

**UTOPIA**  
**JETZT**  
Bundes  
kongress  
2020

Dokumentation einer Veranstaltung im  
Rahmen von UTOPIA.JETZT:

In Ko-Kreation mit Politik und Verwaltung  
18. Januar 2020

## Dokumentationsleitfaden für BUKO 2020 Sessions

**Titel der Session:** In Ko-Kreation mit Politik und Verwaltung

**Name der Session-Leitung:** Aron Weigl, EDUCULT

Folgender Artikel ist ein Ausschnitt aus dem Bericht, den EDUCULT für ein anderes Projekt zum Thema Ko-Kreation zwischen Zivilgesellschaft und Administration im Kulturbereich verfasst hat.

Insbesondere Unterkapitel 7.2 liefert wichtige Hinweise auf Gelingensbedingungen.

Ganzer Bericht unter: [http://educult.at/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Co-Create\\_Good-Practice-Report-1.pdf](http://educult.at/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Co-Create_Good-Practice-Report-1.pdf)

Die Fotos stammen aus dem Workshop bei UTOPIA.JETZT.

# 7 Conclusions on a High Quality Co-Creative Cooperation

By Aron Weigl, EDUCULT

## 7.1 Characteristics

The concept of “co-creation” is not synonymous in the participating European countries. While in Denmark the term referring to the collaboration between the civil society and public administrations in the cultural field has a longer history, in Austria and Finland it is a rather new approach. There, participatory processes or co-development are the often-used terms for something which can be defined as “co-creation”. Nevertheless, co-creative approaches exist in all three countries despite the absence of a single all-encompassing term.

In Denmark, co-creation is a common practice in cultural activities. In Finland, the concept of co-creation is more widely used in service, corporation, municipal and social sectors than in culture. Also in Austria, where a strong state presence dominates the cultural sector, co-creation refers more to product design and participatory approaches in environmental questions. However, in both countries an increasing number of cultural actors are becoming aware of the possibilities for co-creative processes.

The case studies collected in this report illustrate different approaches to co-creative cooperation. They also show the different approaches of the partner organisations involved in the selection of examples. The two Austrian analyses point to processes of cultural development planning in cities and regions, on the one hand in order to further develop the cultural policy of an entire federal state like Salzburg, on the other hand to strengthen the local cultural landscape of a city and surrounding areas through an application for the European Capital of Culture as found in St. Pölten. The project *World Heritage Sites' Boost to Local Services* in Petäjävesi and Korpilahti/Finland also aimed at strengthening the local cultural infrastructure with a focus on cultural heritage and the direct national and international networking within the region. In Guldborgsund in Denmark, the reconstruction of cultural heritage sites led to an improvement in the cultural offer and, similar to the Finnish project, a cultural tourism development was initiated. The same applies to Selde/Denmark, where – similar to the *Kaustinen sings* project in Finland – a concrete artistic project was organised co-creatively.

The examples cover different target levels and show that co-creation in different settings is possible and can be successful. However, a similar pattern is apparent in all cases: The first initiative for the projects mostly came from civil society actors or citizens, but the actual implementation was then only possible with the support of the public stakeholders, who committed themselves to the cause and made it their own. When this support was stopped in the course of the project, it meant a threat to the project.

These initiating individual actors are critical to change. It is their desire to improve a societal situation and to make a difference. We can call them catalysts for co-creative processes. Collective initiation is

also conceivable, but requires already existing structures and networks, so that existing groups can jointly come up with an idea.

Besides initiation, the question of resources is crucial. None of the projects examined could have been implemented as they were without public funding. At the same time, the different working statuses of the people involved often create inequality that makes joint processes more difficult. Volunteers or freelancers in the cultural sector, in particular, have other starting conditions in common discussions as permanent employees in the cultural administrations and institutions have. Being part of a leading team demands time which not all members can give equally.

