



Facilitator Handbook #4

## CREATIVITY

BUILDING CONNECTIONS,  
DRAWING INSPIRATION AND  
EXPLORING OPPORTUNITIES AS  
INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS



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The handbook is part of the series "Facilitator Handbooks", created as a part of an Erasmus+ Strategic Partnership collaboration.



**MitOst** **SKORO**

**Südwind**  
GLOBALISIERT  
GERECHTIGKEIT



WORKING  
BETWEEN  
CULTURES

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## A NOTE FROM THE EDITORS

### Why, and for whom?

How can we best inspire people to pursue personal, professional and societal development? As editors from a range of organizations representing the fields of empowerment, community development and education, this is our guiding question.

In the following European collaboration, we identify best practices from education and learning. Together we elaborate on how to strengthen individuals' key competences. Competences are best developed by learning processes that draw from a wide range of pedagogical approaches, such as incorporating knowledge, learning by doing, reflecting on specific actions, cooperative learning, and working on complex topics to understand learners' life and work circumstances. Creativity is a crucial competence in the development of proactive and self-responsible individuals. It helps people to ideate and to connect new ideas with previous experiences. It is a key competence for taking an active, leading role in social change. As teachers, tutors, trainers, youth workers, group leaders, or volunteers in civic initiatives, we have an important role to play in creating spaces that allow people to unleash and explore their creativity. With this handbook, we'd like to advocate for greater creativity in European education, and support those who share this desire with experience, tools and ideas.

### Facilitator handbooks and tools

This handbook is the fourth part of a series of four printed publications:

- Publication 1 explores facilitating self-driven initiatives;
- Publication 2 considers facilitating and planning experiential and holistic learning;
- Publication 3 discusses learning within European, global, and international contexts;
- Publication 4 delves into stimulating creativity.

In addition to our Handbooks, our online toolbox offers information on a broad range of topics, from active citizenship education to the theoretical aspects of a broad range of educational approaches. It also offers additional information and methods, and discusses the theory behind planning, conducting, and evaluating empowering learning processes in greater detail. Competendo is free of charge. The content of our toolbox is published under a CC Creative Commons License – feel free to use, share, and develop these materials within your own educational context.



We encourage you to share your feedback, approaches, and your visions of European, International and Global Learning.

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The online platform Competendo and its handbooks were awarded the "Best of Austria – Education for Sustainable Development" prize by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management in 2016.

## Legend:

Throughout the publication we use three types of labels:



Under the label "Case Study" you will find specific examples from real life that address a certain topic from the chapter.



Look out for to the label "Task" if you are searching for tasks or methods for working with your group on a certain topic.



The label "Checklist" contains tools for individual reflection.

# CONTENTS

---

page **06**  
**INTRODUCTION:  
CREATIVITY AT EVERY  
TURN, AND IN US ALL**

---

page **10**  
**Chapter 1  
WHAT IS CREATIVITY?**

Creativity and Social Change  
Creative Competence  
What happens in Creative Minds?

---

page **22**  
**Chapter 2  
CREATIVE PROCESSES**

Creativity as a Learning Process

---

page **28**  
**Chapter 3  
DIVERGENCE:  
THINKING IN DIFFERENT  
DIRECTIONS**

Tasks | Case Studies

---

page **36**  
**Chapter 4  
CONVERGENCE:  
NARROWING YOUR  
THINKING**

Tasks | Case Studies

---

page **45**  
**Chapter 5  
CREATIVE FACILITATION**

Holistic Learning | Creative Spaces  
Moderation | Humor  
Diversity Consciousness  
Variety of Senses | Solution Orientation  
Multiple Perspectives | Visual Facilitation

---

page **75**  
**Chapter 6  
SOCIAL IMPACT AS A  
LEARNING SPACE**

From Ideas to Public Activity | Tasks  
Case Studies

---

page **87**  
**OUTLOOK: TOWARD  
SOCIAL TRANSITION**

Applying Creativity to Cross-sector  
Competences | Creative Commons



# INTRODUCTION: CREATIVITY AT EVERY TURN, AND IN US ALL

Creativity has as many different manifestations as it does definitions by which people understand it. Among the many things creativity can be, here are a few:

- Creativity is when you walk down the street and an idea strikes that changes your perception of a problem
- Creativity is a state of mind in which our brains create connections between previously unlinked pieces of information and knowledge
- Creativity is a scientist, exploring every possible angle and perspective of their research question in order to see it a new way
- Creativity is an attitude of empowerment that focuses on our individual and collective potential to reshape our environment and our world
- Creativity is exploration, and as such it manifests itself in art
- Creativity is inherent in every human being: it can be developed as a skill, but it is nonetheless a natural ability of our minds
- Creativity creates and strengthens connections between people and within society; creativity helps the individual connect to the world

Aware of the challenges in establishing a comprehensive definition of creativity, we set out to compile this handbook.

## Unleashing creativity

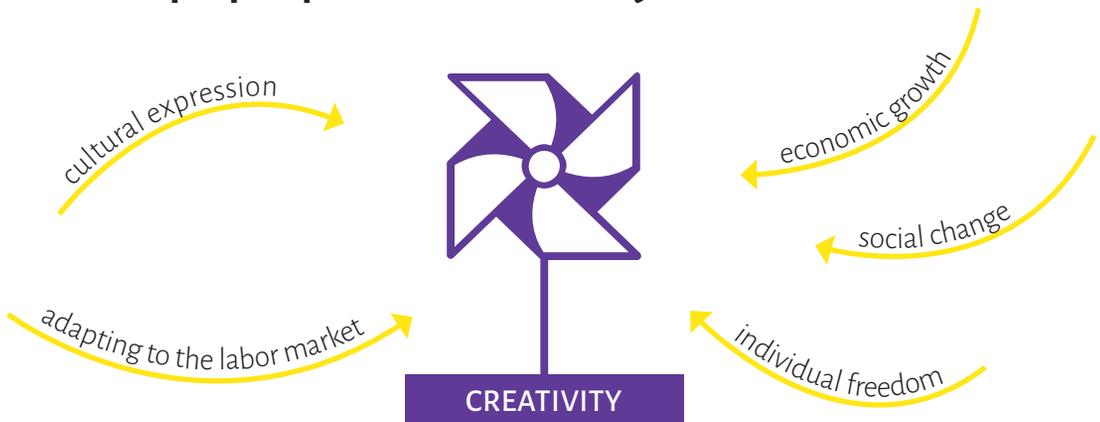
We feel it is important to start talking about creativity more openly in order to define its place in education and society and to demystify the term. In society creativity is often discussed as something that you either have or don't, much like talent. Today however, we recognize creativity as an innate process that can be stimulated through activities, for example in groups, or by creating the right conditions, for example through facilitation.

In this book we examine creativity through the lens of facilitation for the purposes of:

- Better understanding education as a process requiring and stimulating creativity
- Better understanding the complex interconnections at play within social systems and the world
- Developing manifold tools for working with different target groups and participants
- Shaping holistic learning spaces
- Activating creative energy for community initiatives
- Facilitating creative social processes within society

The purpose of this handbook is to provide facilitators with a theoretical and practical approach, empowering them to use proven ideas with diligently prepared tasks and exercises in order to achieve a creative environment, both within physical spaces and community/society.

## Multiple perspectives on creativity



The notion of creativity is often framed by *discourses on social or economical innovation or educational modernization*. Creative industries are viewed as a solution for post-industrial societies. Creative citizens are seen as innovators who find social solutions to problems that classical politics and businesses cannot deliver, whether that is creating new jobs, lowering unemployment rates, or resolving political or social problems. Creativity may also be perceived as a key competency that helps individuals navigate a complex world by adopting new technologies and using them to tackle global developments in their social field - as a kind of *tool for adaptability* to respond with smart ideas to the modern world and pressing global issues, like climate change. These intentions often appear in a *top-down* format, for example as a demand or request: we need more creative citizens and employees.

An alternative perspective on creativity is articulated by actors who emphasize creativity as an instrument to support individuals for developing their *individual freedom* and autonomy from the *bottom up*. In this context, creativity helps as many people as possible explore their capacity as creators. They wish to unleash creativity in humans by removing the barriers and limitations that society imposes on us.

In reality, creativity is a mix between all these intentions. As the interest in creative societies, creative industry, and creative citizens grows, a diverse group of actors are influencing teaching curricula and educational approaches. Many educational methods and approaches advocate for governments and grassroots activists' involving creativity more consciously in their competency development programs— from Entrepreneurship Education to Education for Democratic Citizenship to Cultural Education. This has consequences for facilitating creativity insofar as the predisposition of our *values* is affected. Facilitating creativity is a deliberate activity, and facilitators should be aware of how specifically they want to influence education. In this handbook, we would like to emphasize the facilitation of creativity as a *process of empowerment*.

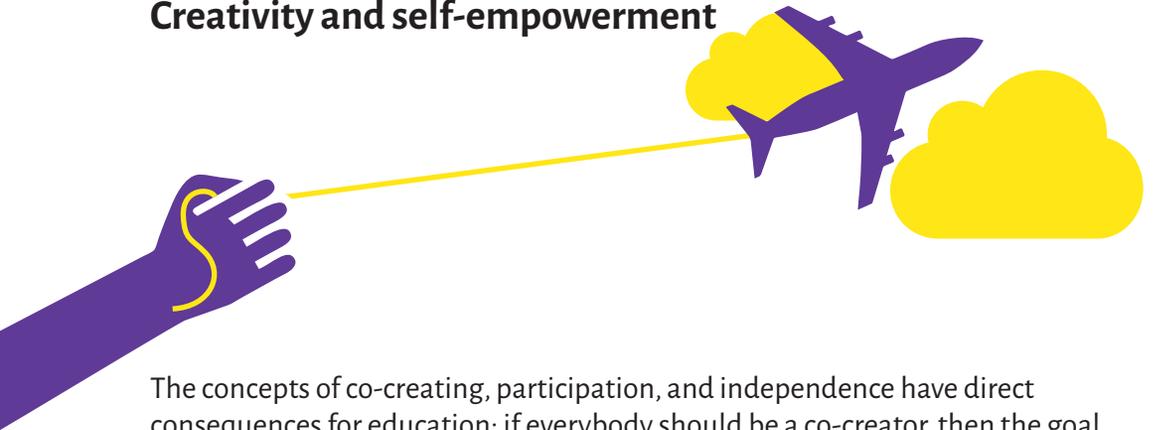
## **The miracle of freedom is grounded in our ability to create**

Beyond any utilitarian intention – whether implemented bottom up or top down – we see developing creative individuals as standing front and center. The Latin “creare” means to shape. People throughout all ages of history, and likely in all cultures, have commented on the *ability of a person to start things, to create* and therefore to change their environment. It was seen as a kind of special privilege of humans, often even legitimating their closeness to god(s) and their responsibility for the earth. The deep roots of this term also underpin our idea of democracy. In democracy, each individual is legitimated and should be allowed to become a co-creator. Hannah Arendt built a bridge from Aristotelian thought to the conditions of democracy today: “*The miracle of freedom is enclosed in this ability to begin*”<sup>1</sup>. Freedom is the fundamental goal of human social activities. The participatory revolution of democracy sought to change power systems based on the idea of a self-conscious citizen. As such, it is precisely democracy's self-conscious citizens and their ability to initiate change by *envisioning, connecting, discussing, deciding, and working on common issues* that should be strengthened and supported by schools, civil society organizations, and governments in order to contribute to and foster democratic ideals.

One can see this as a responsibility to the community or a personal

challenge. Before treating creativity as a burden or as something that leaves us too exposed to the complicated world around us, we should not forget creativity's *positive impact on the individual*. A person who starts to work with his or her creativity in a conscious way will realize that it leads to greater mental flexibility, an attitude of trying things out, critical thinking, and the ability to deal with social diversity in a constructive way. Creativity can even lead to greater resilience to stress or crisis.

## Creativity and self-empowerment



The concepts of co-creating, participation, and independence have direct consequences for education: if everybody should be a co-creator, then the goal of education is to empower individuals to be *involved and ideally to innovate*, which in turn means having a bigger impact, one which may even affect the creativity of the social system. Creativity should be perceived as an *instrument for the self-empowerment* of self-responsible, socially minded, and individual citizens. It starts with the attitude of seeing oneself as capable, powerful, and with the legitimacy to create.

Empowerment for creativity's sake also poses a challenge for facilitators and teachers. For example, it requires them to shape a *participatory and resource-oriented learning culture*, actively involving participants in the learning process. Facilitators and teachers must further develop an *attitude that appreciates non-conformism, divergent ideas, and proactive learners*. This may involve allowing learners to add new insights in the form of noise, altered needs, disobedience, or new insights – opening the process, allowing participants and facilitators to shape it together. As such, they need both an ability to *communicate and negotiate goals and processes* with learners, as well as the decisiveness to carry it out. Last, facilitators or teachers need *methodological competency in opening learning processes up to creativity*, and at the same time to aligning these with other learning goals. The authors of this handbook believe that a competency-centered approach and *holistic learning* (as described in the second handbook for facilitators on Holistic Learning) can help achieve this end.



# Chapter 1

## WHAT IS CREATIVITY?

Creativity is an ability that *helps us process the wealth of information* that our minds collect and *forge connections between different pieces of information* in order to *find a solution to a problem in a new way*, or to come to a *new understanding* of the problem itself.

Often, this involves establishing new connections where there have been none, and exploring the potential of seemingly unrelated topics. Creativity is as much about providing answers to particular needs as it is about *redefining the questions* that guide the search for answers. Ultimately, building upon previous knowledge and experiences is the essence of most creative deliberation.

Therefore, in many ways creativity is about *exploration*: exploring the knowledge that we already possess, exploring our environment and the rules within it, and exploring the problems that we face in order to understand and tackle them in new ways. Learners must overcome their discomfort with unclear situations, and any tendency to go into "fight or flight" mode or avoid uncertainty and ambiguity. That means constructively dealing with 'mental disorder' and disruptive processes.

Children are often creative – they are constantly learning to explore and reason. Ideally, they would connect this with an attitude of curiosity. In this way, all creative processes begin with *curiosity*, or a willingness to explore. Since learning about the world and trying to understand the connections that guide it are connected to *personal development* and *social experience*, one could conclude that creativity is an essential competence required in the processes of learning.

### Creativity and social change

Today creativity is studied and perceived against the backdrop of the following fundamental changes in our society's character, and connected to it by a need to apply our concepts of knowledge and education.

First, our perception of human beings changed significantly with a participatory paradigm shift. According to the philosophies of *democracy and participation*, all human beings have the potential to take part in public discussions and decision-making processes. This implies that they should be able and motivated to realize this potential, since democratic social development relies on it.

Second, *the emergence of psychology* and its neighboring disciplines in the 20th century helped us redefine our understanding of creativity. They are a potential tool for people to explore the nature of creative processes and learn to master their own creative competences. These fields also contributed to numerous innovations in the field of pedagogy, making creativity a competence accessible to everybody.

Third, *modernization* radically changed society. New technology continues to change the labor market by destroying old jobs or social structures, but it also creates new ones which require a different understanding of an individuals' education and work in society.

Existing educational systems often do not support this ongoing transformation, and are partially under pressure to reinvent themselves. Mostly created in the 20th century, these systems were built largely to suit the needs of industrialism, which were at that time clearly defined. The dominant approach consisted in forcing people to fit a certain mould, focus on their efficiency and ignore individual dreams and aspirations. The dominant work setting was strictly hierarchical, with less tolerance for mistakes or alternative paths toward a solution. The learning process was considered finite.

The legacy of industrialism still affects the way we learn today. However, a gradual process of academic inflation suggests that the whole structure of education is shifting. In the future more people will graduate from universities than since the beginning of history, mostly due to technology and the transformation of work, demographics, and a huge population explosion.

While people are increasingly qualified, the importance of higher education degrees is decreasing; today they often don't guarantee a job. Instead more people feel an urgency to come up with their own idea and. In order lifepath to define their visions and to plan how they can be achieved, a confidence in one's ability to initiate processes and the adapt to the unknown is crucial.



TED Talk by Ken Robinson: Do schools kill creativity?

[www.ted.com/talks/ken\\_robinson\\_says\\_schools\\_kill\\_creativity/](http://www.ted.com/talks/ken_robinson_says_schools_kill_creativity/)

## Elements of the transformation

*Artificial Intelligence, digitalization, human enhancement* via smart devices, and the shaping of spaces through the Internet of Things and similar advancements will find increasing application in everyday work and life. As such, people need to become conscious of their own particular qualities in creative thinking, drawing conclusions from opposing views, thinking in new ways, working with people, and fostering empathy.

*New job descriptions* are emerging. People need to be continually learning and adapting their skills, without the goal of fitting to one specific category of jobs but rather finding work that matches their specific abilities.

*Learning is becoming a lifelong process.* Education will be focused on the development of key competencies rather than a specific set of skills. Creativity, empathy, personal competence, and social skills will be in demand.

*Blurring the line between "life" and "work"* People will be more likely to follow their real interests and key competencies. They need to develop self-competencies as designers of their learning processes. To do so, people need to think more about attaining fulfilling jobs and how their positions and activities align with their qualities and passions.

*Expert-generalists supersede hyperspecialism.* They think in systematic ways, and can see the bigger picture, while at the same time specializing in one thing. They explore different sectors, develop their curiosity, research different things, and are familiar with basic components and fundamentals across different unrelated fields. Creativity is a key competence for developing such connections and understanding how things interact.

*A mindset of personal growth is established according to the dynamic idea of personal mastery.* Instead of thinking that one is born with a predetermined talent, society focuses on people's capacity and mindset for self-development.

The idea of *active citizenship in a civil society* becomes more important. If in the past citizens were often perceived as supporters of power and stabilizers of state institutions, today proactive, solidarity-minded citizens acting in accordance with democratic principles and human rights provide a needed counterbalance to economical and political power or antidemocratic pressure from within society.

## Ingredients of Creative Competence

The transformations we see today demonstrate the crucial role of creativity. Its development should be encouraged across a variety of social contexts. As the need for creative competency affects more and more people globally,

the overall goal of education must be to make it accessible to individuals regardless of their level of education, ethnicity, age, or gender. In this sense creative competence as a *proactive adaptivity* is a *survival mechanism* and at the same time a *starting point* for personal development as well as the *raw material* for social change.

One definition from the EU's EntreComp researchers locates creativity within the context of social impact: “Learners can develop ideas, test them and transform them into solutions that create value for others.”<sup>1</sup>

Facilitating creativity cannot be done by simply putting knowledge on the agenda. Rather, creative learning processes also need to address the skills, knowledge and attitudes people will need in order to act as self-responsible and active citizens in the society. Together, these form a *creative competence*.

## Creative Competence

Creativity requires an *attitude of curiosity* to explore social surroundings. Basically, it is the *ability to connect* new things with old things, to build unexpected connections, and to develop new solutions to a problem or challenge.

Within the context of groups, communities, or society, creative individuals' ability to make connections means a *proactive adaptability to social change* and an ability to recognize synergies and create new qualities out of what already exists in discourses and groups.

Crucial for this social dimension of creativity is a *mindset that demonstrates a willingness and ability* to generate ideas and a *motivation* to think and share new solutions.

Creativity includes certain *analytical and reflective skills* required for exploring new insights, as well as an ability to to implement these insights through activities—here creativity is understood as a *methodological competence*.

Modelling creative competence for educational purposes can try to articulate the essential aspects of this key competence in a systematic way. One option is to distinguish between the factual, methodological, social and personal competencies included in creative competence. This allows for the facilitation of creative competencies in a targeted and conscious way. It helps with planning and during learning processes, and can assist facilitators and learners in developing criteria for evaluating achievements.

