the mechanisms of inequality operate in substantially different ways. This part of the project's work was carried out by making use of the methods applied in the field of futures studies.

People engaged in planning work approach uncertainty in two ways. First, decisions can be postponed until there is enough information about the change affecting the operational environment. Second, uncertainty can be regulated by devising a strategy that helps the organisation adapt – and even succeed – regardless of what happens in the operational environment. The latter mode of action is referred to as the construction of resilience, or of flexibility. For example, the COVID-19 pandemic, or the reactions to the pandemic, has been a source of great insecurity in the field of the arts. This will hopefully turn out to be a short-term phenomenon. In addition to the pandemic, however, there are several processes at work both in Finland and in Europe (e.g., equality-related developments, increased multiculturalism, the rise of neo-nationalism, and the rising popularity of neo-liberalism), which may have an effect on the public funding of the arts and the operating environment of arts organisations (e.g., Ministry of Finance, 2019). This is because the allocation of public funding not only depends on the available economic resources but also on the decision-makers' attitudes and mental models.

The future cannot be predicted, but it is possible to present alternative scenarios of the future by examining trends and signals that can be used as indices of change (Kuosa, 2017). In this report, we present four future scenarios where there is variation in the social

attitudes towards the arts and the number of economic resources in each scenario. As a method, we used the morphological matrix (Johansen, 2018), where the four driving forces that play an important role in the development of the operational environment are given different values. By driving forces, we refer to the phenomena underlying different trends and megatrends, which have an effect on both conscious and unconscious choices and decision-making. They can constitute belief-based assumptions, individual facts, or events that affect either entire organisations or individual agents (Heinonen et al., 2017, p. 303).

In order to develop new modes of operation that could already be implemented in the near future, we tried to construct future scenarios that differed greatly from each other. None of the scenarios necessarily represents a more preferred outcome than the others; rather, our goal was to diversify our thinking through them. The future is, of course, more complex than what can be described in a single scenario, but these glimpses into the future give us the opportunity to put new mentalities to the test. They also allow us to test the feasibility of the existing plans of action and to design future pathways in order to construct the kind of future that we would like to achieve in various alternative operational environments and changes related thereto.

An individual success strategy was formulated for each future scenario: we will give examples of measures that help the service and educational organisations in the arts to succeed in the given scenario. Measures that increase the flexibility and resilience of the organisation will help it operate efficiently in a changing world, providing them with opportunities to succeed in as many future scenarios as possible.

As was already mentioned, the inequality mechanisms that were identified by the project, or which were reflected in its operations, have been produced or enabled by the structures that exist within

the systems and the institutions. It is obvious that these mechanisms will not change unless the underlying structures, concepts, and values also change.

Demand of equality	Role of the public sector	Respect for the traditional elitist culture	Social stability
T1 Absolute necessity to participate, just like in the teaching of mathematics, sanctioned	J1 The government's responsibility is to maximise economic growth under the conditions of market economy.	P1 Existential crisis: the elitist culture becomes scattered and marginalised, having to fight for its existence.	Y1 Anomie: Polarisation, insecurity, increased mistrust. The individual becomes detached from society.
T2 Respect for diversity, everything depends on the individual's interest. Individualism	J2 Guaranteeing the maximum happiness of the citizens, maximizing the role of the public sector.	P2. Reform: transformation and reformed social relationships. Focus on the human and the mode of existence. Constructing new values.	Y2 Resilient: Flexible, dialogical, moral society, where people care for each other both locally and globally.
T3 Regulated necessity, people forced into a certain group (problem, age, to those selected)	J3 Further growth is not possible, the government is responsible for combating the ecological crisis.	Construction of cultural heritage: no change, tradition is valued. What is considered to be the best will be preserved.	Y3. Orwell: Everyone has their own place and must follow the rules. People will settle for the society they have.
	J4 Focus on improving the status of vulnerable people.		

An example of a morphological matrix underlying the future scenarios and an example of the operational environment of a single scenario.

