Beyond the Participatory Project

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Beyond the Participatory Project

Practices of Organising, Planning and Doing Participation in Museums

Inge Zwart

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Abstract
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This thesis investigates practices that constitute participation in museums, building on information studies' tradition of exploring work of professionals in memory institutions. In an effort to democratise, memory institutions have been increasingly interested in working with external stakeholders and audiences through various collaborative, participatory and engagement projects. Scholarship on this type of work in museums largely focuses on if and how specific participatory goals are best achieved in projects. Instead, the aim of this study is to understand how participation is organisationally situated, maintained and done in museums.

The thesis is based on a multi-sited ethnographic investigation set in two Northern European museums: Fisksätra Museum in Sweden and Museum Europäischer Kulturen in Germany. By describing and analysing practices of practitioners in preparation of, throughout and in-between different participatory projects in these two museums, the thesis advances our understanding of the work of doing participation.

Museum practitioners work with and around internal and external systems through repeated and continuing practices that create and maintain both social and financial resources for participation. Participatory projects are planned in negotiation with socio-material structures of the museum organisation, as well as individual interpretations of participatory goals. During projects, practitioners engage participants in practices of making and sharing, by framing the project through explaining, organising meetings and project management, and reflecting on this work.

The findings suggest practices of participation in museums can be understood as maintenance work. This work is contextually bound by the museum organisation and requires structural support. Practitioners and participants also engage in emotion work, including emotion and affective labour, which can benefit interaction with cultural heritage but also problematises the frequent affective quality of work shared with external audiences. Based on the findings, participation is proposed to constitute of practices which configure material, people and systems in and between three contexts: the organisation, moment(s) of interaction, and the museum's institutional and local context. By understanding participation as a practice-based infrastructure, this study proposes future research and practice to consider participatory goals as pragmatically realised and negotiated, in further contexts than projects alone.

Keywords: Participation, Memory institutions, Museum studies, Museum practice, Work practices, Organisational ethnography, Practice theory, Information studies, Democratisation

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Abbreviations

ALM	Archives, libraries and museums
FM	Fisksätra Museum
ICOM	International Council of Museums
MEK	*Museum Europäischer Kulturen* Museum of European Cultures
POEM	POEM European Training Network on participatory memory practices research project
RAÄ	*Riksantikvarieämbete* Swedish National Heritage Board
SMB	*Staatliche Museen zu Berlin* National Museums in Berlin
SPK	*Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz* Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation

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Figure 1: Photograph published with permission from MEK. © Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Museum Europäischer Kulturen / Christian Krug.

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1 Introduction

The museum is dead. Long live the museum!

In 2022, the International Council of Museums (ICOM) approved a new definition of the museum with 92% of the votes of assembled members. The definition reads:

> A museum is a not-for-profit, permanent institution in the service of society that researches, collects, conserves, interprets and exhibits tangible and intangible heritage. Open to the public, **accessible and inclusive**, museums **foster diversity and sustainability**. They operate and communicate **ethically, professionally and with the participation of communities**, offering varied experiences for education, enjoyment, **reflection and knowledge sharing**. (ICOM, 2022b)

The highlighted words were added to the previously existing definition that was approved in 2007. These additions were heavily debated by the international museum community of practitioners and scholars with a stake in museums around the world. A proposal for a new definition that had been in the making for over a year was rejected in 2019 and followed by critique about that initial process. In response, ICOM presented an elaborate methodology in 2020, which allowed for members to make proposals for amendments which would be systematically summarised and considered (ICOM, 2020). Eventually, this process led to the definition that was approved in 2022 (ICOM, 2022a).

The additions were not uncontroversial attributions to the idea of a museum and reflect values that have been attributed to the institution in scholarly debates and reflections of practitioners since the late 20th century. This debate is captured in the discourse of new museology and critical heritage studies (e.g. Black, 2012; Harrison, 2013; Weil, 1990). This discourse and the new museum definition largely focus on the social responsibilities of the institution, drawing definitions out of how museums act in society, focusing on their functions, and secondarily on their collections (Brown and Mairesse, 2018). Brown and Mareisse traced the history of previous ICOM discussions about museum definitions, and noticed how the museum's position in and relation to society has been increasingly important, in Latin-American and European contexts. They point out that discussions about museums' social

role came at moments of significant crises: the financial crisis in 2007-2008, the oil crisis in the 1970s, and began as early as the 1930s in Europe. At the time of writing, the European continent has found and finds itself, again, in multiple crises: the ongoing climate crisis, war in Ukraine, and the COVID-19 pandemic, are impacting societies and individuals in significant ways –for many in Europe, for the first time in their lives. Simultaneously, political climates have been changing, allowing for stronger influence and mainstreaming of far-right movements, with such political parties elected into office in countries from Hungary and Poland to Italy, and gaining significant political power in Sweden. This context further highlights the additions to the museum definition as particularly focused on the institutions' relation to society. Within these changing political climates and global crises, it can be read as a political statement to mark the museum, from 2022 onwards, as being 'accessible and inclusive' to all people. Now, the museum acts in society as it fosters 'diversity and sustainability' and offers 'experiences for […] reflection and knowledge sharing.' Furthermore, the museum does this in a certain way, namely: 'ethically, professionally and with the participation of communities' (ICOM, 2022b). Long live the (new) museum!