## Aspects of creative competence

<p>Task-specific Factual Competence</p>	<p>Identifying adequate solutions for tasks and problems based on the knowledge of a specific field, as well as how that field is systematically organized and externally related to other fields:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Applying knowledge and practices from different domains</li> <li>→ Transferring knowledge from other fields to the specified learning field</li> </ul>
<p>Methodological Competence</p>	<p>Acting consciously, competently, and in a goal-oriented way. The ability to choose methodologies and to evaluate outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Adapting approaches and concepts to the needs of the circumstances and actors</li> <li>→ Structuring and visualizing complex topics and seeing them from multiple perspectives</li> <li>→ Assessing and combining information and experience</li> <li>→ Experimenting with innovative approaches</li> <li>→ Perceiving several ideas and opportunities</li> <li>→ Assessing and evaluating different solutions according to criteria such as success or needs fulfillment</li> <li>→ Shaping spaces and organizing processes to unleash creative potential</li> <li>→ Organizing and moderating creative and targeted processes</li> </ul>
<p>Social Competence</p>	<p>Living in relation to other people and actively shaping social relations. Reflecting different interests, needs and tensions. Team and conflict management skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Developing analytical, reflective, and empathic listening skills</li> <li>→ Finding solutions for situations that pose challenges to communication</li> <li>→ Participating in collaborative ideation processes</li> <li>→ Developing a diversity conscious and constructive attitude toward others' thoughts, needs, and ideas</li> <li>→ Developing an ability to deal constructively with non-conformist, contrary, and divergent opinions</li> <li>→ Involving others in the creative process in a participatory way</li> </ul>

## Personal Competence

- Acting autonomously in a self-organized and reflective way: observing and evaluating challenges, requirements, or options. Assuming responsibility:
- Maintaining an attitude of curiosity toward others and the world
  - Developing an ability to find inspiration in different ways
  - Envisioning a future goal
  - Keeping a proactive attitude of adaptability to social change: perceiving oneself as able to influence change
  - Thinking inside and outside of norms
  - Fostering a playful attitude, open for disruptive processes
  - Balancing an ability to process divergent and convergent information
  - Thinking of challenges and problems in a solution-oriented way

Inspired by: Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB) <sup>2</sup>

## Emotion and Motivation

Competency-centered learning not only includes cognitive aspects, but also emotional and unconscious ones. As John Erpenbeck is putting it: “Action necessarily presupposes emotion.” <sup>3</sup>

Creativity *requires emotion*. A desire to change or put new things on the agenda is not necessarily intellectual, but an expression of intrinsic, emotional motivation. Creative processes include emotions of all kinds: positive (e.g. visions, embracing something new) and negative (e.g. protest or disagreement).

Facilitation can put these valuable emotions to work by bringing them to the surface and *making emotion accessible for learners* to reflect on. As we put it in the second handbook for facilitators: “holistic learning seeks to increase our consciousness of our behaviors and skills. This helps individuals see how self-development takes place.” <sup>4</sup> People need learning processes where they feel safe and able to create. In this context, safety means being able to *express non-conforming or unfiltered ideas* without negative consequences. As such, they need a space where they are *able to express their emotions* in their own individual way. Learners need to *see what they stand to gain* from making their emotions accessible to themselves and others (for example better inspiration, support, relief, or relaxation).

One crucial emotion without which creativity would be impossible is *motivation*. The optimal state of motivation is when the *challenges a person faces and his or her own abilities are balanced*. In this instance, a person acts with passion and without feeling like he or she is exerting tremendous effort: they are in the so-called *flow*. As facilitators, we might conclude that facing challenges must be done while keeping the existing competencies of a given person in mind. A good balance will support creativity. The challenge should not be so high so as to cause a learner to feel anxiety and shame instead of deep motivation. Nor should the challenge be too low so as to cause a learner to feel too relaxed and lack motivation.<sup>5</sup> Creative activities, performing, and group rituals seem to stimulate and foster intrinsic motivation more than competitive ones.

The small activities one does during the day are crucial. We are constantly involved in maintaining our level of motivation, even when there are external stimuli. These *proactive, diverse, and apparently trivial activities* seem to help us to balance our mental state and develop our ability to be creative.<sup>6</sup> This flow, however occurs within the learner, not in the classroom. Facilitation must avoid asserting too much control over learners' minds, leaving them enough space for their own flow to evolve.

## What is happening in creative minds?

Creativity is a process in which inspiration occurs through the interplay of a more *associative* gathering of inspiration and information and a more *stringent* process of assessing and sense-making. This can be described as a kind of mental table-tennis.

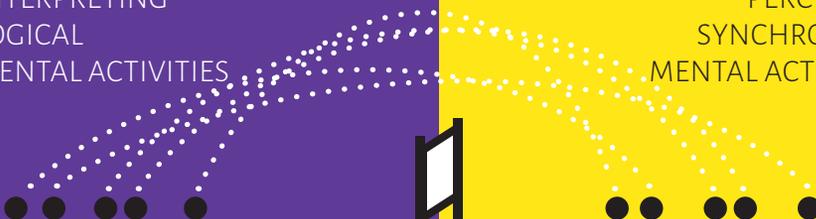
Penaluna/Coates/Penaluna describe the creative process as a process in which two phases follow each other consecutively. After the phase of creating new connections, gathering new experience, and perceiving, rather than evaluating perceptions, a phase of reflection with a re-establishing

### CONVERGENT

STRUCTURED  
INTERPRETING  
LOGICAL  
MENTAL ACTIVITIES

### DIVERGENT

CHAOTIC  
PERCEIVING  
SYNCHRONOUS  
MENTAL ACTIVITIES



of a linear logic follows, as well as the goal of making sense and putting some experiences aside to reduce complexity. By consciously and regularly introducing creative disruptions between phases, facilitators can assist in this interaction; in contrast enforced discipline limits dynamics.



Creativity seems to be the result of these process. On the one hand it involves more nonlinear, illogical, unordered processing. It involves an ability to *reason abductively*, and to deal with an “infinite number of possible solutions to a myriad of challenges.”<sup>7</sup> Such abductive reasoning means forming and evaluating explanatory hypotheses on the basis of a set of (different) data, and assembling a theory that fits the diverse aspects of what one has perceived. It means asking: How can these things go together?<sup>8</sup>

At the same time, creativity involves thinking in a rather linear cognitive way, discarding irrelevant observations or experiences – it is a kind of *deductive reasoning* in a “rule based, deterministic,” or assessing way.

The subjective moment when an insight appears takes place in the space between these two phases and is generated by making use of both processing styles. It is contingent, which means it often *appears by accident*. Predicting the insight is not possible, nor is there a recipe for stimulating creativity in a mechanistic way. What is clear, however, is that these two opposite states of mind interact and that creativity involves an ability to make use of both.

In this “table tennis” setting, different mental processes come into play with each other. When the right divergent side controls the mental ball, it will happen in a wild, rather uncontrolled way. On the other hand, the left side will try to hit the ball back in a more precise manner and to take control of the game, make sense of the information, and come up with a strategy. This continuity and stabilizing playing style hedges the right side’s behavior and aligns the play toward results, or products. Creative processes are iterative. Sometimes they are redundant, referring to previous experience and thoughts,

and sometimes they proceed toward a goal. To achieve this flexibility, the brain needs to develop structures that allow for such flexibility.

This idea of interaction between different parts of the brain, the interaction of different brain functions in a hub-style as well as a flexible, interconnecting way contradicts the assumption of a static work division between mental processes or a static understanding of creativity as located in one certain place in the human brain.<sup>9</sup> It is an ability to make connections with help of a bipolar style of thinking shifting between “blind variation” and “selective retention”.<sup>10</sup>

Creative learning processes imply both intellectual and physical development. They keep our competencies and dendrites developing.

For facilitation, we can draw conclusions from these insights to encourage creativity:

- Reflecting and developing the emotional connection and motivation of learners with regards to a particular issue or challenge
- Allowing space for nonlinear, inspirational, abductive reasoning
- Allowing space for linear, logical, deductive reasoning
- Taking into account the dynamics of creative processes since they seem to be asynchronous, especially in groups
- Disrupting a process by shifting between different modes of reasoning, for example by reframing, turning hypotheses on their head, or viewing them from different angles
- Challenging learners by always keeping them in their learning zone



## Case study: Envisioning new solutions with the SCAMPER Principles

You are searching for a creative idea, but nothing comes to mind; you are missing the context, inspiration, or point of reference. Brainstorming does not help, no fresh ideas come to your mind. The SCAMPER method, an approach created by Alex Osborn/Bob Eberle<sup>11</sup>, provides a more specific framework.

Instead of trying to develop completely new ideas for improving your project or product, start first by modifying and transforming existing ones. This method directs thinking by giving a context for the creative process and the common ways for fostering creative logic.

Let us take an example from the fieldwork of the Warsaw based SKORO

Association: To promote young inhabitants' feeling of ownership over their Ursus city district and to empower them for initiative, SKORO invited them for 5 day-long "Neighborhood Labs", trainings where the youth met like-minded people, came up with ideas, and planned neighborhood activities.

Now, SKORO would like to change the format of the trainings because they are poorly attended; 5 days is too long a time period, and the workshops are not reaching the wider population.

The SCAMPER method can be used to help SKORO develop a creative approach to improving the Neighborhood Lab format.

S

### Substitute

**Idea:** Remove one aspect of the current situation, thing, or concept and replace it with something else.

- What elements does your learning event currently include?
- Which of them can be replaced?

**Example:** Trainings usually begin with a group activity that is often very dynamic and loud.

*These might be replaced with an activity that helps one focus on oneself and calm down before the start of the training.*



C

### Combine

**Idea:** Join, affiliate, or force together two or more elements of your subject matter.

- Which elements can be combined and which have to stay unchanged?
- What other ideas can be affiliated with your primary learning event?

**Example:** Scholars and practitioners talk about issues during separate learning events (e.g. conferences for scholars and non-formal events for practitioners).

*Bring these groups together to work on a certain issue.*



A

### Adapt

**Idea:** Copy an existing solution and apply it to your problem.

- Does my event share common elements with something else?
- Are there other fields, spheres, or educational practices that inspire me?
- What previous solutions or situations are applicable to my current learning event?

**Example:** Venture capitalists are usually "pitching" ideas and teams. *Adapt the highly successful business approach of presenting and mentoring civic initiatives.*



# M

## Modify

**Idea:** Change a particular element's size, shape, other dimensions, texture, color, attitude, position, history.

- What happens if I make my learning event bigger or smaller?
- Can I speed up or slow down the process of my learning event?
- What if I change the frequency?

**Example:** The usual training in SKORO takes place 5 full days at one stationary place.

*Offer a weekend meeting plus a series of webinars.*



# P

## Change the Purpose or find Another Use

**Idea:** Modify the intention of the subject. Think about why it exists, what it is used for and what it's supposed to do. Challenge your assumptions and think of new and unusual purposes.

- How could similar learning events be used by completely different people?
- Who else could use my service that I have not thought of before?
- What if I completely change the target market?

**Example:** The target group is young civil society actors.

*Do it in a similar way, but with school principals who will meet to plan how civic education can be incorporated in the school.*



# E

## Eliminate

**Idea:** Arbitrarily remove any or all elements of your subject, simplify, reduce to core functionality.

- What can be removed?
- What is not needed for the stated goal or intended impact?
- What do others find superfluous?

**Example:** Learning events are usually facilitated by one person.

*Create an open space, self-facilitated by mentors and participants, in so called "peer-to-peer meetings".*



# R

## Reverse or Rearrange

**Idea:** Turn it upside-down, inside-out, or make it go backwards, against the direction it was intended to go or be used. Alternatively, modify the order of operations.

- How can I rearrange the elements of the learning event?
- What about starting from the end?
- What habits and patterns can I change?

**Example:** The learning events are facilitated by the SKORO facilitators.

*Let the participants teach the educators how they should facilitate.*



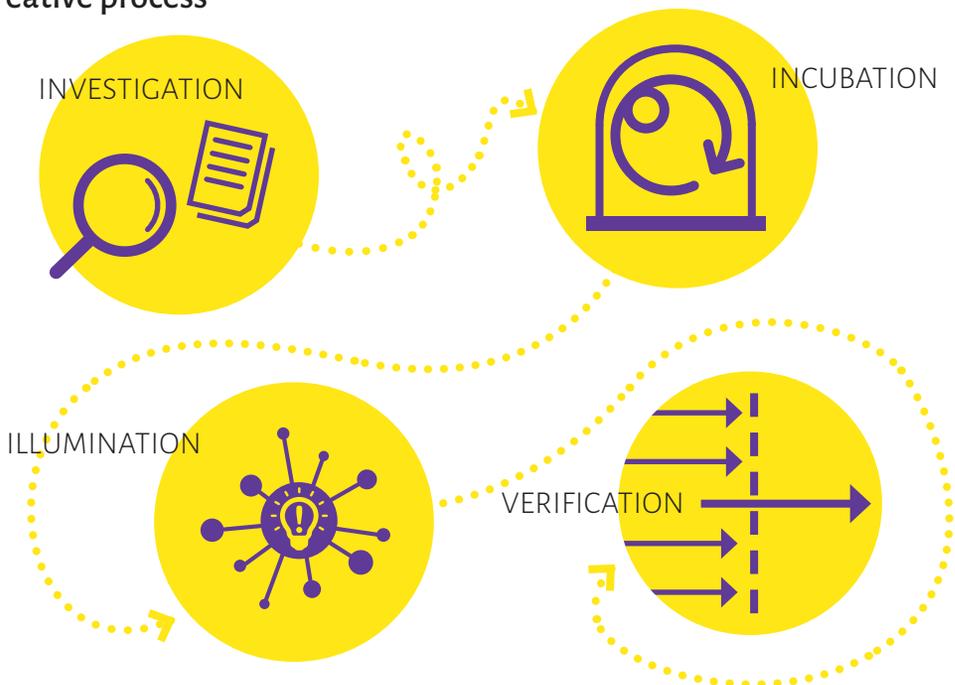
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## Chapter 2

# CREATIVE PROCESSES

The creative process is an interplay between conscious and deliberate stages and less conscious and non-deliberate phases. They cannot exist in isolation from each other. As creativity is a process that starts by thinking proactively, it is luckily not possible to control creative processes in learners' brains. For example, we cannot pinpoint the moment where an insight appears in the mind of the learner, and different ideas and problems overlap. We might conclude that designing learning processes should involve an understanding of creativity as an open process. Knowledge of the process and the particular challenges that may arise in certain stages allows facilitators to increase the likelihood that creative insight will appear. In 1926, the creativity pioneer Graham Wallas defined creativity as “the art of thought” and delineated four stages of the creative process :

### Creative process



## Process Design

Some approaches to group facilitation try to direct the process of creativity towards a social goal. For example, Design Thinking seeks to mobilize the divergent and convergent aspects of the creative process for the development of products or product-like solutions. This approach leads participants through various stages:

- Empathize (deeply understand and observe the social context)
- Define the challenge
- Ideate & prototype
- Test & iterate
- Modeling

Human Centered Design follows a similar logic to Design Thinking, featuring the stages of hear, create and deliver.

Other programs seek to combine classical learning phases with typical project development phases. We introduced this approach in the first handbook of this series (Steps toward action).

- Ideation (gathering ideas)
- Concretization (transforming them into concepts)
- Experimentation (activities)
- Reflection (impact assessment and evaluation)

These complex approaches *incorporate diverse learning experiences* in a holistic process and give creativity a chance to appear over the long term.



### Case study: Creative workshop

by Marta Gawinek-Dargargulia SKORO

*The following case study shows how a workshop designed to strengthen civic activists' engagement through social projects can be structured according to the model of G. Wallas.*

#### 1. Preparation

This is a conscious and deliberate phase in which problems are investigated in all their facets, intellectual resources are accumulated to provide a basis for constructing new ideas, research is given full attention, and the problem is analyzed in depth.

### Ideas for facilitating investigation:

- SWOT analysis of the community or the team:  
[www.competendo.net/en/SWOT](http://www.competendo.net/en/SWOT)
- Brainstorming relevant aspects of a future initiative, product, or activity:  
[www.competendo.net/en/Word\\_Cloud](http://www.competendo.net/en/Word_Cloud)  
[www.competendo.net/en/Democracy\\_Scrabble](http://www.competendo.net/en/Democracy_Scrabble)
- Identifying learning motivations, learning challenges and emotional triggers for creativity:  
[www.competendo.net/en/Learning\\_Zone\\_Model](http://www.competendo.net/en/Learning_Zone_Model)  
[www.competendo.net/en/Checklist:\\_Crucial\\_Questions](http://www.competendo.net/en/Checklist:_Crucial_Questions)  
[www.competendo.net/en/Motivation](http://www.competendo.net/en/Motivation)
- Social diagnosis of the problem using mapping methods:  
[www.competendo.net/en/Map\\_your\\_neighborhood](http://www.competendo.net/en/Map_your_neighborhood)  
[www.competendo.net/en/Empathy\\_Map](http://www.competendo.net/en/Empathy_Map)
- Adopting a different perspective on the idea or initiative:  
[http://competendo.net/en/Seeing\\_new\\_perspectives](http://competendo.net/en/Seeing_new_perspectives)
- Reflecting on the potential users, audience, or supporters:  
[www.competendo.net/en/Designing\\_a\\_Persona](http://www.competendo.net/en/Designing_a_Persona)
- Interviewing local community members and representatives from different sectors

## 2. Incubation

This is a less conscious process that deliberately inserts breaks into the concentrated effort of the workflow, voluntarily leaving problems unfinished, and incorporating relief and rest. Keeping participants' minds open ("mindwandering") for inspiration, taking a break from the intense process of thinking in order to refresh the mind, maintaining perspective and returning to the task with a different state of mind.<sup>1</sup>

### Ideas for facilitating incubation:

- Walking through the city or a hiking trip
- Manual artistic workshops, such as with stencil, clay, photography, or creative writing
- Drama and performance workshops
- Asking participants what relaxes them the most, then letting them do that
- Plenary discussions: [www.competendo.net/en/Discussion](http://www.competendo.net/en/Discussion)

- Writing down ideas individually and putting yourself in new shoes while brainstorming (taking third person perspective)
- Generating content: Writing a “laundry list” of at least 100 ideas

### 3. Illuminating a new formation

An Aha moment follows the incubation phase. The “flash” moment of insight happens after gathering all the elements (preparation phase) and letting them float freely (incubation). It can be enforced but not controlled. Sometimes it happens immediately, sometimes as a result of diverse smaller insights. Stimulating illumination and raising learners' awareness of the nature of the process makes its occurrence more likely.

#### Ideas for facilitating illumination:

- Tell learners that a moment of illumination can happen anywhere, anytime and give them a diary and pencil. Ask them to note it down when it comes and before it flies away
- Make sure newly created ideas are expressed and taken care of (appreciation and further elaboration without immediate verification)
- Challenge learners, keep their minds active (similar to the SCAMPER method). Make use of different modes of thought

### 4. Verification

A conscious *and* deliberate phase for testing the validity of an idea, setting down the idea in clearer form, planning it in detail, adapting it, and applying it.

#### Ideas for facilitating verification:

- Six Thinking Hats: [www.competendo.net/en/Six\\_Thinking\\_Hats](http://www.competendo.net/en/Six_Thinking_Hats)
- Future Workshop: [www.competendo.net/en/Future\\_Workshop](http://www.competendo.net/en/Future_Workshop)
- Describing the idea according to its impact on society: [www.competendo.net/en/Theory\\_of\\_Change](http://www.competendo.net/en/Theory_of_Change)

Ongoing evaluation relates to the development of creative competence. Such reflection helps learners to understand the nature of creativity and draw conclusions on how they might arrive at better creative insights during the next steps of a process and in the future.



Methods for assessment and evaluation can be found on:  
 → [www.competendo.net/en/Evaluation](http://www.competendo.net/en/Evaluation)



## Task: A Shared Ideaspace

Working together creatively over a longer period of time, participants develop ideas that serve as the groundwork for their project concepts.



2+ hours



Moderation cards, sheets of paper in several colors, pens, big papers, evaluation dots (stickers). A box for each imagination station.