Scenario 1: Basic skills for everyone

In this scenario, demands for equality and welfare ideology become increasingly prevalent in society. The significance of art is foregrounded to avoid polarisation and conflict and to support civil society. Mental health issues comprise one of the central challenges, but healthcare, as well as occupational organisations and occupational healthcare, acknowledge the role of the arts in the promotion of health and well-being, and offer an increasingly large number of arts-based services to support people's well-being and the management of work-related stress. The public sector increases the funding of the arts because the arts are considered to diminish the social costs of mental distress and to improve the functions of society and the quality of life. The arts are considered part of life; they extend everywhere, and they are integrated into other human activities that have the potential to change society. Investments in the arts are understood as investments in intangible value production, as well as in the reinforcement of holistic well-being, operational capabilities, and a sense of community. The resources for arts education and the time spent on the arts during compulsory education is increased by 200 per cent to reinforce people's personal relationship with the arts. Teaching is phenomenon-based, and the arts are integrated into all teaching and school activities. Schools will host extra-curricular teaching of the arts and arts-based leisure activities. Every student is guaranteed an extra-curricular activity in the form of art they enjoy. The school will be transformed into a comprehensive activity platform (a cultural centre), which permits the crossing of intersectoral boundaries. The line between compulsory education and liberal adult education becomes blurred in the municipality, and arts teachers are increasingly employed by contracts where they work for more than one educational institution. At the same time, the requirement to evaluate the implementation of cultural well-being projects and to write evidence-based reports becomes a more significant part of the public funding of arts institutions.

In this scenario, success is produced by:

- collaboration between schools, other actors, and different sectors
- formation of new combined subjects
- increasing the training of teachers with transversal competences

Scenario 2: A controlled increase of diversity

In this scenario, the demands for diversity keep growing in an increasingly multicultural and socially aware society. The established arts institutions will either reconsider their entire operations or, at a minimum, launch different kinds of projects that help increase diversity. The amount of private funding raised through the operations comprises approximately one half of the budget. Interaction between the arts, society and different population groups takes place through projects, just like today.

The organisations that work in basic education in the arts offer teaching in several fields of art. However, the teaching is aimed at different kinds of individuals and groups with vastly different goals. At present, the municipal organisations in basic education in the arts offer more than just basic arts education (the same organisation is also responsible for liberal adult education and education outside the school). There is a multitude of objectives. Changes in the operations will also change the existing structures. Collaboration between institutions and different fields of art produces new expertise and new services.

In this scenario, success is produced by:

- a strong focus on collaboration with decision-makers, liberal adult education, and different sectors
- the training of collaboration skills and the employment of outreach and community workers
- extensive arts education
- the inclusion of every institution in collaborative projects

Scenario 3: Artists constructing the image of Finland

In this scenario, the driving force is neo-nationalism, which opposes immigration, multiculturalism, and the cultural rights of minority groups (Saukkonen, 2020). All over Europe, the role of the national culture becomes as strong as it was when the Republic of Finland declared independence. The goal is to construct a national perspective on the arts and to produce talented people to increase diversity in the European art scene. All resources are put to the education of those with talent and to the concept-planning of the artists and artistic contents that have been branded "profoundly Finnish". The mission of basic education in the arts is to identify and to produce top-level talent, and this sector in the education system is consequently given more resources. Institutions that provide vocational and higher education in the fine arts, music, the performing arts, and design are provided with a €200,000 bonus for every young Finnish artist who manages to succeed in an international competition. The media promotes the branding of artistic personas by focusing on Finnish experts in the arts. The educational establishments of the artists play a key role in this scenario, as do the top-level artists and their managers. Resources are directed to the teaching and education of the most talented people, while the rest of the population must make do with a minimal education in the arts or with no education at all. Nevertheless, everyone will learn to appreciate and to expect a special Finnish quality from the top artists. The media, on the other hand, will make success stories of them.