What does this definition change on the ground? The whole process at ICOM mostly suggests how describing the idea of an institution such as a museum is complicated and that people care about how a museum is defined, perceived and described. But the museum cannot be declared new from one day to the next. Introducing a new museum definition is unlikely to change what happens in museums. Rather, the everyday work of museum staff determines the meaning of a museum.

This research project starts from the conviction that practitioners' day-to-day work is an important key to understanding what the museum is and does in society. From this starting point, the empirical study centres around how working 'with the participation of communities,' as ICOM (2022b) describes it, takes shape in two museums: Fisksätra Museum in Nacka, Sweden and the Museum Europäischer Kulturen (MEK) in Berlin, Germany. It was considered relevant to study the work of participation in these two museums, which are very different from each other but have both been doing participatory projects for over a decade. In the coming sections, the study is first situated in a museum and information studies context and in relation to contemporary debates about museum participation. Then, a research gap to be filled by this study is identified and the specific aims, research questions and perspectives guiding the study are introduced. To further delineate the study, I explain the research scope, including limitations and contributions. The introduction ends with an overview of the structure of the rest of the book.

Background

This study centres around two museums that 'do' participation. Participation in museums, also referred to as participatory museum practices or participatory projects, is used to describe manifold methods and activities through which a museum interacts with stakeholders such as visitors, participants, collaborators, or members of communities whose objects are part of museum collections. Such methods are increasingly popular as practice in museums, and as a topic of study in scholarly communities. Surveys of libraries, museums and archives in Northern European countries suggest that related terms such as 'social engagement' or user-centred practices are growing more common in all three institutions (Andresen et al., 2020; Audunson et al., 2019; Huvila, 2016). With this increase in practice also came studies into its purpose, value or promise, in museum studies (e.g. Black, 2018; Simon, 2010) and related fields such as: participatory design, highlighting the design process (e.g. Pierroux et al., 2020); media and communication studies, focusing on audience participation and participatory culture (e.g. Carpentier, 2016; Eriksson et al., 2019); and information studies, bringing together participatory practices in museums, libraries and archives (e.g. Huvila, 2008a, 2015; Jansson, 2018, 2020).

The increased interest in participation in museums can be understood to stand both in relation to a growing movement of attention to citizen participation in various aspects of society, and a specific institutional critique about museums from the late 20th century onwards. Manifestos for or actual implementations of deliberative democratic councils have been suggested as a way to include civil society more actively in political decision-making (Pateman, 2012; Rovers, 2022), something that has even been called a 'participatory turn' in the EU political landscape (Saurugger, 2010). Social media is also understood within the context of a 'participatory culture' (Jenkins, 2009). Furthermore, people are included in design processes for solutions to all sorts of societal problems, ranging from urban planning (Hanzl, 2007), to healthcare (Thompson, 2007), to international development (Hickey, 2004). In the museum sphere, this interest in active involvement of citizens focused largely on increased opportunities for people to have a say about how (their) culture is represented and how it stands in conversation with the institution. This approach was fuelled by an institutional critique that emerged in the 1960s against exclusive museum and art practices, thereby echoing the overarching calls for more citizen participation throughout all aspects of society. This can be understood to have led to a 'new museology', a collection of theories which included a focus on objects as contextual, narratives in exhibitions, and highlighting people and ideas rather than objects (Hooper-Greenhill, 2000; McCall and Gray, 2014; Ross, 2015; Weil, 1990), thereby setting up the museum as an instrument to inspire social change.

How calls for social change, citizen participation and new museology should affect the museum institution exactly, however, remains subject to much debate. As a result, museum participation has grown to include a diverging range of practices. Throughout the years, practitioners and scholars have been discussing what should be defined as participation in museums. For some authors, the engagement of audiences counts as participation (Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt and Runnel, 2018; Simon, 2010), or they specify it as 'active engagement', where participants make choices and provide input in museum spaces (Lotina, 2016). For others, community engagement is the preferred term, which typically centres on the participation of more narrowly defined groups of people which are related because of a specific interest, geographic relation or social status. This can regard source communities, such as indigenous communities whose objects are displayed by a museum (Onciul, 2018) but also includes a wider spectrum of groups of people, for example people who use mental health services (Morse, 2022) or 'flight migrants' (Boersma, 2022). In addition to participation in workshops or events in-person, many museums are also concerned with creating participatory experiences in their digital environments (e.g. Galani et al., 2019; Jansson, 2022; Ross, 2018). Furthermore, a large group of researchers and practitioners are specifically concerned with co-creation or co-production of exhibitions, where participants take an important role in the production of exhibitions in the museum (Mygind et al., 2015). In this study, participation is considered the overarching concept that includes all these terms and practices, but scholars have been suggesting and working with conflicting models and names to try and define different categories of participation (e.g. Arnstein, 1969; Carpentier, 2011b; Simon, 2010).