20+

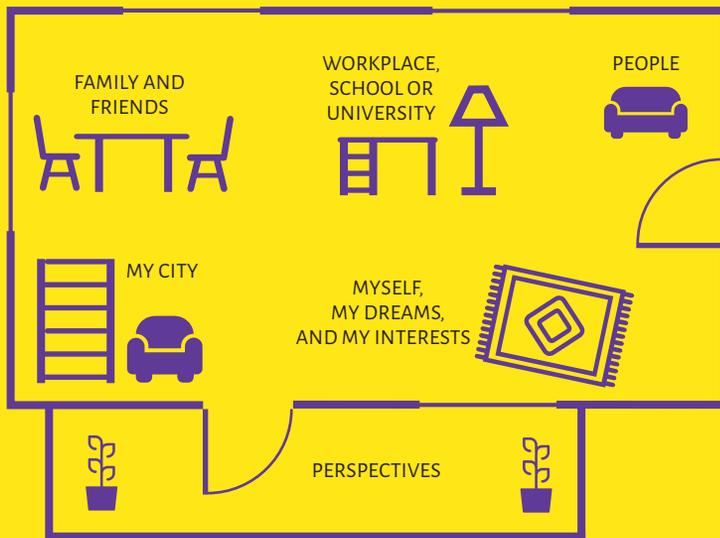
by MitOst

### Goal

For participants to gain inspiration, collect and evaluate ideas for future activities.

### Preparation

Prepare a room with several “imagination stations” with topics such as:



A balcony with a good view might be a good station for perspectives. A spot under a tree can be the “dreams and interests” station. The stations can be decorated with accessories, photos, articles, and objects that relate to the topic they represent.

Supply each station with sheets of paper/moderation cards, pens, chairs and blankets. Each station should be labeled clearly with a number and the topic it represents, and should have a bucket or box for participants to place their responses.

## Introduction

You can introduce this activity with a brief meditation or a focusing exercise.

Tell participants to go to one station and see what occurs to them. Have them write down any ideas that come to mind and place them into the buckets/boxes. If they so choose, participants should feel free to draw instead of write.

Participants then change station, continuing until they have visited all of them.

### 1. Fantasy phase

Participants do the imagination stations silently. During a 30 minute break, the trainers empty the buckets/boxes, cluster them together in a general way according to topic and put them up on a large wall or board. Note: Be sure to allow enough space for the next step!

### 2. Review phase

Next the participants read the ideas that have been written and have a chance to add questions, new inspirations, or comments in the forms of mind mapping, drawings and text.

### 3. Evaluation phase

The participants identify the ideas/topical fields that inspire them most for their project work. They place evaluation dots (small round stickers) next to these ideas, or can make dots with markers.

### 4. Small group phase

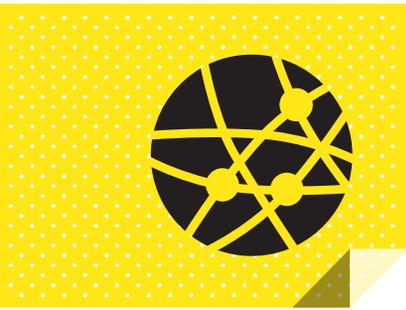
A brainstorming/mind map/idea collection takes place in smaller groups. These can also be small project teams selected according to the inspiration each participant had during the previous steps.

These teams then perform a critical review: Which ideas are actually possible to implement?

Next, participants elaborate on a feasible project concept and create an outline on a poster.

### 5. Presentation phase

Each group presents its results. After the presentations, you can add a phase to evaluate the project concepts with feedback which could include questions, (appreciative) commentaries or proposals.



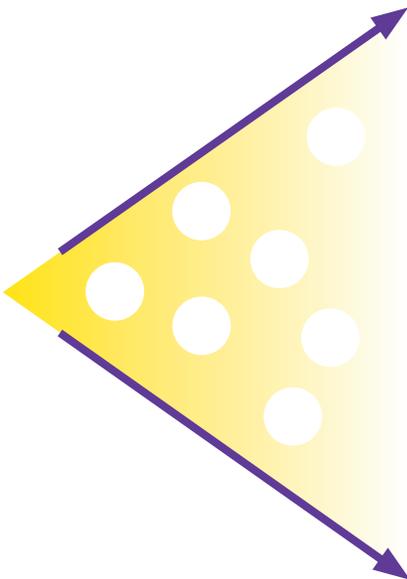
## Chapter 3

# DIVERGENCE: THINKING IN DIFFERENT DIRECTIONS

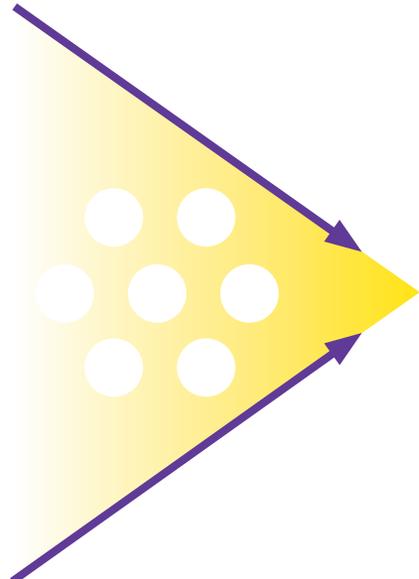
Exploring new and original ideas about a topic and drawing inspiration from the ideas or action of others leads to a *colorful bouquet of opportunities* that people need first for reasoning, and then for using these opportunities as material for creativity at a later stage. For example, divergent thinking can be encouraged by:

- Allowing participants to get into the flow
- Unleashing participants' associative potential
- Providing opportunities for different sources of inspiration. Expression through diverse *active cultural activities*, such as dancing, performing, music, or drawing
- Encouraging and practicing *non-conformist and unconventional ways* of thinking

DIVERGENT THINKING



CONVERGENT THINKING





## Task: Different Ways to Use a Paper Clip

Explore the diversity of what one can do with a paper clip.

🕒 20–60 min 📁 paperclips, cards, pens 👥 2–20



### Goal

Put participants in a creative mode and encourage them to make associations, or think in way that allows us to draw connections and associations between different or previously unrelated ideas, words, and experiences.

In the activity participants explore a broad range of different possible solutions, as perceived within a group setting.

### Steps

Each participant receives a paperclip, if possible it should be oversized.

**Introduce the exercise:** The task is to show others what you can do with a paper clip beyond merely holding papers together. Try to be innovative. For example, participants might transform, shape, or destroy the paper-clip.

Individual work on “prototypes”.

Presentation of each participant’s prototype.

### Reflection

- What was the most common prototype?
- What were the most surprising ones?
- What can you learn from a paper-clip?
- What does a paper-clip have to do with creativity?

### Experience

Creativity comes into play when something new and unexpected occurs. In this exercise, participants use a paper-clip. In other contexts, people might work with prototypes of a product or a service. This task requires a state of mind free from the spoken and unspoken rules implicit in a given context. It encourages divergent, non-conformist thinking. To dig deeper, the task might be extended, for example by adding a “what you can’t do with a paperclip” exercise. And in the following by a conclusion and maybe a more sophisticated product design which might lead to truly new insights how a variation of a paperclip might serve people.



## Task: Collegial Inspiration

 10 min per consultation  paper, pen  5–20

A person describes a problem he or she wants to solve, and his or her colleagues inspire him or her with their associations and advice.

### Goals

- Learners will create an overview of different options regarding a problem.
- Learners will create a mutually supportive exchange, offer different perspectives, and learn to apply mindful communication.

### Steps

One person steps in front of the group, turning his or her back to the group and asking one question for which he or she wants to find a solution. Make clear that it can only be one, open question, and make sure that all group members understand the question.

Next, the group is invited to answer the question according to the following rules:

- focus on a *concrete answer with no value judgement*, even implicitly, of the question;
- participants should proceed one after the other (to make sure the questioner is able to follow);
- The facilitator moderates the process.

Like the group, the questioner also has to follow some rules:

- be *thankful* (it doesn't matter if you find the inspiration useful in the moment or not – your colleagues are trying to support you);
- *don't reply or comment* (at the end it is up to you what you wish to take from the process, and what not);
- *document* the ideas for later.

After each person has given their suggestions, the facilitator asks the questioner to return to the group. At this point, a new round can start.

### Experience

This task is very helpful in finding solutions for real challenges, e.g. in a project team. Often the questioners are pleasantly surprised by the broad range of solutions offered, and even the unrealistic ones can be decisive as they help the questioner to think outside the box. This task combines efficiency and goal orientation with practicing communication skills in a group. The questioner learns to listen and not to defend or evaluate. For

their part, the participants giving the suggestions learn to concentrate on what could be relevant and to empathize with their colleague.

This task also helps participants overcome any insecurities they may have about presenting their imperfections publicly, an attitude that builds the trust required for learning from peers. This approach is inspired by the popular German concept of collegial counseling (Kollegiale Beratung).



## Case Study: Creative Writing

*by Ilona Olehlova and Inese Priedīte, editors of the Creative Writing Cookbook*

Fiction writing, poetry writing, and creative non-fiction writing can give expression to our thoughts, experiences, or emotions. Rather than simply providing information, creative writing can entertain or educate, spread awareness about something or someone, or simply express a writer's ideas and opinions.

Creative writing is also a great learning tool, a means to explore the world around us and challenge our assumptions. Creative writing exercises and workshops offer much more than writing skills. In our professional lives, creative writing might reveal new ways of presenting knowledge and experience to various target groups, and improving your persuasion skills.

For educators, creative writing is a great way to broaden the curriculum and give students new challenges. Creative writing helps to develop our imagination, and therefore helps us to come up with original ideas and new solutions for the challenges we face. In terms of personal growth, creative writing also provides us with a means to grow more comfortable with sharing our own thoughts, to learn more about ourselves, to explore our strengths (and areas we may need to improve), to get in touch with our feelings, and to improve self-confidence and self-esteem. Writing can help us find self-forgiveness and healing.



Creative Writing Cookbook, 2016: Published by Estonian UNESCO Youth Association in cooperation with Piepildīto Saprņu Ištaba and Cooperativa Braccianti under a Creative Commons BY-NC-SA License

[www.creativelearningcookbook.tumblr.com](http://www.creativelearningcookbook.tumblr.com)



## Task: Looking for Metaphors

🕒 30 min



cards in two colors



2-30

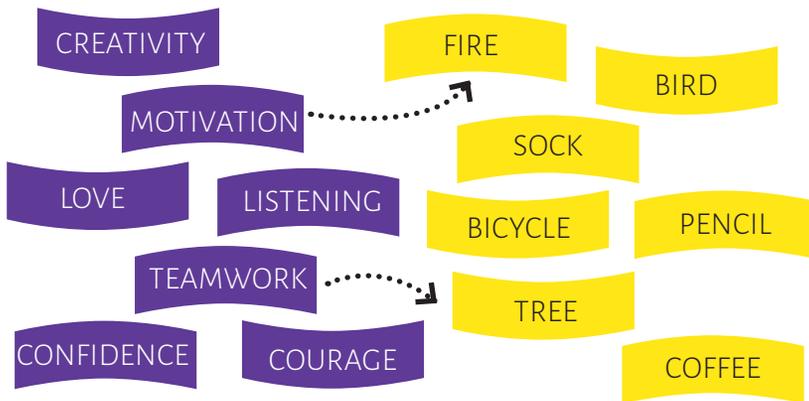
Ilona Olehlova and Inese Priedīte, Creative Writing Cookbook

### Goal

To develop learners' focus and ability to draw connections, and use metaphoric expression. The exercise can also be used to explore and gain new insights into a selected topic.

### Preparation and materials

You will need paper cards in two different colours to create two sets of words. One set of words (different objects) should be written on one set of cards and the other set of words (various activities or concepts) should be written on the other set. Prepare at least 10 cards in each colour. You can choose random objects and activities, or select a specific topic for participants' focus.



Connect 3 words from the first column to 3 words from the second column. Be quick! Then complete sentences:

... is like  , because ...

... is like  , because ...

... is like  , because ...

### Instruction

Ask one volunteer from the group to pick two cards—one from each set—without looking at the words. Ask the whole group to find a connection between the two words and write down new metaphors by using the

following construction:

"[ACTION] is like [NOUN] because...", for example:

"*WRITING is like SKY because it hides much more than we can ever imagine.*"

### Questions for reflection

- How can noticing and forcing connections help us to develop creative ideas?
- How do metaphors help us to become more clear and persuasive in communication?
- What are the benefits and risks of using figurative language?

### Experience

This task is a suitable warm-up for longer writing exercises.

Source: Creative Writing Cookbook, 2016



## Task: Snap Your Name with Photos



45 min



smartphones, projector



2-30

### Goal

For learners to increase their perception skills and to mobilize their visual sense for creativity.

### Steps

We usually ignore many of the shapes and forms around us. Shifting focus may allow us to perceive them more consciously. By choosing certain sections of photographs or adopting a different perspective, we can find numerous letters around us, although they were not written. A pot handle turns out to be a "D", for example, while the space between bricks can be "I" or "T". Take pictures and spell your name, one picture for each letter.

After taking pictures, crop the images (if needed) and assemble the name on a LibreImpress/Powerpoint slide. Or print the pictures and assemble them on a paper sheet.

### Reflection

- How did the activity unfold for you?
- What was easy?
- What was difficult, and what was your strategy to overcome the difficulty?
- What might you conclude for building your perception skills?



## Task: Visioning



45 min



1-25

MitOst

### Goal

Mobilizing learners' positive imagination and motivation.

### Instruction

Before beginning a new task, imagine how you could complete this task with joy and energy. Envision the future moment in which you have completed this task – how good and capable you'll feel, and how proud you'll be of yourself.

- What exactly will you see?
- What will you hear?
- How will you feel?
- What will you say to yourself?
- What will others say to you?

Perhaps you can find a certain image – real or imagined – or a song that connects with your feeling. If you fall into a slump imagine it, look at it, listen to it – and thus simply imagine a good feeling.

### Experience

Facilitators might make use of different methods for such an exercise in imagination:

For example, a phantasy journey where people listen to the questions in a relaxed position, accessing their unconscious knowledge:

[www.competendo.net/en/My\\_Further\\_Civic\\_Involvement:\\_Meditation\\_on\\_the\\_Future](http://www.competendo.net/en/My_Further_Civic_Involvement:_Meditation_on_the_Future)

Use an activity like Bridge to the Future or The Identity River from his handbook to allow participants to express themselves non-verbally. Some participants may prefer to document their imagination visually.



## Task: Word Cloud



30 min



papers and pens



3-many

MitOst/SKORO

### Goal

This is a tool for collecting associations in a small group or team context. In the first step, participants gather associations, in the second they prioritize them.

### Preparation

Make sure that learners are in a relaxed and focused mood. Background music or inspiring decorations in the learning space may support this.

For each group of three/four people, prepare 5 to 7 sheets with one word on each sheet in the center (font size 36pt). Example words might include:

INITIATIVE ENVIRONMENT NEIGHBOURHOOD  
 POLITICS SUSTAINABILITY AT HOME  
 TEAM CHALLENGES PROBLEMS

### Steps

1. From small groups of 3 or 4 participants. While 2 or 3 people sit back-to-back on the floor, the third/fourth person receives a sheet with words.
2. The person with the sheet reads the first word out loud. The other 2 participants make free associations between the words, speaking them out loud. The person reading writes down the associations on the paper.  
 After 1 minute another is read and the process is repeated with all of the 5 to 7 sheets.

### Reflection

Ask participants to analyze their word clouds.

Which are the five most important or interesting associations on each sheet? Mark them.

### Experience

This method is a good starting point for a second step. For example, the most important aspects might be used for a project concept, or as the main topic of an article.



## Chapter 4

# CONVERGENCE: NARROWING YOUR THINKING

To unleash learners' creative potential, the learning process should also encompass activities which challenge learners' capacities for convergence - evaluating, selecting, reasoning. A popular, but misleading, understanding of facilitating creative processes assumes that the process ends with a bouquet of ideas. How many flipcharts and posters were filled with inspiring thoughts only to be forgotten one week after the training or workshop ended? Convergent thinking goes *one step further*. It enables participants to:

- Evaluate and organize impressions and insights
- Follow a goal and finalize processes
- Deepen their understanding of a certain topic or process

Facilitators might support this by:

- *Using methods to select, order and re-arrange knowledge*
- Confronting a group with *dilemmas* and letting them choose between *several options*
- Using tasks for *prioritizing*
- Developing skills for *reflective observation* of one's activities.

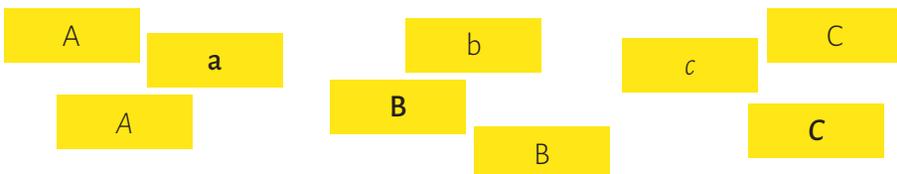


### Task: What to do with all these cards?

The Japanese concept of “seven management tools” has inspired many facilitators and managers. These tools help us to cluster and arrange information and make sense out of it. They are listed below:

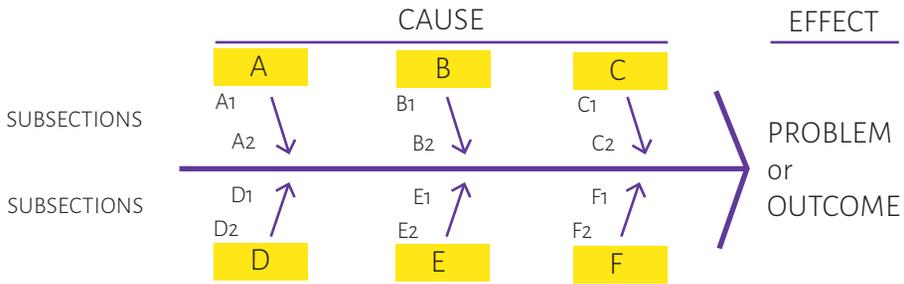
#### Affinity Diagram

Group what belongs together.



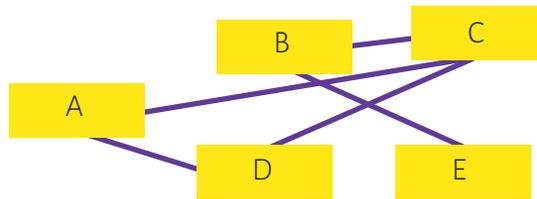
### Fishbone Diagram

Describe cause and effect (outcome).



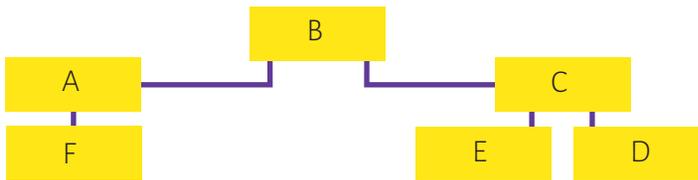
### Interrelationship Diagram

Alternatively, describe the way that things interrelate.



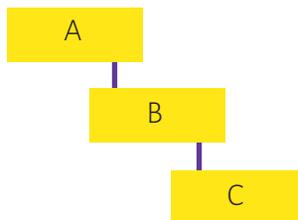
### Tree Diagram

Break broad categories down into details.



### Prioritize

Set ideas or words into a hierarchical order.



### Matrix

Set ideas or words into relation.

	White	Red	Blue
Tree	birch	acorn	chinese wisteria
Flower	camomille	rose	cornflower
Fruit	lichi	apple	plum



## Task: Mapping

A mindmap is a good tool for ideation and documenting associations. It is often used in group processes and set down on paper.

The interesting aspect of mindmaps is that they bring structure and order to thoughts, however. Applications for electronic mindmapping are especially effective, as everything can be rearranged or enlarged.



The open source electronic tool *FreePlane* helps you to change, rearrange, add and connect ideas, words or phrases. Even complex knowledge can be arranged in such electronic maps.

These maps may further be used as an alternative to Powerpoint or Impress for presenting ideas.

More: [www.freeplane.org](http://www.freeplane.org)



## Case study: Global Consciousness

*Matthias Haberl Südwind*

There are many creative ways to facilitate global topics such as human rights, global inequality, climate change or distributive justice. Newspapers, books, and webpages often describe our world in terms of numbers and figures. These give a clear and often well researched overview of how our world actually looks. At the same time, numbers can be overwhelming, hard to put into relation, and difficult to draw conclusions from. Therefore, a creative approach to facilitation might connect the everyday experience of learners with such complex global issues. Concrete local experience connects with abstract, complicated ideas like globalization, supply chains, and the world economy.