Despite the claim to involve as many people and all stakeholders as possible, in most cases smaller teams were responsible for driving the project forward. These can be mixed groups from civil society and public actors or pure civil society groups, which maintain a close exchange with the public side, whereby different types of co-creation can be discussed.

The examples cover all types of co-creation presented in chapter 3. What is striking is that projects can often not be assigned exclusively to a certain type, but rather different forms of co-creation are expressed in different phases of a project. One could then also speak of "oscillating co-creation". This can, as in the case of the cultural development plan in Salzburg, start with a stronger responsibility on the public side, then change into an equal co-creative process, which not only integrates a multitude of stakeholders, but is also open to all citizens. Finally, the Salzburg project concluded with a simultaneously controlled and facilitating approach.

Some of the project consortiums made the conscious decision to work co-creatively, others not. What becomes clear, however, is that in none of the cases were the actors aware of the kind of co-creation they would choose for the implementation. Making clear decisions in advance can help to design the later processes in a more structured and goal-oriented way.

Due to the very limited number of case studies, no answer can be given as to which form of co-creation is more promising if one thinks of the direct project goals. Indirect goals such as the empowerment of civil society actors or the promotion of democratic processes can, however, only be achieved if the civil society actors are also given a corresponding role in the project – right from the start.

Finally, allowing for a higher degree of uncertainty and unpredictability in equal and facilitating co-creation is the best guarantee for generating transformative potential and thus for arriving at innovative approaches to solutions. Only in this way can social development succeed. But this also means that a failure of the co-creative process must be accepted as a possible outcome. Thus, co-creation is closely related to artistic processes that have similar conditions and for which the option of failure is also inherent. Therefore and due to the distribution of different expertise among many stakeholders including many civil society actors, the cultural field is predestined for co-creative approaches.

## 7.2 Recommendations

The final question we wanted to attempt to elaborate on in this report is: what is necessary for high quality co-creation to take place? The analyses show that some basic conditions are needed to achieve this. Among others, time for the processes and a similar commitment of all involved partners

must be mentioned. Based on the analyses, we can describe more conditions which help fostering successful co-creative processes. The following recommendations resulted:

- » Include a wide network of different stakeholders.
- » All participants should be committed to the co-creative approach.
- » Involve all important stakeholders as co-initiators, co-designers and co-implementers.
- » Have a mixed knowledge and different backgrounds represented and value the diverse knowledge of the participating partners.
- » Keep everyone informed so that they all have the same level of information and know the correct terminology and practices.
- » Stay open without predefining solutions.
- » Establish an atmosphere of trust and understanding.
- » Ensure that all actors possess a certain motivation to participate. Clarify the different motivations at the beginning.
- » Work on a shared understanding of the project goals and on a shared belief in the project's importance.
- » Develop equality and respect between the stakeholders, so that all feel that they are allowed to speak and are heard.
- » Maintain a community spirit.
- » Deal communally with conflicts.
- » Provide a sufficient and flexible time frame.
- » Decide collectively about rules or a legal framework to reach the desired goal.
- » Possibly include an external expert for process facilitation, monitoring, etc.

In addition, civil society actors should be supported in two roles: on the one hand as catalysts for co-creative processes and on the other hand as equal partners in negotiation processes with municipalities and other public actors. This would make it necessary for them to develop certain competencies.

On the basis of the six case studies, it was possible to identify important and helpful competencies of the actors involved. They include:

- » the ability to see the big picture, being holistic,
- » the understanding of co-creation and its implications in different phases of the project,
- » social skills, solidarity, open-mindedness and the appreciation of others,
- » the ability to network,
- » good communication skills,
- » empathy and the ability to see things from different perspectives,
- » the will to understand each other's operational environment and its challenges and possible constraints,
- » the ability to understand and communicate the implications, but also the limitations, of one's own role,
- » the capacity to reflect on one's own cultural-political position,
- » unambiguity, clarity and professionalism,
- » a creative treatment of administrative, financial and content-related questions,
- » strategic thinking,
- » awareness raising for the importance of one's own involvement and commitment,