This focus on museums to take an active role in society through participatory projects forms the background for this study. Another context for this research comes from its institutional setting and my positionality. The POEM European Training Network on participatory memory practices research project (POEM) was developed in order to study and create infrastructures, methods and digital tools of and for participatory memory practices that foster social inclusion, sponsored through an EU Horizon 2020 grant.[2] This PhD thesis was funded through this grant, written as one of thirteen studies within POEM, and conducted as a project in Information Studies at Uppsala University. A commitment to social inclusion and social justice issues in relation to memory practices drew me to this research project. My experiences working as a museum educator in a cultural heritage museum in the Netherlands and on public history projects regarding difficult histories further informed me in my approach and goal to contribute to sustainable, meaningful and worthwhile practices of participation in museums and beyond.

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Research gap

Research on participation in museums is largely project-based and often normative: this means that good or bad participatory projects are identified, described, and criticised. This approach is perpetuated by both museum practice and scholarship. Museums largely approach participation on a project-by-project basis (Lynch, 2011b; McSweeney and Kavanagh, 2016), instigated by short-term project-based funding. As such, scholars focus on the results, outcomes and reflections from such projects, by weighing them against ideas and motivations for participation that were identified either by practitioners or by the scholars themselves. This has led to important critical studies of museum participation about the benefits and pitfalls of different methods, participants' choice and control (Lynch, 2011b), decision-making processes (Lynch and Alberti, 2010), and participants' motivations and results (Boersma, 2022; Runnel et al., 2014), in specific projects. At the same time, authors criticise museums for bolted-on, one-off, project-based participation, suggesting that a more integrated approach to participation in museum organisations can make it a more sustainable and meaningful practice (Henry, 2016; Lynch, 2011b; O'Neill and Hooper, 2019). However, scholarship simultaneously continues to largely produce knowledge to be implemented at project-level.[3] In turn, there is much work being done with a focus on methods and definitions of participation, but there remains a lack of understanding of how projects come to be organisationally and what happens outside of the start and end of projects that might contribute to work with participants and the connected goals such as democratisation of the museum.

The few studies that do approach museum participation from an organisational focus suggest that it has an impact on work in museums. It has been reportedly difficult to implement policies representing new-museological values (McCall and Gray, 2014). Furthermore, the roles of museums' practitioners might change: where a curator used to draw on expertise regarding a specific topic, they might now be expected to facilitate co-creating processes to make exhibits and extensively collaborate with source communities (Golding and Modest, 2013b). In turn, museum professionals are encouraged to develop new skills through training, that better fit the work of participatory projects (Lankes et al., 2015; White, 2016), but studies also report how some professionals experience a 'loss of control' (Coghlan, 2018; Kershaw et al., 2018; Lynch, 2011b; Lynch and Alberti, 2010; Tatsi, 2011). At the same time, the research that critically analyses participatory projects puts emphasis on museum practitioners' responsibility to improve projects by countering what Lynch (2011b) refers to as 'empowerment-lite' and ensuring real decision-making power for

[3] The resulting problem, a 'counter-hegemonic cycle', is discussed well by Helen Graham (2012)

participants, for example through reflecting on their work (Boersma, 2022; Lynch 2011a; Lynch and Alberti, 2010). Studies focused on community engagement facilitators, however, suggest that they can experience a lack of organisational support for their work with participants (Morse, 2021; Munro, 2014). This adds further urgency to take seriously all the work that goes into participation as a professional assignment. Until now, the demands on and skills of professionals have been gestured to, but the ways in which practitioners embrace, integrate or work around what ICOM (2022b) called working 'with the participation of communities' in their day-to-day has only been investigated to a limited extent.

Finally, Nuala Morse's research suggests that institutional context can also impact participatory projects, by addressing differences in attitudes towards participatory practices between facilitators and museum management, and the different accountabilities coming with participation (Morse, 2018, 2021). However, what exactly constitutes this institutional context has only been investigated to a small extent. With scholars like Boersma (2022) and Morse (2021) as recent exceptions, most approach the institution or organisation as a background or context for a participatory project only, and there remains much to learn about the constitutive role of the museum organisation in impacting how participation takes shape.

Research aim, perspectives and questions

The research gap identified constitutes the problem that scholarship continuously produces project-based knowledge about participation, but simultaneously suggests that more integrated practices can benefit participatory goals. It furthermore includes the reported difficulties for practitioners and museums in dealing with changing roles and responsibilities, along with a lack of understanding about the organisational tasks and context of participation in museums. Taken together, this makes an ethnographic investigation into the organisational work of participation useful. As such, the focus of this thesis lies on participation in museums in practice, both across different projects and outside of specific project boundaries, to study participation 'beyond the participatory project', as the title suggests.

The aim of this thesis is to explore practices that contribute to participatory projects to understand how participation is organisationally situated, maintained and done in museums. The study analyses practices of practitioners and, to a lesser extent, participants throughout and in-between different museum projects and ultimately produces alternatives to the project view of participation in scholarship and practice. At the end, a proposal is made to consider participation as a practice-based infrastructure in which elements and stakes coming from the organisational setting, moments of

interaction, and social context of the museum are brought together through practice.