Drawing or making visual representations of global connections is often helpful not only to understand a certain topic or situation, but to really feel it and get a holistic view. Drawing mindmaps of global processes can help us to understand them and figure out which parts are most moving and interesting for the participants.



## Task: Global Mapping

🕒 1-2 hours 📁 paper and pens, maybe photos

👥 15-35 🌬️ Südwind

Participants develop a global map from reflecting on their everyday life and how it relates to a globally relevant topic, for example, CO<sub>2</sub> pollution.

### Goals

- Participants become aware of the global dimensions of their personal items and things.
- They strengthen their creative thinking by cross-linking ideas.
- They strengthen their critical thinking ability.

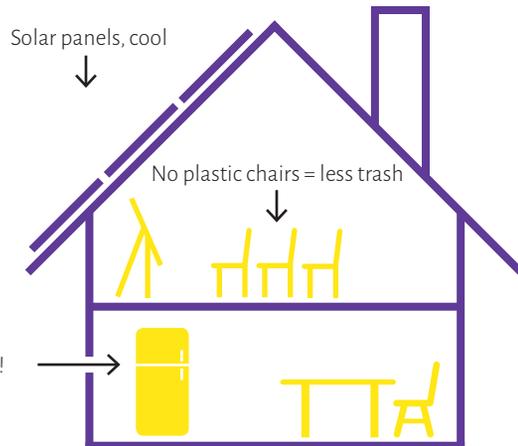
Travel by bus,  
instead of car or plane



A refrigerator full of meat.  
Not so good for the climate.

Fair trade coffee from Colombia, good!

Why plastic cups?  
It's a bad idea for our oceans.



### Steps

- Ask participants to create a map of the training session, the venue or their school.
- Add every place that they associate somehow with globalization.
- Participants then examine their own bags, clothes, lunchbox, computer room, smartphone, the materials the venue is built with .. and reflect on how it relates to CO<sub>2</sub> emissions or global labor inequalities.
- Have participants sketch the items, one card per item, and write a short description of every item.
- The whole class then attaches the cards to the big training map.
- The leading question is: Why and in what way are these icons (products, places, histories) related to CO<sub>2</sub> and globalization?

## Reflection

- How easy or difficult was it to find global connections?
- How deep were you able to dive into various global topics?
- What global topics are most important?
- Where would you like to explore more?

## Experience

When we do this activity with less experienced participants, it is often the first time that they understand that even this training is not an island, but is connected to the outside world and has direct consequences. For example, it makes a difference to people outside the training if we choose vegetarian food or meat. Similarly, the kind of transport we use to come to the training affects climate change.



## Case study: Randomness and the Importance of Mental Noise

*Ramón Martínez*

*Thinking is based on connections. The broader your knowledge, the more connections you can make.*

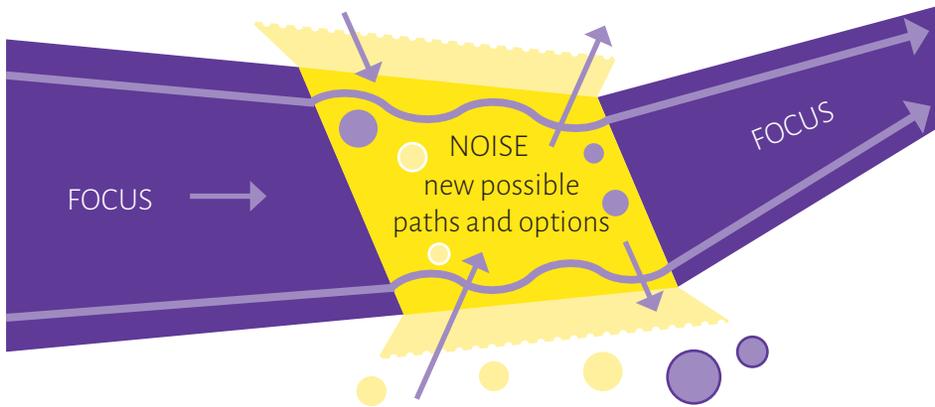
When studying telecommunications, I explored that when aiming to develop a function with a random value, that randomness will increase with the wealth of information is included in the signs that are processed. When more programs are open for example, more processes are working in the machine at the same time and there will be more *environmental noise* from which the function can gather values. Processes where randomness is crucial, encryption algorithms for example, are based on this idea.

Years later, while working as a facilitator, I met noise again, this time as *mental noise* in our thought processes. It is often perceived as something to avoid. Instead, we prefer a focused mind and thinking simply about a concrete matter, excluding everything else. Meditation and various religious practices share a similar idea.

However, there are also plenty of reasons to defend mental noise and ways to learn from technology. Often thinking that is too focused can blind us to a good exit or solution. That is when mental noise can help us.

There are lots of ways to make noise. We all know the stories of Archimedes' Eureka! moment in the bath or Newton's garden reading. Aha effects often appear when you are least expecting them and doing something else. Helpful noise might include putting on some music, standing up from our

desk and taking a walk, flipping through a magazine, calling a friend, or a sports activity. Something that all these actions have in common is that they allow us to *disconnect* and *focus on something different*, then come back with more energy, new ideas and motivation.



Our everyday experience, however, is based on a lot of known things or quantities. We are familiar with our home and neighborhood, our music and books... How can we experience the world more randomly? On the one hand we can do so through planned and intended efforts, by finding new hobbies, meeting different people, trying out alternative genres of music, literature and arts... all this can be time consuming however, and we don't even know whether we will enjoy it or not.

An easier way is to build your own Entropy pool – collect your personal *archive of noise*.

Next time when you are "surfing" in the internet, begin a *collection of images* from different fields that seem related to you. *Group the videos that moved you* and which you could watch again. Even in real life, *collect meaningful items* such as images from magazines, interesting quotes, flyers, little objects you relate to. The criteria for collecting are simple: Because you like them, because they are inspiring, funny, beautiful, sexy, interesting, because they make you look twice, rethink a concept, remember a situation, or question something.

This diversity will activate patterns in your thought processes that will in turn support new connections and approaches. All those connections interact with different parallel thinking process and introduce new ideas, new approaches and perspectives. Your next Eureka! might be random in its source, but deliberate. When I was dealing with telecommunications, we normally tried to minimise noise in communications. But when trying to generate something procedurally that looks *natural*, we typically had to *add noise*. Be natural.



## Task: Assessing Scenarios or Options

Nils-Eyk Zimmermann, MitOst

### Goals

- Assessing the potential of diverse ideas and scenarios for learners' future activities, for example in a social initiative or an organization.
- Assessing and evaluating their realistic capabilities .

A creative group process has yielded one (or more) ideas in rough format, and now the team has diverse visions for its possible impact. Now it is the challenge of the team to *cluster, evaluate and to choose* the one idea they want to follow. The task examines the potential behind an idea by assessing it through the lens of a kind of market analysis matrix: To what extent is it possible to (re-)invent something? And who stands to gain from our initiative? This task might help in two ways:

- By describing the *same idea in slightly different ways*, for example as a revolutionary (totally new approach) or incremental (slight change of an already existing, sufficient practice) concept. This would help provide a deeper understanding of how the initiative could change and have a different impact.
- By providing an overview of what a concept might require in terms of opportunities, capacities, and the competences of the team or organization.

### Mapping phase

*new users/target groups/stakeholders/audience*

<i>existing offers</i>	<p><b>Evolutionary concept</b> Based on existing offers but helping new groups or individuals.</p>	<p><b>Revolutionary concept</b> New offers helping new groups or individuals.</p>	<i>new offers</i>
	<p><b>Incremental concept</b> Something that is close to what one is already doing, and probably doing well.</p>	<p><b>Evolutionary concept</b> Based on new offers for groups or individuals one has already worked with.</p>	

*previous or current users/target groups/stakeholders/audience*

## Resource analysis

The matrix above demonstrated how different options change the nature of an initiative. Further, it probably helped participants gain a mutual understanding of how a team wants to shape their initiative. The following step makes this more concrete and gives its assessment greater precision. Take a look at the existing or needed resources. Criteria for assessment may include:

	Assessment 1 – 5	Strengths and weaknesses
<b>Existing competences:</b> Participants' attitudes, experience and skills.		+  -
<b>Potential for learning and development:</b> On both an individual and group/ institutional level.		+  -
<b>Personal resources:</b> Intensity, complexity of the project.		+  -
<b>Social impact:</b> Adequateness, usability for people.		+  -
<b>Strategy:</b> Your visibility, does it open up further opportunities? Does or should it help to enter a new stage?		+  -
<b>Financial resources:</b> No-budget or low-budget, or fundraising needs.		+  -
...		+  -



## Checklist: Testing an Idea

A concept is a result of an ideation process. More precisely: It describes the preliminary outcome of thinking or a current state, because thinking – hopefully – will not stop.

Viewing intellectual work in this way brings us closer to the idea of *critical thinking*. It is "the art of thinking about thinking with a view towards improving it."

The competence of critical thinking and reflection on its intellectual standards might give us a clue as to how consistent a presentation, an insight or a concept paper already are.

Use this checklist to see whether you have applied the standards inspired by Critical Thinking concepts sufficiently:

- Clarity**  
It is understandable; the meaning can be grasped.
- Accuracy**  
It is free from errors, mistakes or distortions.
- Precision**  
It is exact to the necessary level of detail and specificity.
- Relevance**  
It is pertinent or related to the matter at hand.
- Depth**  
It contains complexities and multiple interrelationships.
- Breadth**  
It encompasses multiple viewpoints.
- Logic**  
The parts make sense together, there are no contradictions.
- Fairness**  
it is justifiable, and not self-serving or one-sided.
- Context**  
It is appropriate in the concrete environment where it will be applied.



## Chapter 5

# CREATIVE FACILITATION

### Holistic approach

Learning that focuses on key competencies prepares learners for ongoing changes and transformations in their lives. It provides them with new skills and capabilities to effect future transformation on their own. When used in a holistic learning mix, as described in Facilitator Handbook #2, facilitation can unleash learners' creativity, allowing them to draw on it in group activities. Such a process combines group interactions and experiential learning, cognitive learning, and opportunities for informal learning and reflection.

### Cognitive, emotional and practical learning:

Encouraging different methods of learning can lead to a learning experience that engages the whole human being:



#### Cognitive

Learning facts, theory, logical relations, discovering others' concepts, ideas, or expertise.



#### Emotional

Playfulness, feeling connected to others, experiencing positive and negative emotions by being challenged; emotions regarding values and intellectual concepts.



#### Practical

Trying things out, doing things together, modeling, turning ideas into decisions and actions, practicing skills, experimenting.

*Ongoing and integrated reflection* strengthens the process of convergent thinking. This can be achieved through tasks designed to evaluate outcome,

goals, skills or developments. It can be integrated in any moderation process, or facilitated in smaller groups or individual work.

If we define creativity as the ability to perceive and make connections, learning needs to address the *connections that exist within a certain topic* and how they *relate to other topics*. Methods for exploring the relationship between individual experiences and *verbalizing this complexity* could support here. This allows learners to familiarise themselves with different perspectives and learn about causes and consequences of processes or decisions. In this sense, holistic learning explores complexity instead of simplifying it, allowing learners to gain a more *complete picture of reality*. Creativity is therefore something that strengthens our ability to recognize the “bigger picture”. In the context of citizenship education, it helps individuals realize how political and social concepts and their implementation will affect not only one's concrete group, backyard or country, but as well how an idea or action impact other social sectors, countries, or the world at large.

## HOLISTIC LEARNING

engages learners' knowledge, skills, attitudes, emotions, and practices. It helps build their key competencies, and improves their ability to meet complex demands\*

combines different opportunities for active, cognitive, emotional, and practical learning

reflects on systemic complexity

offers tools for self-reflection and practicing meta-level observation

addresses a wide variety of realities within society



## Case study: How cognition and playfulness complement each other

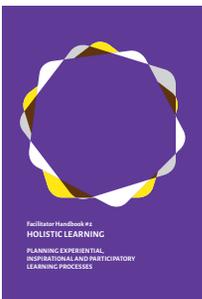
*Nils-Eyk Zimmermann*

In many learning environments, learners are used to reflecting and learning primarily on the cognitive level, whether it is through presentations, texts, or group discussions. This does not mean however that learning on the emotional or experiential level is not appropriate or effective. Often, it can even be a more efficient way to provide learners' with valuable insights and inspiration.

For example, at one point in the middle of an intensive "cognitive phase" during a project development workshop, we decided to offer a stencil art workshop. To our surprise, the participants liked this disruption so much that they continued to use it that evening. Participants enjoyed transforming abstract thoughts into visual concepts, and for us it was a key moment to gain more information about how much they understood of the topic, as well as their passions and ideas. This made the subsequent project coaching phase much easier in the days that followed.

Workshops that use explorative methodology or methods of art education are often called "creative workshops". In contrast to the dominant learning styles usually favored in trainings and schools, they offer a *methodological counter weight*. They provide a space for participants to develop talents which they might not have the opportunity to use every day.

Don't our workshops and trainings often lack the enriched perspective that a "creative" aspect can bring, one which provides the learning process with *additional opportunities for perception and expression*? For us, cognition does not run contrary to playfulness and creativity. Both ways of learning complement each other to engage the *entire spectrum* of learners' talents, senses, and competencies.



More about holistic learning and its facilitation:  
HOLISTIC LEARNING

Planning experiential, inspirational and participatory learning processes.

Facilitator Handbook #2:  
Competendo 2016

[www.competendo.net/en/Handbooks\\_for\\_Facilitators](http://www.competendo.net/en/Handbooks_for_Facilitators)



## Checklist: Creative Spaces

Environments can support creativity, but they should not force it. The following checklist can help facilitators take advantage of the existing opportunities in a space. How can we best provide opportunities for the *seeking*, *digging*, and *well-being* of creative learners?

### Accessibility

#### SPACE FOR SEEKING AND EXTROVERTED REASONING

Different materials, including experience from different fields and diverse opportunities for expression and communication can help to create an inspirational, stimulating and colorful space.



#### SPACE FOR DIGGING AND INTROVERTED REASONING

A quiet space, maybe with a view of nature or dedicated places for focused thinking invite us to dig deeper or to use the absence of noise to listen more deeply to our own voice.

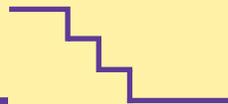


#### SPACE FOR WELL-BEING

Providing participants with drinks, snacks, and the opportunity to meet a diverse group creates an ideal space for relaxation or recharging.



#### CENTRAL ENTRANCE, EASY TO ACCESS



- Are the spaces open and inviting?
- Are they central and easy to reach?
- Are they accessible to everybody?
- Do they contain the materials needed?
- Do they offer opportunities for different working and thinking styles?

### Adapting to existing opportunities

Of course the example in the picture shows the ideal version of a creative space. However, we often have to work with what we have.

Schools, seminar rooms or community buildings meet many of the

requirements for such creative spaces. By looking at the facilities from a different angle, we can break the old pattern of their usage:

- What spaces are available? Are they closed? Are there open areas? Is there natural light?
- How, when and how often they have been used before?
- What do we need to do to finish the space?

### Responding to different needs

- People with different personalities should feel welcome
- People with different learning styles should feel empowered
- People in different steps of a creative process should continue to feel inspired

### Including the spaces in a program

- Include the spaces in your educational program
- Will participants have enough time to use the space(s)?
- Include enough buffer time in your method and learning plan

### Take care and maintain

- Make sure that there is enough material
- Make sure the working environment is clean
- Encourage participants to take responsibility for the maintenance of the spaces

## Moderation

Creative insights in learning processes are often unexpected, they may even sound ridiculous at first. Creative insights require a willingness to think differently. Mobilizing this style of thinking can be described as non-conformist, in the sense that it treats *differences as a resource*. Participants must feel accepted, free to disagree, and welcome to break taboo associations. They must also feel sufficient *confidence* and *trust* in the general honesty and willingness of others to contribute to a positive learning experience that is shared between facilitators and participants. Facilitation increases clarity in the group and helps to develop group norms that help to foster creativity, such as those mentioned above. It is about listening and *empowering learners to listen and to speak* with each other. Including methods for stimulating creativity provides *space for difference, for "crazy" or "stupid", and for opposing ideas and opinions*.

Creative facilitation seeks to incorporate norm-breaking behavior while at the same time shaping new common norms and agreements. As such,

moderators should be aware of the need for *negotiation*, keep in mind the possibility of *consensus*, and maintain the courage to *manage conflicts* if they arise. This is what allows for social diversity - a space where people with common and divided interests learn to accept one another. In a training or workshop, this social diversity and each learners' individual needs must be appreciated and included. Diversity-conscious facilitation empowers people to become (co-) creators. Keeping the phases of creative processes in mind, disruptive practices should be included throughout the facilitation. This encourages learners to make new connections, change their methodological approach, reframe things, shift their mindset, and see things from a different perspective.

## **The attitude of the facilitator in creative facilitation**

### **Learners are experts**

Learners are experts on their own lives. They know what is best for them. They are capable of determining their own needs and goals. They are willing to learn. Show your confidence in their ability to overcome problems.

### **Limitations and qualifications**

Facilitators should be aware of their professional qualifications and limitations.

### **Impartiality**

Facilitators do not judge participants. They don't give more or less weight to the statements of individual participants. They try to include every participant's perspective in the discussion. Using boards for documenting ideas, they recognize every idea mentioned, regardless of whether they find it relevant, or whether they agree or not.

### **Cohesive body language**

Body language, behavior in the space, and intonation all support the moderating role of facilitators, and help participants respond to what a facilitator is saying.

### **Other perspectives**

Facilitators encourage different perspectives, respect divergent opinions, and accept minority positions. They respond actively to stigmatization or stereotyping by the participants.

### **Encouraging alternative paths and methods**

Facilitators allow things to be done differently. They demonstrate flexibility in the way a goal can be achieved, and are willing to change plans accordingly.

### **Encouraging disagreement**

Facilitators treat disagreement constructively and view the open

communication of disagreement as a sign of trust and confidence in the facilitators to deal with it.

### **Fairness**

Facilitators and participants negotiate rules and common norms. They are committed to following and enforcing these rules actively.

### **Patience**

Facilitators stay patient when decisions or participants need time. They negotiate the speed of a process with their participants.

## **A Sense of Humor**

Humor is about amusement and triggering enjoyable shift in consciousness. The punchline of a joke can quickly change one's perspective, allowing him or her to see things in a new way or adopt a more playful attitude with a broader perspective.

Humor lets us see that values and concepts are not absolute, but specific to people, situations, and each individuals' experience. Jokes reveal the blind spots in our understanding of reality.

When asked whether he loved his country, a former German president once famously replied "*well, I love my wife*". In doing so, he showed his surprised public that "love" is a very personal concept, and not suited to abstract units like society. He gave people cause to reflect on how loyalty to one's country differs from personal love.

Most people's everyday experiences include failure, disappointment, and suffering; humor makes life bearable, allowing us to take things more easily and enjoy life's problems.

Jokes regarding power provide a good case in point, such as the following joke from the solidarity movement in Poland: "*Why is Jaruzelski's government shooting at workers? Because the central targets of socialist politics are the workers*". A joke like this demonstrates how humor helps us explore incongruity and discrepancies, for example, between what people say and what they do.

A sense of humor can give us relief and help us to examine important and serious issues less emotionally. Furthermore, a humorous mind-set helps us to think flexibly, and to notice new perspectives and connections between ideas. "*Why are conspiracy theories like moon landings? Because they're all fake*". Or: "*Two planets meet. One says to the other: You look strange today! The other replies: Yes, I know, I have homo sapiens. What does the first planet say? Oh, I know, it will pass...*"

Humor combines different states of mind, mixing the emotional with the rational, and therefore has a close relationship to creativity.



## Case study: Humor in trainings

*Marta Gawinek - Dagargulia*

Facilitation that leaves space for a sense of humor ensures that the learning process incorporates different perspectives, doesn't lose sight of the big picture, and fosters creativity and critical thinking. It helps participants to maintain a certain distance from themselves in challenging situations, for example through irony. It enables facilitators to enjoy the process and naturally leads to funny situations.