In this scenario, success is produced by

- a diversified funding scheme (dedicated foundation, new funding models)
- resources spent on public relations and media partnerships
- the construction of a global network

Scenario 4: Globalised, market-based art

In this scenario, the driving force for change is the severe demand of market-based society brought about by increased neoliberalism. The entire service system of the arts and arts education is expected to operate according to the market philosophy. Teaching in the arts comes to an end in Finland because the Finnish market is too small for the production of cost-effective commercial education services. The funding for art productions is acquired either from the customers or from private (corporate) sponsors. Consequently, fewer art productions are produced than before, but they are of a very high quality, attracting large audiences and operating securely from a financial perspective. Both the sponsors and the affluent consumers appreciate these top-quality experiences, which are produced in the big arenas located in the South of Finland to maximise profit. The arts system becomes globalised to a high degree, which leads to the creation of several kinds of funding channels and agents. Low-cost distribution channels (e.g., Netflix, Spotify) are used increasingly, as they provide the arts projects with extensive distribution and the desired level of global visibility. Paradoxically, the consumers' awareness of the arts increases, but their understanding of art is more superficial due to the mixed effect of the international distribution channels and the social media. The growing middle-aged population pursues top-level experiences by attending the tours of star performers and spectacle shows, which are selectively brought to Finland. Only those with great talent or people with lots of money can devote themselves to the arts with no additional source of income.

The education of the talented will take place in global institutions. Cultural contents that especially relate to Finnish culture, or which are directed at the minority cultures in Finland, become increasingly rare, and the market is saturated with low-risk global shows produced by multicultural production companies. Interaction with Finnish society is not considered essential.

In this scenario, success depends on

- a diversified funding scheme (dedicated foundation, new funding models)
- focus on public relations and media partnerships
- construction of an international network
- resources allocated to the cooperation between decision-makers

The arts will endure, but active interaction with society is a prerequisite for the development of the system

Structural reforms in the economy are expected to curb the increase of tax revenues. If this scenario plays out, the amount of public funding will also decrease (Watanabe & Ilmola, 2018). In the scenarios presented above, the starting point for the development of resilience, or agility and readiness to adapt, is the idea that the funding allocated to the arts and arts education does not increase. Therefore, other means must be used to carry out the reforms. If one decides that resources should be spent on something new, one must also be prepared to give up some of the current operations or learn to work with the decreased resources, while making dramatic changes to the existing operations. According to Therborn (2014, 80), it is not enough to focus on a single equality mechanism, such as approximation that helps reduce social differences, the inclusion of those who have been excluded, the de-hierarchisation of existing hierarchies, or the redistribution of resources. We need all of them.

Because ArtsEqual has looked for ways for reducing inequality and to promote the realisation of the cultural rights and factual equality of the citizens, we will now give some examples of how it would be possible to increase the flexibility within the field while also deconstructing inequality mechanisms that have been identified in the arts service and education system.

*What should the **structure** of the production system of arts education or arts services be like in order to promote adaptability and flexibility?*

Increased collaboration is one solution in a situation where it is not possible to diversify the production or to reach new audiences by

increasing resources. Inter-project collaborations are already ongoing, but longer-lasting, inter-sectoral collaborative structures and the constant planning of new collaborations are necessary for changes to be effectuated. In other words, the services, or an operation required by the services, are produced in collaboration (e.g., the same spaces are used, or the same professionals employed) and some of the services are produced in a form (e.g., digital) that can be distributed to the target groups irrespective of time or place. Well-established collaborations will also promote institutional learning on the long term.

In the scenarios presented above, the public funding for the arts is projected to decrease. Consequently, the *funding structure* must be *diversified* even further. New, creative forms of funding, such as crowdfunding or co-financing schemes from global funds or sponsors, can resolve problems pertaining to the resources of the new modes of operation. However, in order to be successful in the accumulation of funding, one must first be able to identify the added value of the project and to articulate it in a way that conforms with the values of the funding agent and the funding programme. Digital distribution channels and platforms may offer additional sources for extra funding.

*What kinds of **activities** will increase adaptability and flexibility?*

Concrete changes in education and the production and distribution of arts services are a prerequisite for the diversification of the supply of arts services.