In order to achieve the study's aim, the following central research question has been formulated: how do museums 'do' participation?

The overarching research question has been divided into four sub-questions:

I. What practices do museum practitioners engage in when preparing for or carrying out participation in their museum?
II. What practices do participants engage in when being part of participatory projects in museums?
III. What organisational structures inform these practices and how?
IV. How are social goals connected to participation present in, pursued, or reached through these practices?

By asking how participation is *done*, this study applies a practice theory lens (Nicolini, 2012). It aims to contribute to a growing understanding about museums and memory institutions through a focus on practices (e.g. Macdonald, 2022; Mucha, 2022). This warrants a qualitative research study, using ethnographic methods. The empirical study centres practice in two European museums that have a longstanding tradition of doing participation: Fisksätra Museum and the Museum Europäischer Kulturen (MEK). As professionals' practices are central, the museums are approached from an organisational perspective (Morse et al., 2018). Ultimately, concepts of maintenance (Denis et al., 2016), emotion work (Hardt, 1999; Hochschild, 2012) and infrastructure (Bowker and Star, 1998), as developed and investigated within information studies, are used to discuss alternatives to the project-centric discourse and practice of participation. The study is situated within the scholarship of information studies, which investigates memory institutions' professional practice, and engages with the extensive literature about participation as developed in museum studies.

The participatory projects in the MEK and Fisksätra Museum discussed in this study can be summarised as on-site, in-person collaboration with or activation of external stakeholders with a focus on producing material or ephemeral outcomes that are considered meaningful from the perspective of the museum, participants, and/or audiences. This is a purposefully broad definition of participation and is based on the work both museums have been doing for over a decade. Examples of these projects include, amongst other things, exhibitions of material created by and/or with stories of participants; art interventions in permanent exhibitions; workshop series for filmmaking, language, and print-making; public events co-organised with various stakeholder groups; exhibitions including participants' narratives based on interviews; workshops through which people are invited to reflect on collections; and audience engagement activities within an exhibition.

Research scope

This research is based on ethnographic fieldwork conducted between 2019 and 2021. As such, the scope of the study is defined by time and place, most specifically the COVID-19 pandemic. It draws on experiences of only a few people, in a few museums, in a specific part of the world. The geographic framing is also found in the museum studies literature this study refers to and builds on, which is mainly based on European and Anglophone cases and perspectives. Furthermore, the specific time period in which this research was conducted has to be taken into consideration. One-and-a-half years into the start of the study in 2018, the COVID-19 pandemic began to affect large parts of the world, for several years. It introduced ongoing uncertainty and anticipation in the museums as well as into my research. The original research plan changed to engage with two instead of the originally planned three museum institutions. Furthermore, the study should be read within this timeframe: the activities and funding in Fisksätra Museum as described in this study were greatly affected by the conditions of the pandemic, as was the fieldwork conducted in that time. The fieldwork at the MEK was finalised by the end of 2019, and this data thus reflects a period in the museum before the pandemic.

As this is a study about the practices of participation, and centres around the organisational aspects of museum projects, I have been informed by the experiences of museum practitioners, and contextualise all practices within the museum organisation. The viewpoint of participants has been included, but to a lesser extent. This means that the ethnography stays close to the museum practice of participation, but is less extensive in its descriptions of participants' experiences of projects. It describes the participants' practices from the viewpoint of the museum, in order to emphasise how their experiences and practices are organisationally framed.

Taking these limitations into consideration, the research's contribution lies in its combination of information studies perspectives with critical museum and heritage studies to deepen our understanding of work and participation in memory institutions, as well as the practices of participation, while also bringing a theoretically grounded approach to studying museum participation. The current understanding of work and participation in memory institutions will be advanced through an empirically rich examination of participation that includes planning and other organisational practices strongly grounded in their respective contexts. Such an approach can also shed further light on the observed perspectives on and uses of participation methods in memory institutions more generally (Andresen et al., 2020; Audunson et al., 2019). The 'beyond the participatory project' approach to studying participation in museums that I refer to in my title, can contribute to research about the other memory institutions, archives and libraries, as well. In the field of critical museum and heritage studies, this study will furthermore contribute to the

growing corpus of research drawing on social-material theories (Bennett, 2015; Macdonald, 2009, 2022; Morgan, 2018; Dominguez Rubio, 2020). Here, the contribution lies in the investigation of an additional museum practice that has only been ethnographically studied and theorised to a limited extent, and the proposition that this theoretical perspective within museum and heritage studies can be enriched by including insights from maintenance studies and infrastructure studies.

As an ethnographic study, the thesis includes thick description of museum practice that brings together organisational, participants' and facilitating practices. In doing so, the study also aims to deepen the practical understanding of participation in museums. Through the in-depth descriptions, the study can clarify how participatory projects develop organisation-wide. With this insight, practitioners that hope to start working or already work 'with the participation of communities,' might use the research findings to point at places where their practices can be elaborated on or better integrated. They might also want to use it to advocate for the whole range of their work to be taken more seriously and sufficiently supported in their respective institutions.