Below are some examples from my own experience as a facilitator where I used creative humor to help participants' learning process:

### **Alternating forms, methods, and content during a meeting**

I once facilitated a conference for community leaders from all over the European Union. Immediately following a highly intellectual panel discussion, we invited participants in mixed groups to participate in a TV-style quiz about decision making processes at the EU level. It was about knowledge, but also speed and intelligence, and it enhanced the conference by creating funny situations and leading to many insights.

- Changing methods and settings helps people see the same idea from a different perspective, remain open to surprises, and explore new ideas in a topic or a group. By switching methodologies, new situations emerge, making the entire process more dynamic. Creating a timed quiz and competing on a not very serious issue made it a lot of fun.

### **Self-distance and authenticity**

Once, just before the start of an expert training on organizational development, I lost a folder with all of my print-outs and my glasses. Although I was well prepared. I became stressed. So I began the training by saying the truth: "Unfortunately I lost all my written materials, which anyway I wouldn't be able to use without my glasses, which I also lost." Admitting my situation in front of the group in the beginning made my initial tension disappear. The whole situation was quite funny to the group, and participants instead grew more connected and empathetic.

- Being open with our own weaknesses and keeping a little bit distance from our own work by having fun and relying on a sense of humor often results in a group becoming more committed and more open. The

alternative to humor would have been an ostentatious professionalism: playing the role of a straight-faced facilitator while sweating and not having really a plan B. This would not have worked in an authentic way.

### **Taking an absurd perspective.**

Once at a training about migration and border policy, I suggested that we discuss Donald Trump's idea of building a wall on the Mexican border. I used the "Last Week Tonight" satirical television program with John Oliver, who instead of showing the racism and xenophobia behind the wall idea, focused on the practicalities and checked whether and how building the wall could actually be accomplished.<sup>1</sup> By taking the – for the majority of participants illogical, even unethical – power perspective seriously and reflecting on its consequences, this change in perspective brought a fresh and grotesque view to light.

- Analyzing a given topic from a contrary point of view and exaggeration is a stylistic device. One additional aspect plays an important role here: Participants put themselves in powerful shoes, giving them space to come up with unexpected and crazy approaches to an issue they usually discuss very seriously from a bottom-up perspective.

### **Fresh facilitator, fresh thoughts**

I used to take my preparations for facilitation processes very seriously. In order to be able to respond in a dynamic way to feedback or to potential needs of participants, in my first years as a facilitator I spent long nights planning and re-planning my agenda. Since then, I have learned to maintain a balance between preparation and spending time with the group, having fun and enjoying the talks in between and after sessions. A good night's sleep and taking care of yourself physically are just as important to facilitation as good preparation.<sup>2</sup>

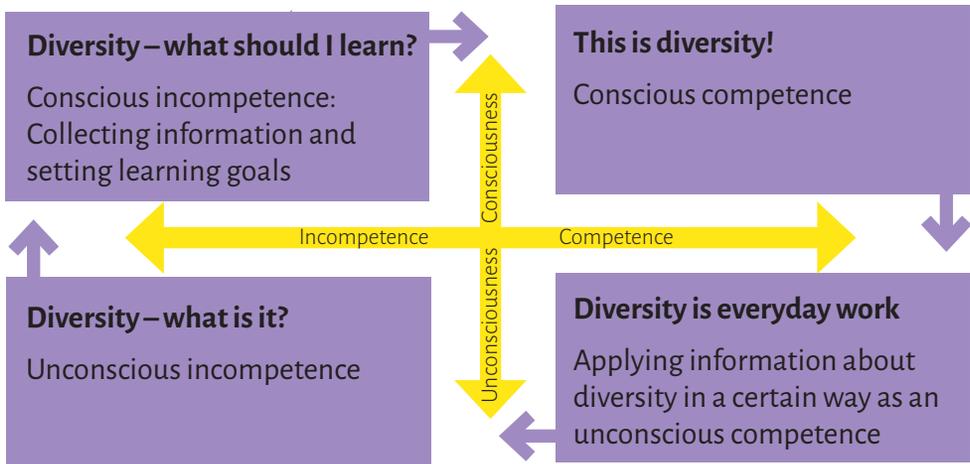
## **Diversity and divergence as conditions for creativity**

Facilitating creativity should include a lot of opportunities to make use of our senses and expressive capacities. As facilitation draws its energy and knowledge from the people involved, it can also be understood as a way of managing diversity or *unleashing the potential of social diversity to inspire creative processes*.<sup>3</sup>

These facilitation processes are sometimes disruptive, inspiring, challenging, or even conflicting. Facilitation processes can also help people and groups to focus, to make sense of their experience, or to find common ground.

In order to unleash creativity through diversity, we have to learn to manage diversity *in ourselves, in our groups and most importantly in our societies*.

## Developing diversity competence



We can gain insights from different people, although this in turn depends on whether we are open to diversity. In this sense, diversity-conscious education stimulates creativity.

The challenge for facilitators is:

- to raise individual and group awareness of the wealth of diversity that each person brings to the group, and to make multiple perspectives visible
- to incorporate all the senses in one's methodology, as different learners have different relationships to sensual perception
- to respond to different learning styles and groups with different learning preferences or expectations
- to facilitate group communication by promoting a non-violent communication culture, instilling a tolerance for ambiguity, and training listening skills
- to balance power relations by prohibiting intellectual hegemony occurring through status and hierarchy, and by choosing methods that exclude such practices.

### Applying a consciousness of diversity to methodology

Often, methodology caters to the needs of extroverts, quick thinkers, and competitive or playful people. But for processes to be sufficiently creative, alternative methods might be the better choice. For example:

**Methods which focus on writing, such as:**

- Quiet round table
- Silent Journey
- Word Cloud

**Methods that focus on talking in smaller settings or bringing ideas from smaller settings to bigger contexts, such as:**

- Dialogical exploration in two person teams, such as “walk and talk”
- Idea pyramid

**Methods which focus on drawing or painting, such as:**

- Learning maps and landscapes
- Finding symbols

**In general, group processes should be moderated by clear rules. This helps any learner to feel comfortable and to take ownership of a process:**

- Setting transparent expectations regarding the quantity and quality of the output
- Making space for all perspectives and needs
- Interfering when the pace accelerates too quickly and people are not heard, or their thoughts not noted, (while remaining sensitive to possible dynamics of stigmatization; creating spaces for participants to speak for themselves)
- Combining dynamic verbal expression with less dynamic, non-verbal methods

## Creating inclusion in creative groups

Groups contain different kinds of people from different backgrounds, with different abilities, and different personal characteristics. Being aware of the differences between group members or colleagues is a good starting point for mutual empowerment. Patience, empathy, and asking questions are all necessary preconditions for *creating equal conditions that awaken group creativity* and prevent anyone from feeling devalued or not accepted.

The implementation of such processes depends on a conscious effort and concern on the part of the team to nurture and value the potential and vital expressions of each team member.

For example, brainstorming sessions are often used as a creative springboard. They're intended to nourish a feeling of connectedness, collective creativity, and intelligence. However, very often during the escalation of our idea-generating processes, people who are usually deep combinative thinkers and emotionally engaged with the topic don't feel part of the creative wave.

An accelerated pace, the vivid expressiveness of other team members, or unspoken expectation regarding which ideas are considered "good" are sometimes reasons why brainstorming might not always be the best tool.

Brainstorming may not always best support the creativity of everyone in the team, for example group members who are introverted, or for whom brainstorming is a barrier.

Accounting for different personalities and thinking styles – and especially encouraging cognitive diversity – contributes to better ideas and to group creativity.<sup>2</sup> For example, introverts and extroverts complement each other in a way as they represent two different domains of sensing and expression. Susan Cain demonstrated the power of introverts and their often unused potential in her TED talk.<sup>4</sup>

## Constructive Questions

When a group requires the support of a facilitator, there are two main approaches: to give advice or to ask questions. Similarly, when you want to buy something in a store, a clerk can help you in a number of ways. One clerk might describe the product's specifications to you, while another will ask you what you need the item for. Both accomplish the same goal, but they follow a different inner logic, and only the second option stimulates creative processes to identify options and solutions to a problem. They are based on the learner's capacities, rather than the facilitator's knowledge. By concentrating on an individual or group's needs, we can identify solutions that we might not have thought of in the first place.<sup>5</sup>

Asking *questions that stimulate* participants to find their own solutions and listening to their answers is a key competence in facilitation. Constructive questions are essential in this context, as they have a central goal of *solution orientation* but need to be open. Regarding the role of the facilitator, it is crucial to provide space for answering and to allow individuals to think. This will be accomplished more easily if facilitators remain in the role of the querent, rather than turning into a problem-solver or advisor. The best solutions are those that learners treat as their own.

### Golden rules for questions

For all kind of questions, there are golden rules that help them have an optimal impact:

1. Ask open questions.
2. Be precise. Try not to ask too much at once.
3. Ask a question only once (avoid asking double questions).
4. Support your question with appropriate body language.
5. Leave time for thinking. Don't speed up after asking a question.

Depending on the context, setting, and needs of the counterpart, there are many different types of question one might ask. A facilitator should have a variety in his or her toolbox, and be able to switch between them.



### Open questions

A closed-ended question requires a specific, concrete answer. An open-ended question encourages multiple possibilities. Constructive questions begin with “who,” “what,” “when,” “where”, or “why.” E.g.

- “What makes you feel this way?”
- “Where did you observe this behavior?”



### Problem-oriented approach

An orientation to the problem or the solution represent the two main approaches when facing a challenge. In academia, an orientation to the problem is very common: we test a hypothesis critically. This criticism helps us to understand the complexity of the hypothesis, and other people review it with a critical attitude. In public relations we often define ourselves as “critically-thinking people.” While this problem-oriented approach can be helpful in understanding the complexity of a given situation or topic, it often causes conflicts during creative processes.



### Solution-oriented questions

In most cases, participants will be able to find solutions for their problems on their own: they just need support along the way. There is a broad range of literature about helping people to find and develop solutions based on their own abilities, rather than on their problems.<sup>6</sup> A solution-oriented approach encourages people to engage in a reflective mode of thinking. This approach can be especially helpful when people are struggling to define the overall goal and feel like the ground is shifting beneath their feet. Some solution-oriented questions might be:

- “What do you want to achieve?”
- “Which options are available?”
- “Tell me about the *last time* you succeeded? How did you respond?”
- “What do you need to *avoid* in order to achieve your goal?”
- “What will you need to do *differently* if the situation changes?”



### Asking for exceptions

Exceptions are situations in which something was done differently and it turned out to be successful. By paying attention to exceptions, we can understand what concretely must be done differently.

- “What do you do differently now?”
- “What can you do so that other people see the difference?”
- “How has the situation changed?”
- “You described an exceptional positive situation. What has to happen so that it might take place more often in the future?”



### Expressing progress on a scale

By using a scale, we can reflect on what our initial positions are, and the distance we have to cross to reach our goal. The combination of different scales can help us to analyze complex problems or to take stock of the different aspects of a situation. Scales can work well for: teams, personal goals, outcomes, partnerships, impact etc.:

- “Imagine a scale from 1 to 10. 1 is the beginning and 10 means the problem is solved – where are you at the moment?”
- “How did you get there?”
- “What will be the next step?”
- “What has to happen before you can take the next step on the scale?”



### Reflecting on multiple perspectives

Changing perspectives can help one analyze a situation in all its complexity. Open questions make complex relationships visible. As Arist v. Schlippe puts it: “A *problem is a behavior in which different people participate. It's not a 'qualitative feature' that a person or a social system has.*” Even when we cannot ask the other people involved directly, we can still stimulate an intellectual shift in our perspective and reveal the different attitudes towards the same situation.<sup>7</sup>

- “How do the other parties look at this situation?”
- “What does your partner think about the situation?”
- “How would a spaceman look on this situation?”
- “How do your project partners think about this?”
- “What would people have thought ten years ago?”



## Case study: Finding new perspectives: Cubism 2.0

*Ekaterina Leondieva*



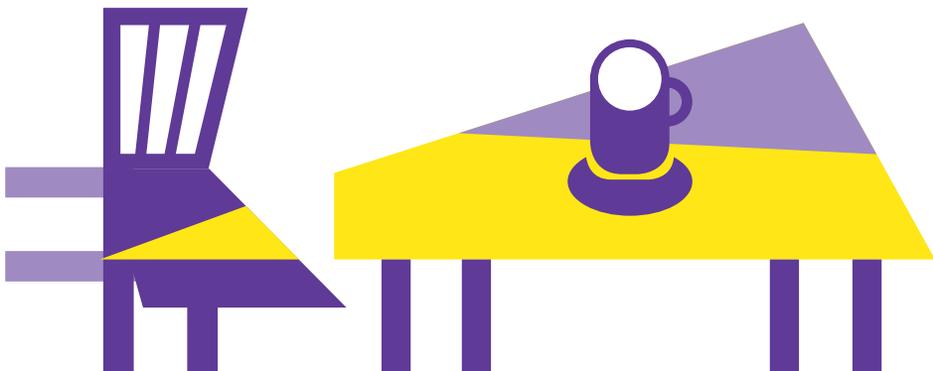
*“Cubism is not a formula, it is not a school. Cubism is a philosophy, a point of view in the universe. It is like standing at a certain point on a mountain and looking around. If you go higher, things will look different; if you go lower, again they will look different. It is a point of view.”*

Jacques Lipchitz, American sculptor

Picasso was influential and inspiring because he questioned the very logic of painting itself and the way it was understood in the early 20th century. Instead of creating simple representations of reality on canvas, he wanted to dissect reality, to play with different angles and notions of space and time and to challenge viewers by combining multiple perspectives on one flat image.

Alongside Georges Braque, he pioneered the first phase of Cubist painting, known as Analytical Cubism. In essence it was about exploring multiple viewpoints and presenting them simultaneously on the flat surface of the canvas. Futhering their ideas with concepts borrowed from metaphysics, they aimed to recreate, in visual form, a world in a state of flux where everything changes constantly and nothing is still.

This approach of presenting the world is similar to what we do as facilitators in education. At the same time, we activate different senses and provide learners with a variety of experiences, which, if we would to put it on a picture, would not resemble a powerpoint presentation, but rather a collaborative cubist painting. The painting includes learners, the group, the globe around us, and the facilitators.





## Task: New options through other perspectives

Elke Heublein, Working Between Cultures

People are constantly confronted with decisions. What should I dedicate my time and energy to in the coming months? Should I change the subject of my studies? Do I want to become a lawyer, or would it be better to become an artist or a social worker? It is often helpful to explore different perspectives in order to make a decision. If we put ourselves in the position of somebody else, we can find new ways of looking at the issue.

### Goals

- Familiarizing oneself with different perspectives on the same issue
- Gaining patience and developing our self-understanding
- Achieving a larger and more complex picture of the issue.

### Steps

1. Ask the participant to identify three people in his/her life that have a positive and supportive attitude towards them (person A, B, and C).
2. Ask the participant to change their perspective and think as person A would.
  - 2.1 What advice person A would give you about the decision in general?
  - 2.2 What would person A's arguments be?
3. While the participant answers the questions as person A, the facilitator writes down the answers (it is best to use colored cards, yellow cards for question 2.1, green cards for question 2.2) After the participant has finished, ask about the advice and arguments person B and person C would give, again making notes on colored cards.

### Reflection

After exploring all the advice and arguments, take a closer look at the colored cards, putting them on a pin board if you have one. Divide the cards into two categories, putting the advice in one column and the arguments in a second. If there are subgroups of arguments and advice, it may be helpful to cluster them in groups. Now take a closer look at them. Useful questions to ask the involved participant may include:

- How do you see the decision making process now?
- What do you think about the advice? How can these individuals' opinions help you?
- What do you think about the arguments? Which of them make sense to you? Which are helpful?

- What new insights did you gain?
- When asking these questions it is extremely important to remain non-judgmental and impartial.

### Experience

Usually this exercise helps us to establish a kinder attitude towards ourselves. People can often be quite impatient and hard on themselves when making decisions. They may grow angry with themselves if they are not able to make a decision, or fiercely defend their position. This exercise helps them to be kinder and more patient, both with themselves and the other participants.

Others' arguments can help a participant to obtain a clearer picture. Throughout this process, it is important that the person engaged in the decision-making process is the one who decides which of the arguments they want to use to make their decision.

Inspired by: Sabine Prohaska<sup>8</sup>



## Task: Bridge to the Future



90 min



paper, pens



1-30

by MitOst

In order to understand better what changes your own ideas can bring about, it can help to picture a bridge. On one side of the bridge is the present or the past, on the other side is the future. The two sides are connected by a bridge, which represents the initiative. This bridge will be built by answering constructive questions. Answers can be written or drawn.

### Goals

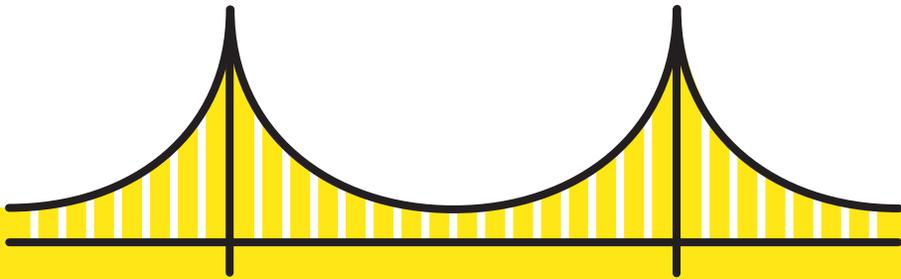
- Reflecting on the status quo, identifying current problems and things that are lacking
- Creating a vision for the future
- Identifying different solutions for different problems

### Steps

1. Draw a bridge. The left hand side is the participants' current state. On this side, you will make a note of everything that occurs to you when answering the questions that follow.
2. After answering all the questions on the present/past side, you travel to the far bank, or the future side. On this side, write down what the future reality should look like. Be as specific as possible.

3. Next, think about your involvement and initiative. Which problem would you like to address and what might be some possible steps to get there? Imagine what the bridge looks like, who are the people crossing, what can happen, and how.

If you're working in a team, begin with individuals working on their own bridges independently, and then sharing them. You can build the bridge from various materials. Just make sure that the ideas and answers are written down.



#### Current state

- What is needed?
- What is the problem?
- What exactly is bothering me?
- Why is that a problem?
- What worsens the problem or prevents the solution?
- What would the future look like if things continue as they are?

#### Bridge

- How can I implement the changes I want to see?
- Why me?
- Who else has an interest in such change?

#### Desired state

- What is the situation now?
- What exactly has changed?
- What is the improvement?
- How can I recognize it?

### Reflection

Let the participants share and briefly describe what they came up with. Divide them into small groups (max. 4 people), keeping an eye on the time. After working individually, some participants may have a greater need to talk and share their ideas, but this step should not exceed 20 minutes.

### Variations

You can also use the metaphor of a sea or a tree.

## Experience

It may be the case that some participants have multiple ideas for initiatives and their involvement, and have not yet decided for themselves which idea they prefer. Encourage them to sketch both.

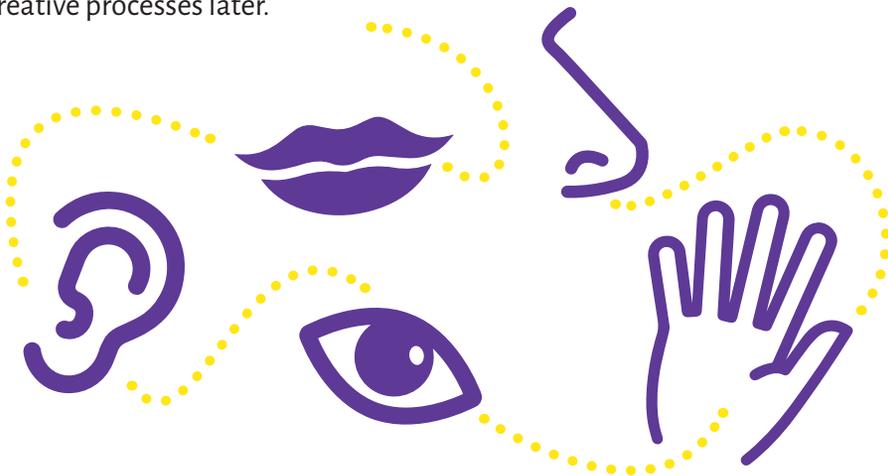
Allow people to express themselves in whatever way is most comfortable to them. Some may prefer to draw, some to write down the aspects chronologically, others may prefer mindmapping. The task can work with all of them.

