

ARTS

EQUAL



Ensuring access to art and culture for all children

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Eeva Anttila
University of the Arts Helsinki



Starting point

The right to culture and arts is widely recognized in international human rights agreements. In these treaties, arts and culture are mentioned as concepts of intrinsic value. They are perceived as phenomena of human life that are vital to civilization and democracy.

What play and the free expansion of the imaginative capacities contribute to human life is not merely instrumental but partly constitutive of a worthwhile human life.
(Nussbaum 2011, 36)

Human experience vs. "benefits"

- Human experience and development takes place at multiple levels at the same time.
- Art works at multiple levels, and thus, direct and indirect effects intertwine.

The problem

- Social, material, and cultural resources are transferred from one generation to the next
- Thus, access to arts and culture is unequal
- Inequality regarding arts and cultural education persists in schools

The Arts as Public Service: Strategic Steps towards Equality

*What if the arts were understood more widely
as a public service with equality as the starting
point?*

Framing questions for ArtsEqual research initiative

- *What if* the arts were understood more widely as a public service with equality as the starting point?
- *What if* equality is the starting point, instead the end point, for arts education?
- *What if* each pupil is considered gifted, talented and capable?
- *What if* every form of talent is equally valued?

Six research teams

1. Arts@School
2. Arts Education for All
3. Arts in Health, Welfare and Care
4. Socially Responsible Arts Institutions and Artists
5. Impacts on the Arts on Equality and Well-being
6. Visions – Systemic Analysis and Policy Recommendations

Arts@School -team

- focuses on questions related to inclusion, participation and equality from the viewpoint of arts education.
- looks for ways to foster every student's possibility to participate in arts education and learn through the arts in support for his/her learning, school engagement, and well-being.

artsequal.fi

An interdisciplinary research team with a common focus

- Specialists in arts education and related fields who are interested in *equality and difference* as foundational elements of education
- We ask, could understanding, tolerating, celebrating and *performing difference*, instead of erasing it, lead towards greater understanding of diversity and thus, creating and sustaining diverse communities, and democracy

For finding solutions...

- The team, in collaboration with the school community, have designed several pedagogical interventions that aim at developing teaching practices both in and through the arts
- We investigate how these multimodal, “arts-infused”, participatory pedagogical approaches may provide learning opportunities for all, through, e.g. embodied encounters where different groups interact
- The team also writes policy recommendations

Arts and cultural education at schools

A policy brief

Numerous studies have shown that arts and cultural education strengthens the cultural capital of children and young people, and supports their capacities to actively participate in society.

Based on this premise, comprehensive schools should be considered as Finland's largest cultural centers, where high-quality, diverse arts and cultural education is equally available to all.

Comprehensive school: Finland's largest cultural center

Where

- cross-disciplinary arts education is an integral part of the school
- arts and culture are offered through extracurricular activities
- the effects of the arts and culture reach all pupils regardless of age, gender, residence or socio-economic background
- the pupils encounter and experience all forms of art, cultural inclusion and agency, while building a natural relationship to the local actors in the field of the arts and culture
- all pupils can express their own individuality and develop their personal potential

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