Finally, practitioners and researchers might enrich their respective practice with the theoretically and practically grounded vocabulary introduced at the end of this study. I propose participation as a practice-based infrastructure, as a way to highlight how materials, structure and actors embedded in three contexts are brought together through practice and constitute participation: the organisational context, moments of interaction between museum staff and participants, and the broader social context of museums. For research, the term contributes to the theoretical depth and understanding of democratisation of museums through participation, and what work contributes to those efforts. This can forward scholarship about participation in museums to go beyond the practical investigations of project-based methods and processes, to understand participation as it is created contextually. For practice, this vocabulary can help practitioners to look at how conflicting goals or meanings might arise out of the three contexts, as well as to consider how participation can be strengthened outside of a project timeline, or 'beyond the participatory project'.

Outline of the thesis

The thesis is built up as follows. In the next chapter, literature about participation and work in museums will be discussed, paying particular attention to perspectives from critical heritage and museum studies and information studies. The literature review starts with an overview of the practices, promises and problems of participation in museums that have come out of museum studies scholarship. Participation in museums is contextualised

by discussing the social goals of museums connected to it. Then, different methods and categories proposed to define participation are introduced. Finally, literature that tells us something about the organisational and professional element of participation in museums and more widely is reviewed, elaborating on the scope of the literature by using information studies, participatory design and public governance research.

Chapters 3 and 4 introduce the methodology of this study. Chapter 3 presents the theoretical framework. Drawing on Nicolini (2012), the study takes a practice approach to study participation, introducing two main moves in this study: 'zooming in' and 'zooming out' on practice. Furthermore, I approach museums as both an organisation and institution, drawing on organisational and neo-institutional theory. The theoretical underpinnings for terms that are used in the discussion and conclusion are also introduced, drawing on work developed within Science and Technology Studies (STS), as greatly informing information studies scholarship. This includes a discussion of infrastructure studies, maintenance, and emotion work, and the approaches taken to these respective terms in this study. The fourth chapter describes the research design by first going over the methods for data generation and analysis. The use of ethnographic methods and multi-sited ethnography in this study are related and compared to others' applications. Argumentation for and explanation of the sites, duration and intensity of the ethnographic fieldwork is given, as well as the research procedures for data collection, management and analysis. The ethics, limitations, and trustworthiness of the study are discussed.

Chapter 5 introduces the two sites of ethnography in this study: the Museum Europäischer Kulturen (MEK) and Fisksätra Museum. Here, the ethnography starts. I give a brief overview of the museums' organisation, programmes and exhibitions to contextualise their relationship to participatory practices, and outline the data generated at the site. For each museum I provide a list of projects that will be discussed throughout the dissertation. Chapters 6 to 9 present the analysis of this study by 'zooming in' on the various practices through which participation is done. All four chapters include analysis that is based on the material generated at both Fisksätra Museum and the MEK, and the practices are divided into three moments. Chapter 6 discusses practices through which conditions for participation are created in the museums. These include two main categories: creating social conditions through initiating and sustaining contacts with various people and groups, and material conditions through methods of financing participation and other work at the museum. Chapter 7 concerns planning, which is introduced as a practice of taking specific circumstances on which to base decisions, and the chapter analyses how practitioners shape projects into the structures of the museum organisation and plan for a project to be meaningful to the museum and participant. Chapters 8 and 9 analyse practices as they occur in the same moment: when participants are partaking in a project or event. The primary

focus of analysis is one particular project at Fisksätra Museum, a three-week filmmaking workshop with eight teenagers. The practices are further defined through the analysis of other empirical data generated in both museums. Chapter 8 focuses on the practitioners in the moment of meeting and collaborating with participants and suggests three practices that they engage in: explaining, organising and reflecting. Chapter 9 discusses the same moment but centres on participants' practices of making and sharing.

Then, 'zooming out' on practice happens through the discussion presented in Chapter 10, in which the research questions will be discussed and elaborated upon. The findings are discussed as they relate to practitioners' work tasks, maintenance work, and emotion work. Furthermore, initial suggestions are made about how these findings could be interpreted within practice, using information studies scholarship about knowledge management and elaborating on the understanding of transparency in museum studies. Finally, three dualities that shape how participatory goals become actualised are discussed.

The thesis finishes with Chapter 11, in which the main findings are summarised, the study is contextualised in relation to the methodological limitations, and a proposal is made to understand participation from a practice-based infrastructure perspective.

2 Museum Participation: Promises, Categories and Work

To further situate this study, this chapter discusses contemporary literature about participation in memory institutions, as produced within museum and heritage studies and information studies, and secondarily in fields much concerned with participation theory and practice, such as media and communication, public governance, and participatory design. The literature is presented in three themes that are important for this research. First, I discuss the 'promises' of participation. Here, I outline underlying goals that practitioners and scholars connect to participation in museums, to stress that participation is a value-laden concept connected to a variety of museum practices. I particularly dissect the different meanings of 'democratisation' connected to participation in museums. The second section moves away from primarily discussing participation as a concept and homes in on practice. The goal of this section is two-fold, to outline the different museum practices that are considered to be participatory and their related challenges, and to review how scholarship has attempted to study and categorise these practices. Third, I discuss literature from museum and information studies about museum professionals and include research about working with citizen participation outside of these fields. This section outlines the current state of the art when it comes to working with participation in museum organisations and secondarily outside of the memory institution.