The newer a concept, the more intensively the concept must be explained. Concepts that are more straightforward are easier to grasp. Therefore, self-explanation is not necessarily a quality criteria, but some learners may need more space than others when working on their explanatory skillset.

Source: Initiative Cookbook<sup>9</sup>

## Addressing the variety of senses

Perception training explores the diversity of ways in which one might perceive the world and explores one's talents. When developing creativity, it is helpful to *broaden individuals' perceptive and expressive repertoire*. The challenge is to help participants broaden their opportunities for expression, which in turn makes it easier for them to make use of different tools in the creative processes later.



We enjoy live performance because it provides such a rich experience for our senses. The feeling of being in a crowd stimulates the social brain network. This mirror neuron system helps us to read emotions, movements, and gestures: we feel what we see. In essence, empathy is what makes us enjoy a performance.<sup>10</sup>



## Task: Awakening Our Senses



2–3 hours



paper, blindfolds



12-20

Ilona Olehlova and Inese Priedīte, Creative Writing Cookbook

### Goals

Participants reflect on how they feel, see, and respond to all that surrounds them by activating their sensory knowledge and perception skills through their eyes, ears, skin, muscles, and organs.

### Preparation and materials

Prepare sets of 10 cards in different tones of the same color, creating one set for each group of two. (for the Sight part)

Prepare a selection of instrumental music. It should be music that participants will not recognize.

Have some blindfolds on hand to cover participants' eyes.

Prepare some background information about the different senses and concepts that help to explain the role of senses in the learning process.

Plan around 30 minutes for each exercise, including time for sharing some of the texts.

### Instruction

The following short exercises are intended to help participants explore different senses. Time for sharing texts should be provided after each exercise.

#### Sight

Make-up catalogues can be a useful place to gain inspiration for the different associations we have with colors, such as “Red Fox,” “Impatient Pink,” or “Mauve Madness.” Divide participants into pairs and give each pair *10 cards in different tones of the same color*, for instance, 10 tones of blue. Ask them to imagine that they are copywriters working for a cosmetic or fashion brand, and that they have to give names to each of these ten color tones.

#### Hearing

Invite the participants to find a comfortable spot and close their eyes, then play them the instrumental music you have selected. When it stops, ask them to write a text reflecting the feelings and associations the song evoked for them. Time should be limited to 20 minutes. The name and story of the song can be revealed after some of the stories are shared.

**Smell**

Ask participants to describe their favorite season by its smell, without revealing which season it is in their text. When the descriptions are read aloud, participants can guess if the text is describing spring, summer, autumn, or winter. If time allows, you might also ask them to also describe the smell of dirty clothes or stinky cheese, and what this smell means to them.

**Taste**

Ask participants to describe the taste of a common food to a person who is not able to taste – an orange, coffee, or chocolate, for example.

**Touch**

Divide participants into pairs and have them close their eyes. Give them clay, wet sand, play-doh, or even paper to create different objects. The task is to create a sculpture while working together for 10–15 minutes with their eyes closed, and without speaking. Next, ask them to describe the other person based on their cooperation during the exercise.

**Questions for reflection**

- Do you use all your senses when you are learning?
- Which senses are the most important and helpful for your learning process?
- How would your world change if you lost one of your senses, and how could you adapt?
- How can working with our senses help us to produce more creative results – ideas, artworks, questions, texts?

**Experience**

When writing, we often rely on our visual sense, but a story that we can truly feel needs much more than visual descriptions. It should also make use of sounds, scents, tastes, and physical touch. Using all five senses makes writing more real, and more relevant. For learning processes, it is important to work with different senses, enabling learners to boost their creativity.

Source: Creative Writing Cookbook, 2016<sup>11</sup>



## Case study: The SensoryLab

*Karsten-Michael Drohsel*

SensoryLab Berlin explores the sensory qualities of urban spaces and develops methodologies to promote experiential learning based on the sensory aspects of the environments we experience in various professional contexts. Using a performative approach, SensoryLab Berlin explores the auditive, visual and haptic dimensions of cities through games and workshops.

Drawing their inspiration from the fields of Urban Planning & Design, urban Research, Urban Perception and Urban Gaming, the games and methodologies were developed by members of the Berlin and Stuttgart-based association “mikromakro e.V. (i.G.)”. They examine different sensory aspects at the intersection of individual and collective perception and the production of space. In various collaborations, the collective has led workshops focused on personal experiences and participants learning through their own senses, as well as reflecting on those impressions. The results of the workshops and reflections usually end in a performance to make a connection between body and the space where it is positioned.

In this respect, SensoryLab focuses on the sensory experience of cities and urban spaces, including sight, hearing, taste, smell, and touch. In turn this focus generates questions on a number of different issues:

- How could a better understanding of sensory perception influence the work of urban planners and designers? (SensoryLab Ernst-Reuter-Platz, TU Berlin);
- Can we learn something about the history of a city from its sounds? (KlangKörper, Erlangen, Germany);
- How do the colors of a city affect our emotions? (Haus der Farbe, Zürich, Switzerland; Documenta 14, Athens, Greece).



More information can be found at:

[www.mikromakro.net](http://www.mikromakro.net)

[www.impulsbuero.de](http://www.impulsbuero.de)

[www.spacedigger.org](http://www.spacedigger.org)



## Case study: Visual Facilitation

*Communication and expression can also occur in a more visual way. Explore the potential of visual language and use it to increase the scope of your facilitation.*

*Torben Grocholl, Deniss Jershov and Kati Orav*

Visual Facilitation is the intentional integration and application of visual elements and exercises into educational activities for:

- Presenting content and information,
- Supporting (in the sense of actively guiding) an individual and/or group process,
- Documenting outcomes.

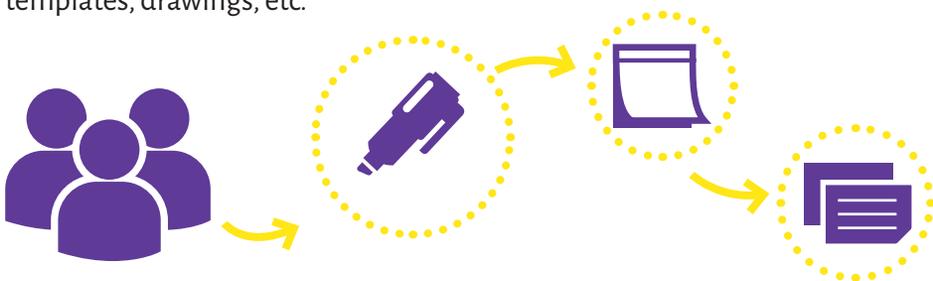
Especially when the density of information or the level of complexity of a given task is high, the use of visual elements can be of great value for perception and overall understanding. As such, we also regard Visual Facilitation as a more holistic and dynamic approach to education, one that can be used to successfully grapple with the challenges of “information overload” and the complexity of a globalized and rapidly changing world.

Visualizations can grab a learner’s attention and increase his or her level of motivation and engagement. Combining spoken and/or written words with visual elements in a way that addresses our different senses can change the way in which we perceive information and retain facts.

Nearly any type of communication – especially in the field of education – relies on the communicator’s intention to “draw” a clear and detailed picture in the mind’s eye of the audience. The challenge for a visual facilitator is to stimulate and evoke these inner pictures in their audience by applying “visual language” to educational activities. Here we identify two central approaches in the field of visual facilitation.

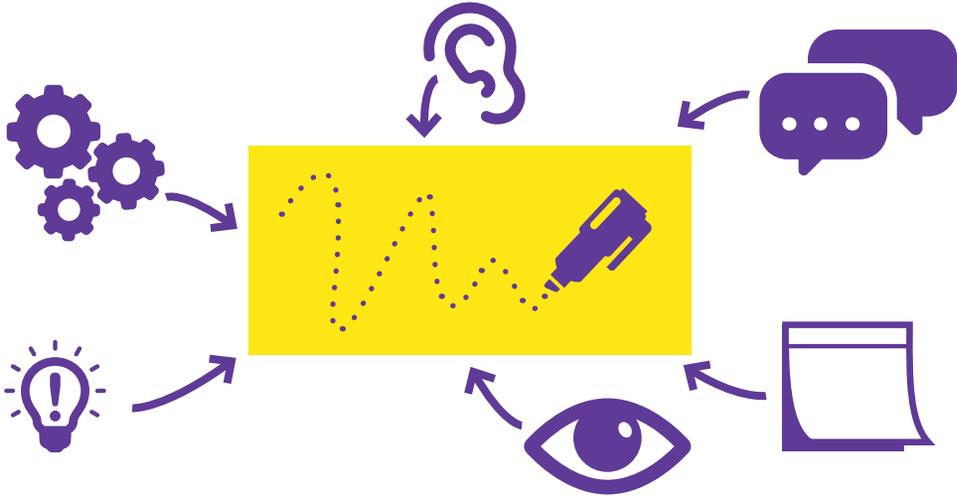
### Graphic or Visual Facilitation

*Leading and/or guiding* an individual or group process, dialogue, or working session by using a variety of visual tools, such as process illustrations, templates, drawings, etc.



## Graphic or Visual Recording

*Documentation and summarizing* a workshop, conference, lecture usually relies on oversized paper formats. As a graphic recorder, a facilitator takes on a more passive role and does not normally interfere directly in the group process. This is sometimes called scribing.



## Why Visual Facilitation?

Some people might say that Visual Facilitation works because there are different types of learners (audial, visual, verbal, kinesthetic), and some of us are just visual learners. In reality, nobody is just a one type learner. Depending on the situation, we all use the four types mentioned above. In this sense, visual facilitation enhances facilitators' ability to meet the needs of different learner types.

Most of the information we receive comes through our eyes – not just the texts and images we read or watch, but the color of our furniture and lighting, the organization of our spaces, which, once we have assimilated visually, we apprehend without focusing. We can't touch colors, smell textures, or hear the size of an object: our eyes are important to us. Visuals deliver information faster, and such information is easily processed.

Once we have 'read' an image using our eyes it is processed in our brain, which recognizes a given object then provides signals to other parts of the body. In this way, visual facilitation stimulates and supports learning through and with the whole body, a crucial criteria for holistic, experiential learning.

Images also allow for the inclusion of people who speak different languages, which may be critical in international or intercultural groups, or situations when someone might otherwise be excluded from the process.

## Tools of visual facilitation

The tools of visual facilitation are the same as in other visual arts.

Examples include:

- Making use of basic shapes
- Boxes, containers
- Emoticons, people, faces
- Symbols and icons
- Organizing information in diagrams or logical structures
- Letters and typography
- Composition

## Icons and Symbols

Sometimes a simple image can explain more than an entire written essay. Just consider traffic signs for instance. In this context, two types of images that seek to reduce or simplify information are of particular importance: icons and symbols.

Foot is foot, bird is bird, ship is ship. This is an icon. We understand what it depicts.



When documenting developments or concepts, we must explain more complex things: a foot becomes “to walk,” “to run,” or the mark of shoe maker; a ship might signify “a delivery,” “a port,” “to sail” etc. Such symbols hold a more complex meaning than they do as icons, when their meaning is direct.

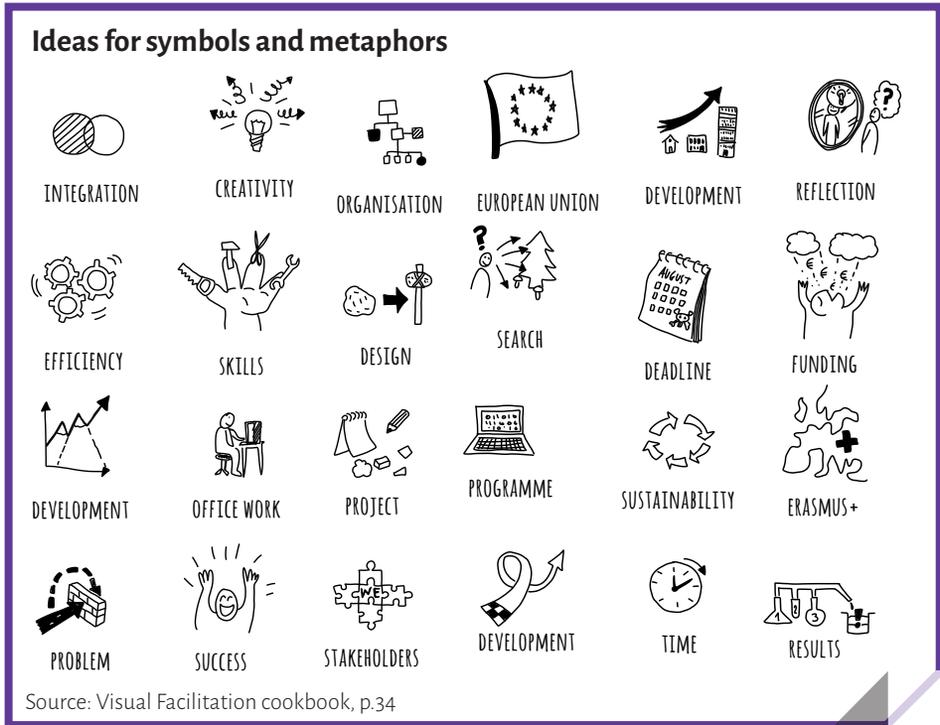
A cup is an *icon* of a cup, but it is also the *symbol* of a coffee-break.



In order to develop meaningful, strong imagery, it is essential to be clear about your core message. Think about *metaphors and symbols*, and the deeper meaning that these pictures and metaphors might hold for a given audience.

## Simplicity

According to a concept by Scott McCloud (author of “Understanding Comics”) *“amplification is done through simplification.”* Sizing down an image to its very essentials by removing (unnecessary) features allows the viewer give it more meaning. A simple stick figure can be more effective than an elaborate and well-drawn character!

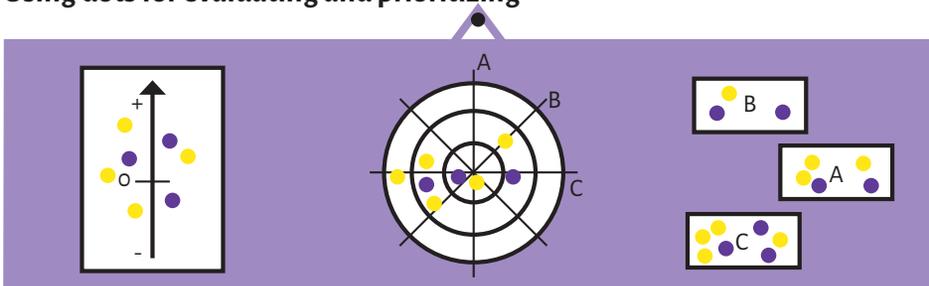


## Deciding and evaluating

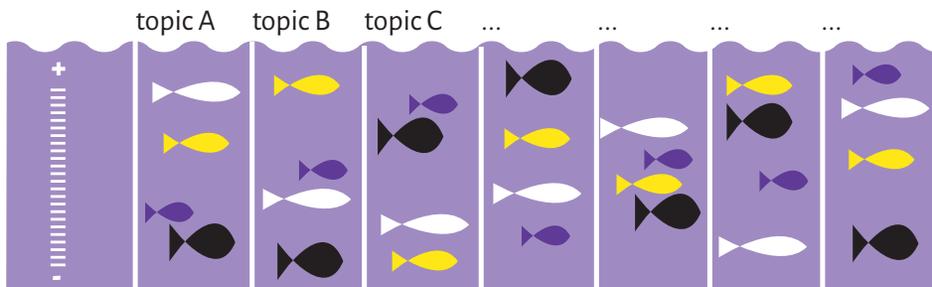
Reasoning and evaluating learning outcomes or processes is a topic that deserves a handbook of its own. Briefly however, in many cooperative processes there is a need to make decisions, understand different perspectives, or to evaluate.

Getting good results from an evaluation is less about the technique, and more about the questions you ask. Think not only about the content here, but about the learning goals of the day: the tasks, the group collaboration, meeting the goal and other aspects. For more information about evaluation visit [www.competendo.net](http://www.competendo.net)

### Using dots for evaluating and prioritizing



### Example: Cooperative evaluation



An example of cooperative evaluation in a training. Each participant marks his or her fish. Near the surface of the water means +, and at the floor of the sea means -.

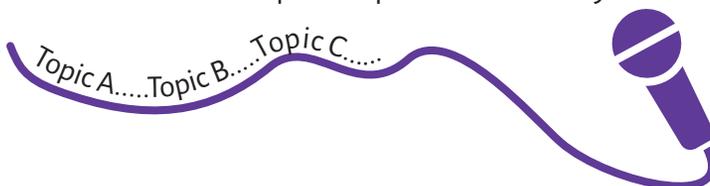
### Experienced-oriented evaluation:



Participants place balls in different bowls depending on the individual answer.

### Singing evaluation

Write a song, a rap, or a poem about a project activity or the entire project. Participants should refer to important parts of the activity.





## Task: Identity River

N. Paddison, SALTO Cultural Diversity



At certain moments in life, the metaphor of a river can help people to reflect on their experience. This method stimulates participants to use creativity when looking at their identity in terms of their choices and commitments.

### Steps

Each participant receives a picture of a river drawn on a large piece of paper. The beginning and the end of the river should be marked on the paper. Papers of different colors, scissors, glue, pencils, and markers should be made available.

Working individually, participants then represent their choices and commitments during a certain period of life and/or in relation to a certain dimension of their identity. For example, how/why they changed jobs, how their relationship to their family has changed, at what point they took on a new role in society...

Participants should place the results of their efforts onto whichever part of the river they consider appropriate.

### Reflection

- What were the crucial points?
- Where was the water calm?
- Where were you travelling with the current?
- When did you have to go against the current?
- Where was the water moving quickly?
- Where and what did you learn (about yourself and your identity)?

### Experience

This activity is also useful for talking about things besides identity. For example one could evaluate an individual's learning journey. One could also address the diverse experiences of past group activity.

Given an adequate level of mutual trust in the group, this sharing can be extremely rewarding.



## Task: The boring box

Marta Gawinek-Dagargulia, Teresa Grünhage

One tactic to instigate creativity is to shift our perspective 180 degrees. Think of what might lead to a disappointing, boring, or fruitless outcome in a learning process. The following task makes use of this kind of reframing with the goal of revealing the interesting aspects of boring issues.

### Goals

- Participants assess the relevance of a seminar topic for themselves
- They come up with obstacles that prevent them from learning about it
- They are asked to consider what positive/interesting aspects may exist within a boring topic
- They come up with a solution to bring these interesting aspects more into the forefront

### Steps

1. Acting anonymously, everyone puts one or two of the most boring topics they can conceive of in an “absolutely boring box”.
2. Facilitators open it, group cards, then present the results.
3. From the list, participants vote for 1 to 3 of the most boring topics.
4. They are then assigned the following task: break up into in small groups (around three participants) and discuss answers to the following questions:
  - What are the most interesting aspects of this otherwise boring topic?
  - What are the most relevant aspects in terms of our learning needs?
  - What about the style of learning? What would fit best your needs?
  - What are some concrete ideas on how one – or a group – could facilitate this learning in a way that it is fascinating, rather than boring?
5. Groups present their findings in the plenum. Other groups should feel free to add interesting and important aspects to what each group presents.

### Experience

During one training, participants identified a planned session about financial management and an obligatory presentation on the donors and other institutional supporters of the learning event as “boring” and then transformed them into theater play and a funny comic. The task brought up many surprising ideas.