The education of arts teachers and other arts professionals should be as extensive as possible, and it should also promote resilience as much as possible. Every future professional in the arts will need stronger interactional skills to be able to work across different sectors. International cooperation must also be developed. Furthermore, arts professionals need to acquire new kinds of pedagogical

skills, particularly if their work includes phenomenon-based teaching or supervision, it is organised according to the needs of special learners, or it includes problem-solving that makes use of artistic thinking or methods employed in the arts. Furthermore, the arts professionals will need research skills that are more varied than at present, project expertise, communications knowledge, conceptualisation skills, interactional skills, and ethical knowledge (Lehikoinen, 2019a; 2019b; Lehikoinen & Pässilä, 2016; see also, Lehikoinen, 2013).

Impractical and hierarchical structures, which are unduly separated from each other and expensive to maintain, will increase rigidity and slow down reactivity both from the perspective of funding and the operations of the arts institutions. The challenge faced by the institutions is to simplify their administrative structure so that they would not spend an increasingly large share of their resources on administration and the maintenance of the existing facilities and office spaces. However, the discussion on administrative and structural simplification is not relevant to freelance artists and art educators, micro-businesses in the arts, or small organisations operating as associations, that is, to the majority of agents working in the field of arts. It is often the case that these people and associations struggle in their day-to-day activities, and there is nothing they can remove from their operations. Examples of a *resource-scarce, ecological* way of operating can already be found in contemporary teaching and service production in the arts. For instance, students can try out different forms of art in group teaching. A concert that is streamed online can reach an audience that is hundreds of times larger than in the concert hall – although the experience is admittedly different. However, the diversification of the distribution channels requires knowledge of new digital technologies. Services that are offered remotely may save both economic and ecological resources. However, understanding the complex interactional relationship between

humans and nature requires a more comprehensive reform of attitudes, knowledge, and policies. This provides the field of arts and arts education with significant, largely unexplored, possibilities. The research-based development of the education of artists and art educators plays a key role in this respect as well. *Media partnerships and the active use of social media* as a channel are also part of responsible operations, in which the results acquired with public funding are reported to the audience, and especially to society that has provided the funding in the first place. In addition to having direct channels to the decision-makers, active public discourse is particularly necessary when the field of arts participates in social decision-making concerning the realisation of cultural rights. The media should take different value bases into account instead of discussing topics only from a narrow, economic perspective.

*What kind of **thinking** can increase adaptability and agility?*

The monolithic ideals and black-and-white confrontational attitudes are renounced in the subfields of the arts. The traditional criteria concerning high artistic quality can be made more expansive and diverse, so that they will better reflect how the arts can provide solutions to the needs of the modern human and actively support the ecological development of society that is based on equality and well-being. As our understanding of the quality criteria of artistic activities becomes more diverse and complex, the ways of producing and enjoying art will also become more varied.

We need to have professionals in the arts who are already encouraged to engage in *active interaction* between the different arts institutions and society during their studies. The organisations in arts education and service production can only provide solutions to the changing needs of society through constant, multi-faceted, and

diverse dialogue. Arts professionals also carry a considerable responsibility in making our society more inclusive and pluralistic and causing the inequality mechanisms to lose their significance over time.

This project investigated the operations of the arts and arts education service system co-financed with public funding in different operational environments, such as schools, basic education in the arts, arts institutions, and services integrated into health and social services, such as prison services and the integration of immigrants. Although some of the studies examined the health and well-being effects of the arts, the project excluded arts therapy, where the arts are used as a form of treatment, from the inquiry. When the arts and arts education were investigated as part of the activities of schools and other educational establishments, institutions providing secondary education and liberal adult education were also excluded. Consequently, the project did not study questions pertaining to the ways in which liberal adult education could promote equal accessibility to the arts and arts education, the realisation of cultural rights, and cultural well-being, for example.

University partners of the project's researchers

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ARTS EQUAL

The ArtsEqual project, funded by the Strategic Research Council of the Academy of Finland (2015–2021), investigated factors that discouraged people’s participation in the arts and arts education. The project proposed to break the cycle of vulnerability through a range of active measures and examined current policies in the arts and art services from an ethical perspective. This report describes some of the most significant inequality mechanisms identified in the arts and arts education service system in Finland as well as the mental models that underpin them.

cover photos: Eeva Anundi and Juha Metso