Promises of participation

Participation is a value-laden concept and often approached normatively (Carpentier, 2016), meaning, to some, there are good and bad approaches to participation. Describing participation in museums, is never about 'just' a museum practice. Practitioners and scholars relate it to democratic theories (Pateman, 1970; Carpentier, 2011b), and present it as a potential answer to problems of the museum institution pinpointed by scholars, artists, activists, and practitioners from the sixties onwards. Their 'institutional critique' focused on institutions involved in valuating art and the production of art, such as museums, art academies, and galleries (Garrido Castellano, 2018). A movement first led by artists (Raunig and Ray, 2009), and then furthered by

social and cultural theorists like Bourdieu who critiqued the museum as a bourgeois public sphere (Bourdieu et al., 1997). This period has continued throughout different phases (Raunig, 2009), leading to what Andrea Fraser has called the 'institutionalisation of institutional critique', or the eventual normalisation of this critique seen now in the exhibiting of artworks made as critique against museums (Fraser, 2005).

These various critical voices can be considered to have contributed to, or to be part of, a more common reflective practice in museums and reflections of museums in academic settings in the form of critical museology (Shelton, 2013), or more broadly as critical heritage studies (Harrison, 2013). One major contribution to this trend was Paul Vergo's edited volume 'The New Museology' in which the role of museums in society was examined (Vergo, 1989). Now mostly referring to a shift in philosophy about museums, new museology has been described as signalling a new direction in thinking about museums (MacDonald, 2011a, p. 2).[4] The philosophies embedded within new museology have been summarised as departing from focusing on objects to centring people and ideas (Anderson, 2004; Black, 2012; Hooper-Greenhill, 2000; McCall and Gray, 2014; Ross, 2015; Weil, 1990), and thereby framing the museum as an instrument to aspire social change (Boast, 2011, p. 58). One underlying element of the increase in participation, focus on community and other new-museological influence in museum practice, is the particular economic circumstances through which these practices came up, especially in the case of the UK (Morse 2021). The increase of participation in museum practice, has been argued to be connected to a decline of funding for memory institutions and a subsequent necessity for museums to prove relevance to public governance and publics (Stam, 1993; Crooke, 2011; Robinson, 2020).

Two ideas coming from the shift in thinking about museums provided a ground for instigating participatory practices in museums and continue to lie at the heart of the framing of participation in museums today. The first one can be summarised as a conviction that museums should be concerned with democratic practices and understood as political, critical, and social institutions. Second, new understandings of learning, and the educational and entertaining value of museums introduced opportunities and needs for new audiences, museum education and audience engagement practices.

In the following sections these two underlying ideas for participation will be dissected. This dissection will show small discrepancies between the promises connected to participation, and the connected issues critical scholars focus on when reviewing participatory projects from those specific viewpoints. Most importantly, however, I want to point out the general significance of these bigger ideological goals for how participation is studied and practiced.

[4] Some argue that this is not so much a shift, but rather a continuation in reflecting on museum institutions (Hein, 2006, p. 179), or that it should be called differently (Shelton, 2013)

The museum and democracy

Museum institutions have been linked to democratic processes and values when they were studied as information provider (Audunson, 1999; Henningsen et al., 2020), public institution (Bennett, 1995), part of nation-building through authorising cultural heritage (Assmann, 2010), or as educator (Hein, 2016). These perspectives provided both critical reflections, for example on how public institutions operate within a logic of 'governmentality' (Beel, 2017; Bennett, 1995), as well as grounds for investigating the museum's potential role and responsibility in democratic societies (Assmann, 2010; Henningsen et al., 2020). In the critical museological tradition, which 'interrogates' the practices, processes and logics underlying and perpetuated by museum and heritage sites (Shelton, 2013, p. 8), the reality of the museum as a democratic institution, has been turned into a continuous investigation of the ways in which museums might better fulfil a democratic mission whether it relates to activism (Janes and Sandell, 2019), representation (Sandell, 2003), or social cohesion (Bayer et al., 2017).

In relation to participation, democracy is a crucial concept used by scholars and practitioners to motivate and interpret different practices. It is not uncommon for scholars to describe participation as a process of 'democratisation' (Coombes and Phillips, 2020; Hetland et al., 2020) or 'democratising' (Coghlan, 2018), without explicitly explaining *what* is democratised. When reviewing such work in conjunction with museological literature, however, three interpretations of the museum-democracy relation can be highlighted as providing different argumentation for participation. First, the museum has been considered a place for civic practices like creating dialogue and debate amongst different people (Bennett, 2005). This entails the institution might fulfil a role in providing information and education about current issues (Cameron, 2019; Henningsen et al., 2020), and in transmitting democratic values (Hein, 1998). In my understanding, scholars following this line of argumentation describe participatory methods as a tool for people to engage in *processes of democracy*. The second argumentation builds on the idea that museums are places where communities can be represented and formed through the display of objects, stories and heritage (Assmann, 2010; Douglas, 2017; Macdonald, 1998). Here, participation involves *democratisation processes* of museum structures, where authority and authorship (Adair et al., 2011), and processes of meaning-making (Black, 2018) and decision-making (Carpentier, 2011b) are ultimately shared with citizens. The third argumentation can be found within what Shelton (2013) termed critical museology, where museums are imagined, challenged, or considered advocates for social change (Abram, 2020; Chipangura and Mataga, 2021; Chynoweth et al., 2021). This includes an activist understanding and imagining of the museum (Harper and Hendrick, 2017; Janes and Sandell, 2019), in which the museum is an *actor in democracy* and