## Join the dots that others don't see

*Andy Penaluna, International Institute for Creative Entrepreneurship,  
University of Wales Trinity Saint David*

"It is no surprise that artists don't use pens, which are fixed and permanent and locked on their ideas. It's no surprise they use pencils and constantly shade, remap or rub out less precious elements.

They have many ideas, and many ideas is a key to this. Seeing the dots that others don't see. Bringing out dots and more dots into a (open ended) funnel.

When you see a black screen you might assume that something is broken. Creative people, on the other hand, might say that's dark, that's moody. They see the black and instead see a variety of connotations that you have maybe never thought about.

How do we reward imagination? We can ask students to have lots of ideas. We can ask them to explain how they came up with those ideas. We can also ask what would you do in the future? How would you develop these things, connect them and explain them? It's a bit like being an entrepreneur giving a pitch. During the pitch the thing does not yet exist, but there's a damn good argument. There are many ways that we can reward our students."

Education and creative thinking: Time to think again?

TEDx talk with Andy Penaluna: <https://youtu.be/9Gannilwc-o>

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2. Additional source: Comedy, tragedy, and religion, John Morreal, State University of New York, Albany
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4. Susan Cain: Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking [www.ted.com/talks/susan\\_cain\\_the\\_power\\_of\\_introverts](http://www.ted.com/talks/susan_cain_the_power_of_introverts) Susan Cain: Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking, New York 2012
5. Nils-Eyk Zimmermann: Mentoring Handbook – Providing Systemic Support for Mentees and their Projects – A Handbook for Facilitators; Berlin 2012; p. 36ff
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7. Arist. v. Schlippe, Jochen Schweizer: Systemische Interventionen; 2nd edition; Göttingen 2010; p. 7
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9. Heike Fahrnun, Nils-Eyk Zimmermann, Eliza Skowron: Initiative Cookbook - Homemade Civic Engagement - An Introduction into Project Management, Berlin 2015
10. Sarah L. Kaufman, Dani Player, Jayne Orenstein, May-Ying Lam, Elizabeth Hart and Shelly Tan: This is your brain on art; Washington Post online: [www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2017/lifestyle/your-brain-on-art/](http://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/2017/lifestyle/your-brain-on-art/); Published Sept. 18, 2017
11. Ilona Olehlova, Inese Priedite: Creative Writing Cookbook; Estonian UNESCO Youth Association, Piepildito Sapnu Istaba, Cooperativa Braccianti. Published under a Creative Commons BY-NC-SA License; [www.creativelearningcookbook.tumblr.com](http://www.creativelearningcookbook.tumblr.com)
12. Understanding Youth- Exploring Identity and its Role in International Youth Work; Nik Paddison for SALTO-YOUTH Cultural Diversity Resource Centre; [www.salto-youth.net/diversity](http://www.salto-youth.net/diversity); S.32



## Chapter 6

# SOCIAL IMPACT AS A LEARNING SPACE

Facilitating social processes within a community means stepping outside the seminar room and into the world, where knowledge can be tested and applied.

Creativity is a powerful way to engage community members in dialogue or activities that can *transform their environment*. Activities or interventions might help people:

- To build new connections
- To increase their understanding of the structures and relations that connect citizens
- To come up with solutions for the common space or common needs
- To motivate co-creation.



Creativity and participation are very much interlinked. In order for a group to exercise creativity collectively, each member needs to be included and involved. The reverse is also true: in order to ensure everyone's participation, everyone must feel and see that their visions, ideas, experiences, and competencies are valued. They need to feel actively involved in the process of co-creation – that they are creating something with the community for the community.

Throughout Europe, it is increasingly common to see community-based civil initiatives that focus on solving social, cultural and political needs and problems, reflecting on value and rules, and fostering dialogue. In this process, creativity is a necessary raw material, motivating individuals to participate,

convince others, and to seek new solutions in a collaborative manner. As creativity in social groups thrives when respect for social diversity and differences is valued, creative participation and co-creation sets the stage for pluralistic and democratic societies.

Facilitation at the community level has the main task of *shaping spaces* in which social diversity can be expressed, *socio-political and cultural topics* can be discussed and negotiated, *people feel comfortable* opening up to neighbors and other citizens, and where people can *use their common creativity*.

As a result, facilitation within a community might differ from facilitation in schools or seminar rooms. It rarely takes place within a protected environment. *Flexibility and methodological adaptability to local contexts, or the needs of people* we might not know personally are essential.

The community activities that we highlight in this chapter share the goal of identifying solutions that are beneficial to the local community or wider society. At the broadest level they seek to achieve a form of *social impact*, a result and effect at the social level. More concretely, this impact is often realized in a concrete product (the *output*), or concrete effects on target groups (called then *outcome*).<sup>1</sup> This impact may take different forms.

Sometimes it is a social process, sometimes it is the result of a common achievement or a new product/service. Tasks like “Social impact with 50 EUR” or “Newspaper Theatre” help people to translate their motivation and passion for social change into practical terms.

When planning or designing such initiatives, it is important to base them on real problems and needs, as determined through the direct involvement of community members and research into their attitudes, environment, and conditions. Methods that make use of our ability to change our perspectives, and demonstrate empathy and curiosity towards differences are an important ingredient in community work. In this chapter we highlight methods that can stimulate engagement with and within a given community through art, empathy, listening, and inspiring acts of sharing – whether they are stories, experiences, or visions for the common good.

#### **More on social impact:**

PHINEO's Social Impact Navigator: The practical guide for organizations targeting better results  
[www.phineo.org/themen/social-impact-navigator](http://www.phineo.org/themen/social-impact-navigator)



## Task: Social impact with 50 Euro



2–3 hours



moderation material



10–50

Nils-Eyk Zimmermann, Competendo

This game anticipates an argument that is often heard when people explain why they are not engaged in volunteer activities. "Getting involved doesn't matter", they say, "only elite people and experts" have the power to change anything. The goal is to lead participants to the realization that money is not the primary key to success. If it is about impact, what impact can you have with limited resources?

### Goal

- Participants identify diverse options.
- A wide variety of resources, especially non-financial, are taken into consideration for civic involvement and activity.
- Participants reflect on diverse ways they might have social impact.
- They evaluate and assess ideas.

### Steps

The trainer takes a symbolic amount of money as an example – 50 EUR for instance (you can also use a smaller amount in your currency if you wish) – and asks for ideas about what one can do with the set amount of money. Participants brainstorm possible project ideas and develop a concept consisting of goals, methods, and resources. The trainer emphasizes monetary and non-monetary sources for fundraising, encouraging participants to become independent project designers.

#### 1. Explanation of the task

Make a suggestion of what you can change with 50 € in a day/in two hours/in two days in your environment/on a specific issue/in your university/... Announce that the winners will receive a prize.

#### 2. Ideas

Participants divide into teams and plan their concepts.

#### 3. Selection

Afterward, all ideas will be presented and all the participants will vote for the best two or three concepts. To the winners' surprise they will actually receive the sum of 50 € to implement the selected project ideas.

### Reflection:

- How was the process?
- How would you describe your strategy and the theory of change that you came up with?

- What influence does the 50 EUR have on the impact?
- What can you do with limited financial resources?
- What would motivate you and others to participate in this activity?
- If you were to receive ten times more money, how would your theory of change shift?

### Experience

This method illustrates on a small scale what happens on a larger scale in successful initiatives. Beginning with personal individual motivations – drawing from all kinds of support – then implementing a concrete small initiative. The initiative's success does not depend on the initial 50€. A smaller amount in another currency might be even more symbolic to your particular participants.



### Task: Newspaper theater

 2 hours



seminar room, 2-3 small rooms,

 20

newspaper articles, texts

The Newspaper theater is a technique of the Theater of the Oppressed as conceived of by Augusto Boal. The source of the theatre are newspaper articles and headlines, but also books or speeches. It prompts reflection on socially relevant issues by acting them out. With the help of such sources participants create a short scene.

### Steps

1. Participants choose the news topic they want to work on. [15 min]
2. Working in small groups, participants practice different reading methods and familiarize themselves with the different techniques of newspaper theatre:

#### *Simple reading*

The news is read without any further comments.

#### *Completing*

The news is read and an extra sentence is added to one part. For example: The news: "According to TIME magazine, Germany's chancellor is the most powerful woman in the world". Here participants might add: "Except in her party".

#### *Connecting*

Participants read the news from various articles. They contradict each other and disagree on the topic.

“Thanks to innovation, cars are becoming more and more environmentally friendly”

“Pollution caused by cars poses more and more of a threat to public health.”

#### *Rhythmical reading*

By reading a text in a rhythmical way, different associations are created. For example: Read a political speech with the rhythm of a march, a tango or a waltz.

#### *Adding*

Similarly to the "added" reading, the advertisements of companies, organizations or politicians are added to the article content.

#### *Mimed reading*

By creating a big gap between content (text) and presentation, the news article is caricatured. For example: A speech on the serious situation the country is facing is given by an actor who sits at a table with a lot of food on it.

#### *Improvisation*

A scene is acted.

#### *History*

The news is related to events from the past. The idea is to learn from history.

#### *(Re)definition*

The vocabulary of news and headlines often hides information and reduces their meaning. In example, euphemisms like “welcome centres” for refugee camps. Or the way in which “climate change” does not convey the concrete threats by itself. The play tries to include their (re)definition and to make the information behind the terms visible again.

#### *Empathy*

The news is complemented by other information that is related but which is often not printed, such as impressions or emotions. For example: Participants announce the news of a state funeral with a detailed description of the guests' mourning.

#### *Contextualizing*

Some bogus reports only talk about specific details as headlines and do not mention facts. By acting the scene after having read out the news, this information is then given to the audience.

**3.** Participants choose an approach then develop a scene and perform it in the group setting. [45 min]

## Reflection

After the performance follows a common group reflection. [30 min]

- What was the basic information underlying the scene? Why did you choose that?
- How did the theatre change your perspective on the topic?
- What was the feedback and emotions you received from the audience?
- Which important aspects in the topic are worth revisiting?

Source: After Augusto Boal Theater der Unterdrückten. Übungen und Spiele für Schauspieler und Nicht-Schauspieler; Frankfurt., 1989



## Case study: Baba Residence

*Yoana Stoyanova, Ideas Factory*

At the heart of our daily work at Ideas Factory is a belief that creative thinking and sharing empathetic experiences with a given community is the only path to social impact that retains its human aspect. Here, art is one tool used not only for its own sake, but also for its social impact. We prepare the soil for solutions by bringing together center and periphery challenging the assumption that innovation takes place mainly in the centres. In focusing on the quality of human relations, we try to create a social glue that connects different disciplines, generations, cultures, cities, peripheries, areas, spaces, people, and ideas. We work with a wide palette of approaches and a variety of creative and design thinking.

Baba Residence, one of our activities, illustrates this approach. "Baba" means "grandma" in Bulgarian. It shows in practice one way in which *intergenerational* creativity and *creativity between rural and urban people and culture* might be supported.

### How Baba Residence works

Young people from urban centers spend a month living in the households of elderly people in depopulated Bulgarian villages. Throughout the month, they share, learn about local customs, explore rituals, resources, and discover the current or potential possibilities and challenges that locals face.

Ideas Factory works with different Bulgarian villages. After a selection process, participants go through a training to prepare them for the differences between rural and urban culture. They learn how to develop empathy rather offer ready-made solutions, and also how to work together

with the local community in a participatory manner by using design thinking and anthropological approaches.

During their residency, participants organize activities that are useful to the local populations, some of which the villagers had not thought were possible. Participants also study the community and the resources that these villages possess in terms of their cultural heritage.

After their month in the villages, participants develop a social space that will address the needs they identified in the villages by identifying new resources and competent actors.

### **Creating impact together**

The first and most important impact of the project is that the elderly people feel visible and heard. Some of the examples of the social-entrepreneurship initiatives carried out in collaboration with local residents include:

Recording 43 folklore songs that were close to extinction, as the elderly women in the village were the last ones to sing them. All the proceeds from the CD is returned to village residents so they can travel to festivals and demonstrate their cultural heritage;

After many hours of cleaning and restoration, a bakery was reopened after being closed for 15 years at the encouragement of participants. It was the first time in 15 years residents were able to enjoy local bread, something that has a lot of cultural value – something much more meaningful than bread itself;

The social enterprise “Chergodeiki” offers weaved rugs with modern design, combining the creativity of one participant Elena Stoycheva with that of elderly ladies from one village in the Rhodope mountains. This provides the women additional income.

### **The community**

The simple act of connecting urban youth and rural elderly populations provides an important opportunity for exchange, whether that means sharing practices or knowledge, stories, or forging a shared cultural identity together. This collaboration makes it possible to link different known elements in a new way – precisely what lies at the heart of creativity.

What is needed for this process is an environment of trust: a system that gives free reign to innovation that encompasses different institutions and sectors, individuals and companies. We need a new mindset that will allow us to use creative thinking as a method for creating meaningful social impact for a given community.



## Case study: Exploring with empathy

*Annett Löser, Ruchi Junnarkar & Sabine Fekete,  
Design for Change Germany*

Empathy is fundamental to sparking creativity and triggering imagination that falls "outside the box". One exercise we use to foster empathy is to construct an imaginary persona. Participants are shown a few photographs from a person's daily life then asked to create a description of a typical person and his or her needs, values, wishes or interests based on these visual snippets.

The method allows people to respond to open-ended practices in different, sometimes unpredictable ways. There are challenges, however. For example, participants often get caught up in "being right and true" in their observations. Constructing a persona, then, tends to become a purely analytical exercise in collecting facts about a person's life without really entertaining empathetic thoughts.

Engaging creatively however – with all the possibilities of the photos – allows us to gain new insights that transcend cognitive facts. A facilitator might guide or push forward the discussion by highlighting less analytical points of view from group members.

By asking participants to look deeper into what the persona's needs are, we encourage participants to look beyond visible facts to emotional or other less visible aspects. Obviously there are no right or wrong answers. In fact, acknowledging this is one of the biggest opportunities within the creative thinking process.



## Task: Designing a persona

*Nils-Eyk Zimmermann, Competendo*

A persona may represent a typical person affected by an initiative, or the initiative's target audience or group. Imagine a concrete person, with a name, habits, and clothing. Try to understand them as deeply as possible. Try to think like them, take a "walk in their shoes". Developing these personas are the first step in helping real people and reflecting critically on our assumptions.

### Goal

- Participants gain a knowledge of the target groups, audiences, and community members involved in an activity.

- Participants gain analytical skills.
- Participants improve their empathy.

### Steps

1. To develop the persona, give a short raw description by answering the following questions about the imagined person:

- Name → Opinions and wishes regarding the impact of your activity
- Age, gender → Beliefs and values
- Marital status → What does he/she listen to or like to look at, e.g. in the media?
- Occupation
- Hobbies

### 2. Motivations, goals and needs

In the next step, gather information about the following aspects:

- What would the motivations, goals, and needs of actual people be?
- What are their challenges?
- What emotions and passions are involved?

A group might make use of a roleplaying activity. One or two learners step into the role of a persona and are interviewed by a colleague. A fourth group member might document the key points that come up during the interview.

Another option is to draw the persona individually, and then present the different types of personas to each other. Discuss and collect the key features (e.g. on a flipchart, separating motivations, goals, and needs).

### 3. Personal touch

Draw a common persona then explain it in short sentences. Include an image, name, and quote that expresses the needs and goals of the persona. If the task is conducted in a larger group, facilitators can add an additional step of identifying the most common aspects shared between the personas of the various groups in a plenary setting.

### 4. Explore feedback

Chat, talk, or write to people that share characteristics with your persona.

- What are their goals and needs?
- What are possible motivations for their being involved in or supporting your activity, or using your product?
- Which social characteristics in the persona did you not see before?
- What kind of new knowledge about local conditions needs to be included?

### 5. Adjust

Alter the persona based on feedback.

Inspired by: [www.opendesignkit.org/methods/personas](http://www.opendesignkit.org/methods/personas)



## Case study: We are all made of stories

*Handan Saatcioglu Gurses, Pinar Ozutemiz, Senem Donatan,  
Tolga Bektas, KOMSU KAPISI, Istanbul*

Sharing stories from our experiences represents an important way for people to learn from and about each other, have fun together, and overcome social division.

The community center KOMSU KAPISI seeks to bring people together and break the ice of isolation within a peaceful setting. Located at the very center of Istanbul, the centre finds itself in the middle of many environmental, social, and political problems that affect the whole country. During our storytelling nights we encourage community members to tell stories about specific issues on a stage open to all kinds of audiences.

It's not easy to call people to the stage just like that and ask them to tell a story and overcome their shyness. Even when they do get on stage, the real stories are sometimes hard to coax out. By focusing on the potential of working with small communities, we have learned a few tricks to unlock raw stories:

We encourage volunteer tellers to share their stories while also working with a storyteller/facilitator to enhance their performance.

During storytelling night we have two facilitators, one from the community and the other with a storytelling background. This pair helps to people to warm up and encourages them to tell their story in a cozy and unstructured improvisational atmosphere.

Finding icebreaking keywords that people like to talk about can also stimulate the process. When it comes to childhood for example, almost everybody has a nostalgic memory to share.

You can never really know what will happen. Sometimes stories trigger other stories and it continues beautifully. It might be the reverse. This is the risk of an open, participatory process.

The magic in such urban storytelling nights lies in their potential to reveal a shared soul within the community, the condition for community transformation. This is a simple idea, but it can be applied in different community contexts, or for talking about social relevant issues like peace making, reconciliation, or community identity.



## Case study: Working as a city dramaturg

*Adeshola Tunde Adefioye, KVS Brussels City Theatre*

As a city dramaturg at the Brussels City Theatre KVS, one part of my work is bringing the city to the theater and taking the theater into the city. A city dramaturg is a term that was created by my colleague. As city dramaturg, I am tasked with creating a mission for the theater, carrying it out, and, on the other side of the spectrum, doing dramaturgy for actual theater pieces.

The project Slam Our World (SLOW) is the perfect embodiment and product of my work. Through SLOW, we try to reconceptualize the world we live in and re-envision how we occupy a space like the city of Brussels. We do so by inviting an artist from outside of Belgium for a residency at the KVS for 3 weeks. Within these 3 weeks, the artist interacts and meets with different cross-sections of the greater Brussels community: activists, academics, sex-workers, community organizers, artists.

For example, our first visiting artist – the British Egyptian Sabrina Mahfouz – focused on Muslim feminism. In the form of a blog, we collected the opinions of different individuals from the community who gave their reflections about Muslim feminism ([www.whatismuslimfeminism.tumblr.com](http://www.whatismuslimfeminism.tumblr.com)). This created a discussion that in turn created a buzz, which eventually filled our 200 seat theater two nights in a row.

The artist Quinsy Gario from Holland took a different approach. Months before his residency, he engaged artists and asked them to keep a diary of the experiences they had, especially racist ones. During his three week residency, he conducted two masterclasses, not in the theater, but at Le Space, a tiny community center, where ten community members shared their experiences with race, class, and post-colonial realities in Brussels. These texts were used in the final script of SLOW #02. One might consider this a sort of crowd-sourcing for writing, something which created a powerful text that included the voices of the community and a variety of languages, including French, Spanish, English, and Dutch.

The craft of a city dramaturg is to create a unique theater experience while exploring the community and its vast resources. This is done with the aim of moving towards a theater culture that is more inclusive and considers the participation of different cross-sections of society.



## Case study: Design for Change Spain

*Chiara Giorgetti, Montserrat School, Barcelona*

The Design for Change ([www.dfcspain.com](http://www.dfcspain.com)) project aims to give children the opportunity to change the world through their ideas. The method's creative potential lies in the target group (children 8–15): the method helps them to feel empowered by implementing their ideas for the urban development of Barcelona. These are small project ideas and the process accompanies the young participants through several steps. By successfully finishing the process with a concrete project idea, the method allows them to understand that “I can actually change the environment and my idea matters.”

The 5 steps of Design for Change are:

→ **Feel**

Empathizing with the environment, simple methods such as seeing, thinking, asking, circling of points of view, comparing and contrasting help children to identify what concerns them, while at the same time posing a challenge.

→ **Imagine**

Imagining solutions and coming up with ideas without criticizing and assessing them.

→ **Do**

Carrying out the idea.