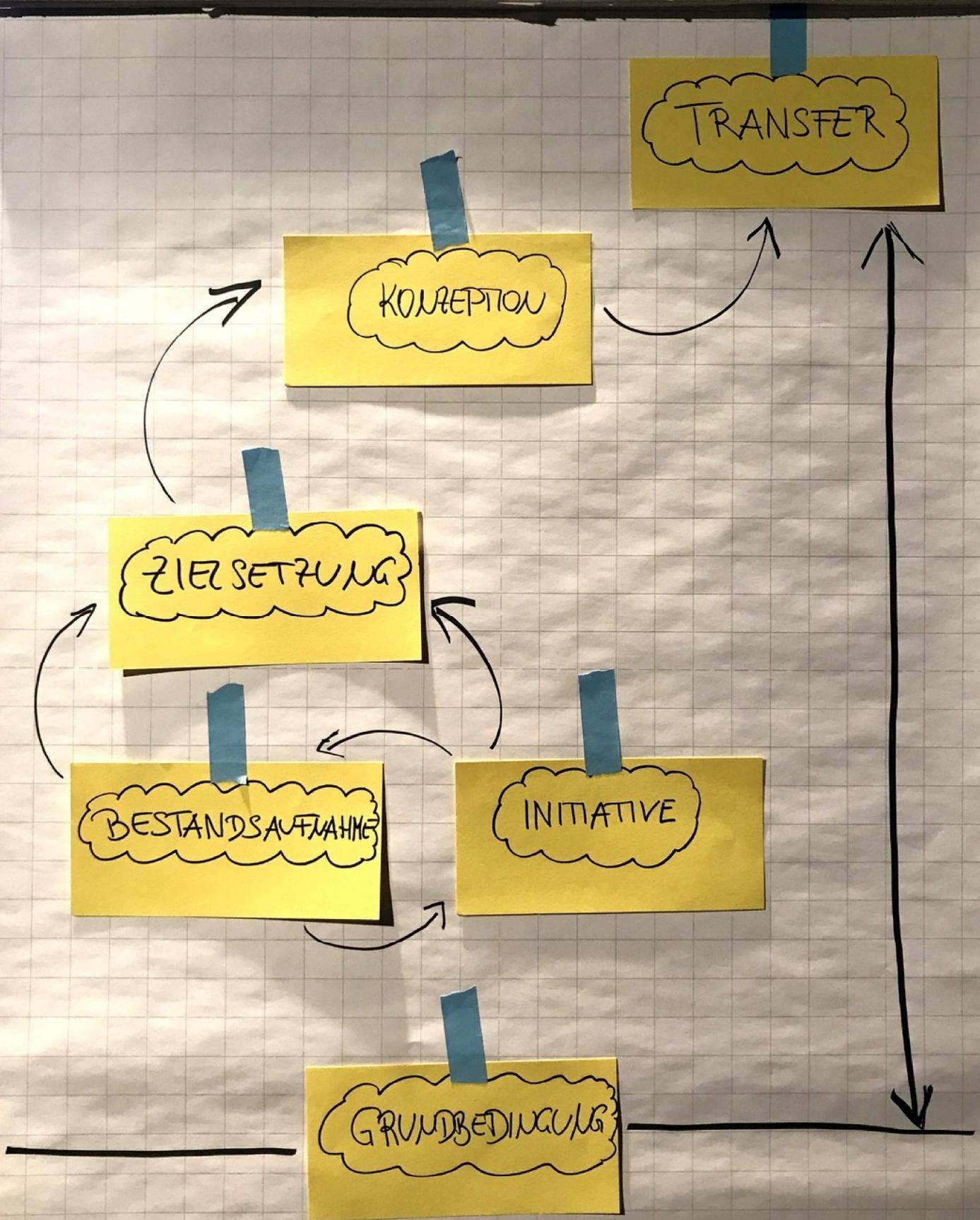
## » Co-Create. Good Practice Report

- » the self-confidence to face public actors at the same eye level,
- » curiosity and the motivation to learn new things,
- » the willingness to take risks and desire for change, and
- » professional time management skills.