participation methods are - heavily critiqued and scrutinised - tools to enact these different social justice missions. In the next three sections, these approaches to democracy, participation and museums are further discussed. The purpose is not to argue that participatory projects operate following either of these categories only, but to highlight the multi-layered motivation for and meaning awarded to participation in museums in scholarship and practice.

Museums advancing processes of democracy and democratic values

The idea that museums have a role to play in building citizenship has been core to the understanding of the institution's relevance over the course of history (Bennett, 1995). One way that this role of advancing citizenship has been theorised is by connecting the institution to the idea of the public sphere (e.g. Audunson et al., 2019; Barrett, 2012; Hein, 2006). Hilde Hein, in her re-imagination of the museum as 'public art', posited that museums focus on contextually relevant ideas and topics that could draw people 'into dialogue with themselves and each other', and thereby harnessed the social responsibilities of the institution (Hein, 2006, p. 151). These ideas of dialogue and debate in the museum go back to Habermas' proposition of the 'public sphere' (Habermas, 1993). One major contribution to this focus on the role of museums in creating, maintaining or educating a public sphere came from Jennifer Barrett (2012). She investigated this notion by tracing how museums awarded a space for debate for certain members of society only, one of Habermas' original critiques embedded in his investigation of a public sphere. Barrett showed how this then became a part of institutional critique, against elitism found in museums. She included a call for a re-imagination of what a museum as 'public sphere' could mean, which would allow for welcoming more people into this space and imagining the museum fulfilling a vital role in maintaining a public sphere. Museum theoretician Tony Bennett, however, appears sceptical of such conflation and argued that when one stays close to Habermas' original proposition and looks at museums historically, the institution never fulfilled Habermas's definition of a public sphere where 'through reasoned debate, a set of opinions is formed and brought to bear critically on the exercise of state authority' (Bennett, 2018, p. 182). Regardless of arguing whether or not museums historically contributed to a public sphere, it has remained a popular line of inquiry when it regards the function of museum in contemporary society, as becomes apparent from Vårheim and Skare's (2021) literature review, and the multiple studies conducted within information studies about this relation (Audunson et al., 2019, 2020).

Scholars build on the idea of the museum as a democratic space, whether or not they call it a public sphere, to make two arguments for participation. First, this space requires dynamic museum-visitor relationships, or dialogue, that some have interpreted as participation. For example, Noy (2017a, 2017b) reported on different exhibitions in which visitors were invited to contribute by writing and responding to questions posed by the museum in the exhibition

space. As such, participants can be engaged in conversation with the museum. Similarly, Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt and Runnel (2018) studied participatory communication methods in their analysis of different museum projects. They considered barriers from the museum and visitor's side in such instances, stressing that participatory methods can 'help the museum support democracy' and contribute to the making of cultural citizenship (Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt and Runnel, 2018, p. 145). The authors linked museums' activities to processes of democracy as self-expression and dialogue. Simultaneously, dialogue has been a rather blanket statement used to describe a general approach to introducing some democratic, shared, approaches to a variety of museum practices. For Arrigoni and Galani (2021), dialogical endeavours are especially centred on increasing reflective processes in visitors, as affective approaches to knowledge production in the museum. Schorch and Hakiwai (2014) reflected on the museum as public forum as a dialogue between western and indigenous knowledges, on a theoretical level. Marsden (2018) described a collaborative curatorial strategy, without clear argumentation or description of how this happens, as dialogical. Taken together, these applications of dialogue in museum contexts, allow for a broad and multifaceted interpretation of participatory practices, both reflected on by scholars or explicitly instigated by practitioners.

A second interpretation of participation within this promise of advancing democracy, regards museums or projects that explicitly deal with the topic of democracy (Cameron and Deslandes, 2011; Cameron, 2019; Coghlan, 2018; Sherman, 2014). Sherman (2014), for example, reported on an exhibition which involved engaging visitors in conversations with facilitators and other visitors about contemporary issues. As a researcher, she observed and partook in conversations, to finally argue that these bring in the public sphere in the museum. Results from another study, by Coghlan (2018), suggested that such conversations might even be continued at home after a museum visit. Coghlan analysed an Australian exhibition tackling democracy and activism that was build based on a large-scale survey, and included opportunities for visitors to 'share their view' about democracy (Coghlan, 2018, p. 799). Through conducting 140 interviews, the study indeed provides convincing evidence that the participatory experiences increased discussion and reflection about the political topics amongst visitors. Another Australian based scholar, Fiona Cameron also argued that museums might indeed have a pedagogic role to play in democratic processes. Cameron's single and co-authored visitor studies suggested that visitors see museums as places where information on contentious topics are provided (2006), and awarded a deliberative role of museums in climate change debates (Cameron and Deslandes, 2011; Cameron, 2019).