→ **Evaluate**

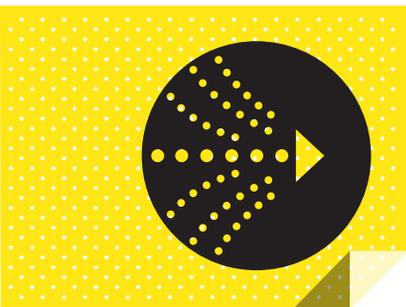
Reflecting upon the process (What have I learned? How did I learn? What are the three ideas that I will remember? How did I feel during different stages in the process?)

→ **Share**

Sharing the project in order to show it was possible, as well as to awaken in other children a desire to change the world.

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1. A. Rickert (Ed.), B. Kurz, D. Kubek: Social Impact Navigator: The practical guide for organizations targeting better results; second revised edition, Berlin, PHINEO gAG, 2016; p.5



## OUTLOOK: TOWARD SOCIAL TRANSITION

When ideas and practices become examples or inspiration for others, creativity can lead to social innovation. Creativity is a necessary ingredient for innovation, not only because it helps to generate ideas, but also because it can involve citizens in a dialogue about their needs and the significance of innovative solutions. When civic competence is the aim of competency centered education and empowerment is the main methodology, any solution accepted as an innovation can and should be a social innovation. The term "social" implies an impact on individuals, opening them up to opportunities to co-create, get involved and decide, while also keeping the structures of society in line with the values of participatory democracy. In contrast, many solutions within business or technology that claim to be innovative in fact solve a particular problem for a particular group of people, while the greater social impact often goes unexamined.

In order to facilitate such social innovation, something greater than individual or group creativity is required. As such, we make use of "cross-sectoral competence", or the ability to come to a cross-sectoral understanding and partake in cooperation across different parts of social systems. Creativity and innovation are closely interlinked. While creativity is a condition for innovation, innovation helps guide creative thinking towards practical ideas.

### **From the individual to society – how creativity connects us all**

*Zlatko Teoharov\**

In the past theologians held that creativity belongs to the Creator alone. The 17th c. began to attribute it to the works of a genius. Today it is a blanket term that can describe products, processes, people, and situations.<sup>1</sup> These different ways of looking at creativity highlight its different aspects.

D. Winnicott defines creativity as 'the doing that arises out of being', the capacity to create the world and feel at home in it, our search for words and

symbols that reflect our inner feelings and experiences. Unlike intelligence, with its focus on a working solution, creativity seeks to find as many solutions as possible.

When we use our creativity, we play in order to find our way back to our connection with the world. Experiencing a safe and nurturing environment in a situation of need and/or moderate anxiety are vital to developing creative capacity on a personal, group or societal level. It is about being hungry, curious and ready to create solutions.

Once discovered, this creative input may expand, including not just play and fantasy, but the other aspects of culture as well: its social structures, approaches, artistry, modalities etc. Doing things becomes meaningful only if we learn how to use this activity in order to relate to others, and ourselves.

If there is no space for creativity individuals may develop 'false self' patterns,<sup>2</sup> behaviors that only rehearse the expectations of others and requirements of society. This makes them feel unauthentic, turned into something they are not. In a group context, the end result is alienated communities and societies. Identification with this kind of alienation leads to further loss of individuality and spontaneity, deficient autonomy and self-identity, and a severing of links between the psychic and the social. Understandably, as work practices and learning that were degrading to people peaked in Europe, a series of social experiments in the 1970s veered in the opposite direction. Most of them proved that creativity can be both personal and social, as well as a powerful economic resource.

Group and community life foster creativity: interactions are a point of departure for co-creativity and co-development. In these situations people share knowledge and skills, use reflection to relate to each other, and set into motion the type of individual dynamics that have the power to drive organizations and communities forward.

Creativity is not a luxury: it is a capacity for self-expression and self-actualization and is common to individuals, groups and communities. Each context need transformational leadership to strengthen progressive and formative trends in their transition to adulthood and independence, part of which is an ability to acknowledge the right to be different.

A society of individuals, achieving maximum individual freedom and relatedness to others, is a truly good one.<sup>3</sup> It is a task that is in its essence deeply creative and ethical, and as such requires a great deal of us.

*\* Zlatko Teoharov is a psychodrama-therapist, a group psychoanalyst and group leader at IAG Bonn, Germany, a lecturer at New Bulgarian University in Sofia, and at EFHD in Darmstadt, Germany and a Chair of the Board at Psychology of Groups Institute.*

## Creativity's intersection with cross-sectoral competence

Nils-Eyk Zimmermann

Innovation refers to the successful implementation of an idea, as well as the means by which the idea may have a social impact beyond the direct environment where the idea was first developed or tested.

For example, a method for planning education can become a trend. Just think of Design Thinking over the past few years. Another example from the field of civil engagement is the idea of positive measures regarding gender representation, which has led to women's quotas in economy and politics. Originally tested and developed in grassroots groups, over time the idea grew more and more mainstream. The very idea of deliberative democracy began as an experiment of adding innovative practices with a participatory, consultative, and discursive focus to existing political structures.

After a phase of incubation, an idea may also gain traction across system borders. Such successes are called “innovations.” Often they are “*new combinations or hybrids of existing elements, rather than being wholly new in themselves*” and in their development they “*cut across organisational, sectoral or disciplinary boundaries.*”<sup>4</sup>

To help a creative idea make its way through an entire society, the idea's authors and supporters must be able to share it with others and to convince them of its merit. Authors and others often use an internal language, following an internal logic, which can be perceived as a kind of foreign language. *Cross-sectoral competence can help us learn these languages.* One example might be the competence a social worker needs to interest a banker in her ideas, or the talent a student needs to motivate a factory worker to support their issue—or a facilitator to explain his or her impact to politicians.

### Aspects of cross-sectoral competence

- Knowledge about systems languages and habits
- Linguistic creativity: an ability to describe new things or to describe things in a new way
- Knowledge of the different functions and operations at play within other parts of the system
- An openness toward the demands and needs of other actors and an ability to negotiate
- The ability to situate one's own action within the bigger picture and to organize oneself according to structural, or systematic logic
- An ability to deal with ambiguity and unexpected situations
- Reflecting on and shaping power relations
- Ensuring fairness and trustworthiness

It is obvious that social innovation processes take time, and that during this time the original ideas will transform. They change their original character and, at the same time, society. It is a transition rather than a revolution. This is why we can call them transition experiments: “A *transition experiment* is an innovation project with a societal challenge as a starting point for learning aimed at contributing to a transition”.<sup>5</sup> Transition experiments go hand-in-hand with interactions across groups and sectors. As such, creative people intending to have a social impact need to be able to share their ideas, collaborate, and co-create a community of people seeking change.

While creativity is often a required competency, it is not necessarily the decisive one. Without creativity however, innovation projects might become fruitless. *Organizations and individual networks* are essential spaces where people are allowed and willing to relate to each other, where new creativity can emerge, where participation guarantees that creative impulses are appreciated, and where a *participatory organizational culture* leads to people feeling empowered and motivated to cooperate with each other and pursue their ideas.

Facilitation can support this effort by *shaping spaces* for such cross-sectoral dialogue. It can foster cross-sectoral competencies and help individuals to *increase their capacity to speak and listen* by making use of the language of other groups, and *shape inclusive, co-created transition processes*. It can also *embed the individual activities* of citizens in other social interactions, groups, or movements.



## Interview: Creativity is a core ingredient for cross-sectoral collaboration

*Interview with Marjolein Cremer \**



*“Democracy is a creative act, engaging people in a conversation beyond the ballot box. Democracy needs imagination.”*

Peter Vermeersch (University of Leuven)

### How do you understand the role of creativity in civil-public partnerships?

To me, creativity is the key factor in fueling transforming processes and strengthening problem solving capacities. I am convinced we need to approach issues differently if we truly want to make a difference. One such alternative institutional model of cooperation is civil-public partnerships, a collaborative form of government whereby public administration and

citizens co-shape, co-design, and co-govern. At the same time we see that cultural organizations function as places where creativity and new visions of democracy emerge.

Take the example of POGON – the Zagreb center for independent culture and youth – the first public cultural institution in Croatia based on a civil-public governance model, and one which marked a turning point in institutional design. Urban challenges can no longer be designed from a top-down oriented perspective. Culture and creativity are part of the solutions: providing out-of-the box solutions, engaging people and challenging stereotypes.

### **What do you believe enables communities to exercise creativity?**

Building trust between stakeholders is essential. Specifically, local governments need to trust their citizens and communities. And they can: by acting as an enabler rather than steering or controlling processes. The role of an enabler means giving the power to communities to experiment, create community ownership, and invest in a collaborative process over the long run, thus making it truly sustainable. There is a need for an open and creative process that allows space for experimentation and sharing solutions and information. We experienced this in the Innovative City Development meeting that brought together a small group of city-makers from across Europe at the Idea Camp in Madrid March 2017.<sup>6</sup>

Openness, the opportunity to explore, but at the same time giving confidence, trust and autonomy to people are all factors that enable communities to exercise creativity.

### **How are the Commons and creativity intertwined? Why is one important to the other?**

The commons refer to shared resources and social practices that are maintained by communities in a sustainable way. "Commoning" is a collective venture of co-development and co-government – challenging the duopoly of the state and the market – where people collectively manage and take stewardship over resources.

### **Can creativity help build connections between different stakeholders and interests within a democratic society?**

Creativity is a basic ingredient to bring different people and interests together. To rethink the traditional bottom-up and top-down logic between public, market and civic organizations, we need practical experiments

and creative thinking. In my work as an advocate I am constantly bringing together divergent interests and stakeholders in order to strive for a common cause. Working in a participatory way and at the same time steering the process to reach certain goals is very challenging. But by including different opinions and bringing different people together, you reduce tensions, improve support and have a more sustainable impact. I believe this is the way forward to create solutions for social innovation and a better functioning democracy. This is why we at ECF consider arts, creativity, and culture driving forces in democratic renewal.

To the ECF library: [www.culturalfoundation.eu/library-overview](http://www.culturalfoundation.eu/library-overview)

*\* Marjolein Cremer is a Senior Advocacy Officer at the European Cultural Foundation (ECF), influencing EU, national and local policies, with diversity and equality as key drivers of advocacy.*

## Creative Commons: Open Educational Resources

To enable self-empowerment, people need *access* to education, and especially to resources which are often artificially limited for commercial or political reasons. Open Educational Resources (OER) want to ensure this accessibility in a barrier free way for all.

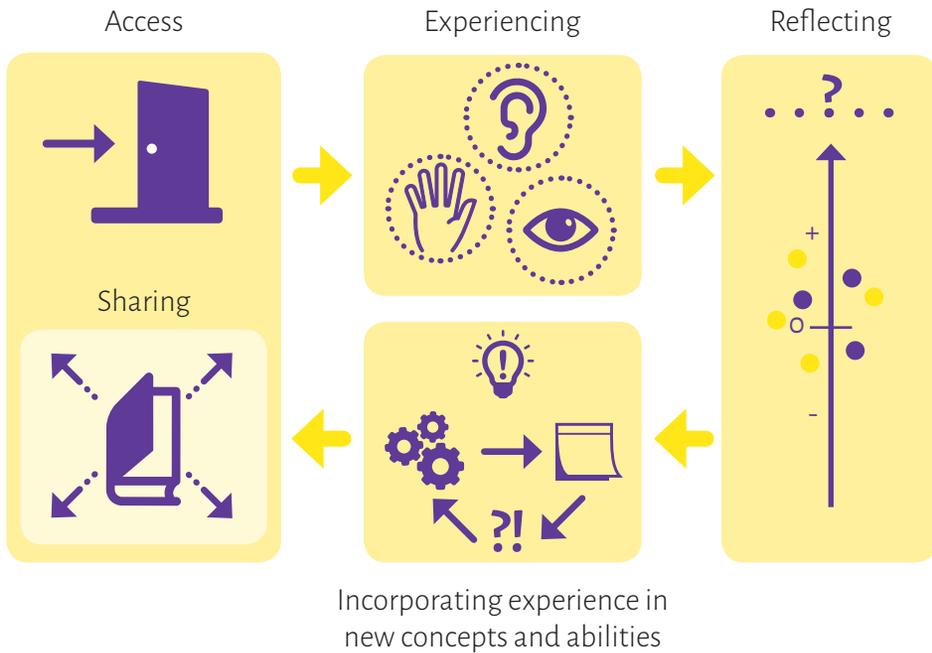


### Knowledge – a Creative Community Practice

Open Educational Resources (OER) build a bridge between knowledge and citizens. They define *knowledge as a common good* and make it available to the public for consumption. Moreover, they *enable learners to deal with knowledge in a creative way*. For example, some open license models for open resources encourage users to develop new materials or other intellectual works (i. e. software or music) on the basis of existing knowledge. Educational Commons adds to the learning cycle *experience → reflection → incorporation of the learnings*, as well as *access and sharing*.

The key idea of the Commons is the productive practice of “commoning”:  
*“The wealth generating process of commoning lies not in producing things or in high return rates. It’s all about the creative process and the fair distribution of the wealth reproduced in the commons.”<sup>7</sup>*

Many active individuals want to *share ideas and approaches* through open source. Thanks to OER they are able to publish their work without needing to pass the often unfair access barriers that are common in publishing houses. One can help good ideas to strengthen and develop, and introduce innovative ideas or products *into the public domain*.



Some see in the commons a chance for *alternative models for the creation of value*. While gatekeepers limit our alternatives, the commons opens opportunities for collective impact and value. Wikipedia is an example of this, as well as musicians who question old business models and plan the distribution of their work differently. Publishing has similar examples, while members of sharing platforms compensate each other with social relationships and use of their skills.

### Strengthening the Social Nature of Humans

The ambivalence in Open Educational Resources should not be overlooked. Users and producers of Commons have *legitimate and non-legitimate interests*, they might act altruistically, or they may be looking for a “free lunch.” Commons recognizes these ambiguities, but these strengthen our *social and community predispositions*: If you take, then please share. And when you share, this will have a positive impact on you as well.

But one thing still needs consideration. A content producer must be aware of the value of one’s creations in order to decide deliberately to share them. Only those who recognize their work’s value for others decide on a voluntary basis. Especially people who depend on their intellectual output for their income should not be blamed for copyrighting or limiting access to their works, especially when others could monetize these without sharing the profits. In a world of copyrights and money, one has to find his or her path. In many situations, commoning might provide a partial answer, but is not the

only solution. In between commercialized and monopolized knowledge and commoning practice there exists a space that must be filled in creative ways.

Commoning is based on concrete social needs, which leads us to conclude that open educational materials support the development of innovation, equality of opportunity, and social development. If in the future commoning were to become part of the operating system of our society, then it would be because civil society, state, and economy had shaped more incentives for those engaging in commoning. For example, this might include different criteria of appreciation of educational materials, more free educational resources, content pluralism, and more sharing practices.

OER are a concrete step toward greater freedom in education for independent learners seeking to develop their competencies..

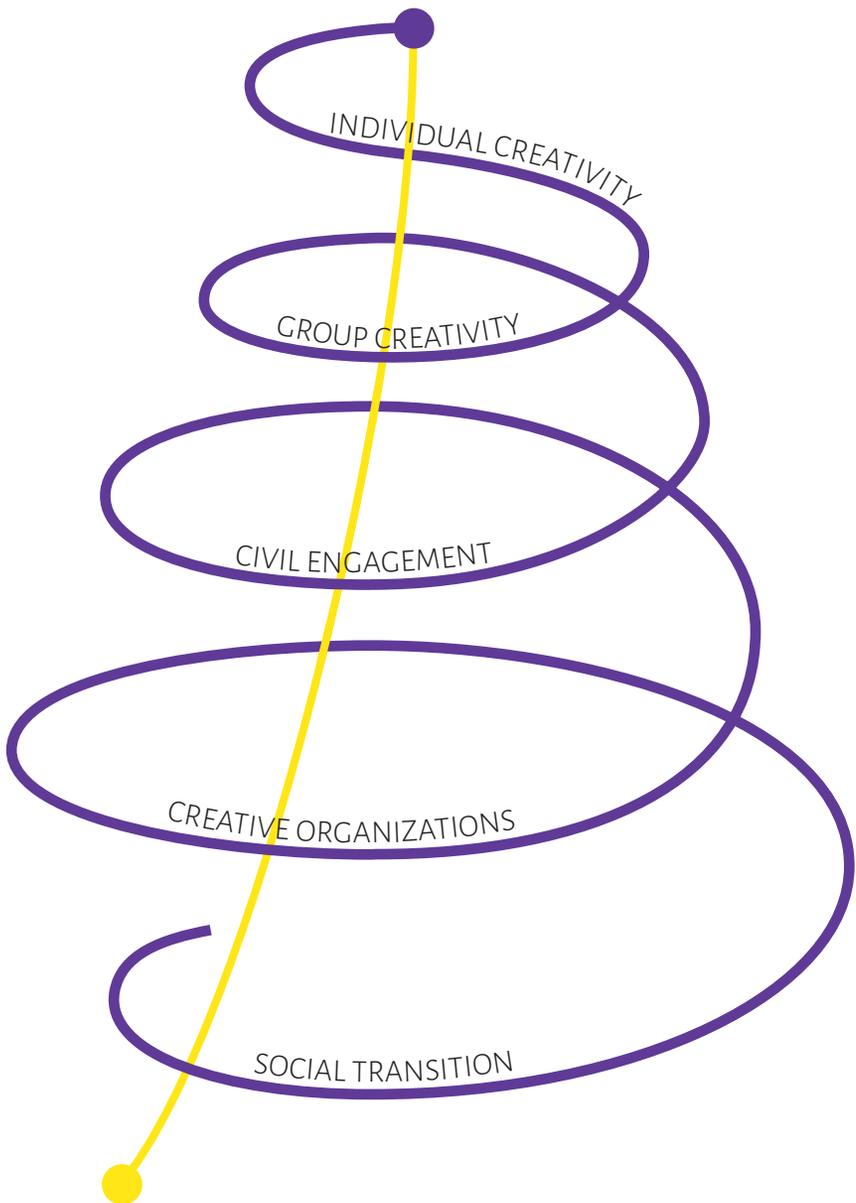


Our online toolbox Competendo is also published under an OER license if you'd like to use Competendo in a creative way and share your experience through the platform.

→ [www.competendo.net](http://www.competendo.net)

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1. Following the ideas of Karl-Heinz Brodbeck, creativity researcher
  2. Donald Winnicott, psychoanalyst
  3. After Jacob L. Moreno, founder of psychodrama
  4. Geoff Mulgan, Simon Tucker, Rushanara Ali, Ben Sanders: Social-Innovation - What It Is, Why It Matters and How It Can Be Accelerated; Skoll Centre for Social Entrepreneurship/The Young Foundation; 2007; p. 5
  5. S. van den Bosch, J. Rotmans. Deepening, Broadening and Scaling Up: A Framework for Steering Transition Experiments.. Knowledge Centre for Sustainable System Innovations and Transitions (KCT), 2008. [hdl.handle.net/1765/15812](http://hdl.handle.net/1765/15812). p.17
  6. Report Co-Making the City from the Innovative City Development meeting: [www.culturalfoundation.eu/library/co-making-the-city-report-2017](http://www.culturalfoundation.eu/library/co-making-the-city-report-2017)
  7. Silke Helfrich: Commons als transformative Kraft jenseits von Markt und Staat in: Commons: für eine neue Politik jenseits von Markt und Staat; Bielefeld 2012

## What is the golden thread of this book?



You are the golden thread!





The Handbooks for Facilitators series seeks to assist teachers and facilitators in strengthening individuals' key competences by highlighting best practices from education and learning. A central goal in this process is empowering people with different social background to act as responsible and active citizens. Within this process of empowerment, creativity is a crucial competence. It helps people to become self-starters, to ideate and to connect new ideas with existing experience. It is a key competence for adapting proactively toward social change and to co-creating this change.

In this handbook, we introduce methods, ideas and case studies for teachers, tutors, trainers, youth workers, group leaders, curators, or volunteers in civic initiatives in order to shape spaces for creativity.