Civil society actors which are involved as coordinators or other facilitators of the co-creative processes would also need the following competencies:

- » the competency to empower the participating actors,
- » the ability to make all actors committed to the project,
- » the capacity for equal consideration of all actors involved in different steps of the project,
- » the ability to establish an atmosphere of equality and shared respect, and a non-hierarchical form of collaboration,
- » the competency to increase partner participation and involvement (including an understanding of how long the process of co-creation takes),
- » the ability to bring something new to the project (knowledge, networks, media), e.g. to see the necessity of an analytical foundation for decision making and planning, and
- » other kinds of management and leadership skills.

The listed recommendations and competencies have no claim to completeness. They form the basis for further discussions on the topic. In concrete terms, they shall help to develop courses which strengthen the competencies of civil society actors to make co-creation possible and sensible. The goal is to increase the number of processes which generate a transformative potential for societies. That is what co-creation is about: this transformative potential to create “something new” in a “third space” where equal representation is possible.



BESTANDSAUFNAHME

Macht-  
Befugnisse  
abstecken



KONZEPTION

Agenda zusammen  
erstellen

# INITIATIVE

Initiative muss von beiden  
Seiten ausgehen können  
in einem kontinuierlichen  
Prozess

Verwaltung + Praxis  
kann Initiative  
einreichen

Praxis hat  
Lösungsvorschläge  
die Politik / Verwaltung  
nicht hat

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Agenda zusammen erstellen

Axis  $\triangle$  <sup>Bülik</sup> Verwaltung

GEMEINSAME ZIELERARBEITUNG

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Akteure ins Ges  
(nicht)



bezahlter Stammtisch  
zu Arbeitszeiten

# TRANSFER

Bsp. NRW:  
Kommunale Gesamtkonzepte  
/ Foren

Austausch muss  
dauerhaft / nicht projekt=  
sein <sup>beschränkt</sup>

ReferentInnen für  
kulturelle Bildung in  
versch. Resorts

bezahlter Stammtisch  
zu Arbeitszeiten

AkteurInnen kommen  
ins Gespräch  
(nicht zweckgerichtet)

## WISSENSTRANSFER

AUSTAUSCH DER  
"EXPERT\*INNEN"  
(Think tank)

GRUNDBEDINGUNG

Temp.  
angleichen

TÜREN ÖFFNEN

ANERKENNUNG  
DER  
UNTERSCHIEDE  
(Systeme, Perspektiven,

GENEINSAME  
ENTSCHEIDUNGEN

Offenheit für  
INITIATIVEN

Zusammenarbeit auf  
AUGENHÖHE

(Finale.  
Augenhöhe

Wertschätzender  
Umgang

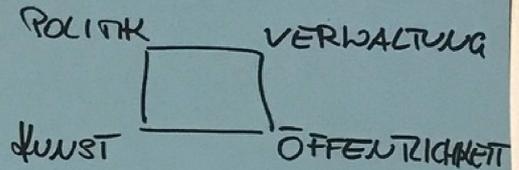
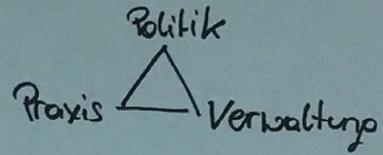
KLÜBELFREIE  
OFFENE  
ENTSCHEIDUNGSPROZESSE

VERSTÄNDIGUNG  
über  
FUNKTIONSWEISEN

TRANSPARENTE  
SPIELREGELN

dialogisches Prinzip  
für beide Seiten  
verpflichtend

# GRUNDBEDINGUNG



K13 - Experte (u. AB)  
in Behörde

Anerkennung der KuBi  
Künste als system-  
relevant

Zielgruppe muss  
einbezogen werden

KünstlerInnen  
brauchen Stimmen

Verschränkung  
Kunstförderung &  
kulturelle Bildung?!