These two interpretations of participation to forward democratic processes, has been at the heart of the democratic theoretical origin of the participation concept. It is an argument based on the ideas presented by Pateman (1970)

about participation in democratic theory, translated into media and cultural fields by Carpentier (2011b). The general understanding here is that to achieve citizen participation in democracy, means that participatory methods have to be embedded in all elements of our (institutional) lives. In the museum perspective, at once, participation would be valuable in itself as it would allow for a democratisation of the institution, while it also could be a way for people to grow to learn how to participate in other elements of society and politics. As a result, going with Carpentier (2011b), participation in museums from this perspective should be about being part of a participatory process in which decision-making is shared amongst citizens and curators, which is found in methods of co-production and co-creation of museum exhibitions. The particularities of these methods, and the meaning of participatory processes is further discussed later in this review.

Taken together, then, the museum-based studies reviewed here put forward the idea that participation can be a way to fulfil a democratic mission of the museum by creating opportunities for people (as participants) to be in conversation with the museum and each other, thereby engaging them in *processes of democracy* like discussing social issues, creating opportunities for self-expression, and being in dialogue with the institution. At first sight this could be understood to be the interpretation of democratic theorists about the purpose of participation outside of the political system, however within Pateman and Carpentier's argumentation lies an understanding of participation as sharing power in decision-making. They, like scholars such as Lynch (2011a, 2013), Tøndborg (2013), and Robinson (2017) would probably contest the idea that dialogical approaches to museum practices alone or exchange in a public forum as described in this section, truly allows for democratisation of the museum through participatory practices. Their points of view will be discussed in the next two 'promises' of participation.

Democratisation of the museum

A second promise of participation that scholars have advocated for and critically analysed is the ability or potential to *democratise the museum.* Rather than providing opportunities for democratic processes by allowing visitors and participants to participate in conversations, debates and dialogue, participation in this regard has been envisioned as the way for the museum to fulfil its duties, by democratising, or sharing, their knowledge-making practices such as collecting and exhibiting (Black, 2018; Clifford, 1997; Golding and Modest, 2013b). I understand this argumentation to be related to conversations in anthropology about legacies of colonialism and the (ethnographic) museums' job of representing cultures (Kreps, 2011; MacDonald and Fyfe, 1996; Sturge, 2014; Yelvington et al., 2002). Thereby, this argumentation also builds on the idea that museums are involved in the formation of collective identities and knowledge through their displays (Macdonald, 2013; Moser, 2010).

Through reflective practice of practitioners and scholars alike, identity-building roles of museums have been studied and criticised and continue to attract considerable interest evidenced in three recent large EU-funded research projects in which participatory practices are researched. SWICH (Sharing a World of Inclusion, Creativity and Heritage), COHERE (Critical Heritages Performing & Representing Identities in Europe) and TRACES (Transmitting Contentious Cultural Heritages with the Arts) all investigated the museum's position in the building of, or at least engagement with a European citizenship.[5] SWICH, for example, '[has] questioned the role of ethnographic and world cultures museums in debates on how to define Europe, Europeans, and European heritage' (Modest, 2019, p.15). Importantly, the EU-funded research project this study has been part of, POEM (Participatory Memory Practices), also aspired to create 'concepts, strategies and media infrastructures for envisioning socially inclusive potential futures of European Societies through culture' (POEM, 2018).

The literature in which participation is interpreted as a way to democratise the museum, can be understood to build on three elements. First, studies and museums redefined (source) communities either as experts or equal partners to the museum. Second, this redefined relationship required the development of new processes of co-creating knowledge or co-producing exhibitions and displays. Third, these new processes required critical reflection.

First, going back to the critical discourses present in museums studies, one discussion revolves around the representation of 'others' in the spirit of Said (1978). This led to one important shift: toward a concern for communities, rather than audiences or visitors (Clifford, 1997; Crooke, 2011). Crooke traced how museums approached people as static, passive and controllable publics throughout the Victorian age, to be later interpreted as communities (2011). Crooke argued that this new understanding was advanced through external forces, both political and grassroots, as well as internal reflective practices. Ultimately, it introduced new topics for museum studies and practitioners. For example, museums' roles in identity creation (Black, 2011; Rounds, 2006), a re-interpretation of the relationship with source communities as a 'two-way process' (Brown and Peers, 2005), and a potential political nature of museum practice.

Prominent in this redefinition of museums' relations to communities was Clifford's oft-cited 'contact zone' chapter, in which he described a visit of a delegation of the indigenous Tlingit to the Portland Museum of Art (1997). He painted a picture of the 'ceremonial dimension' of this meeting, where different understandings of the Tlingit objects the museum stewarded came to light (ibid., p.189). Clifford used the case of this meeting to propose the museum as a 'contact zone', in which its 'organising structure as a collection

[5] See the project websites http://www.traces.polimi.it/ https://encc.eu/activities/projects/cohere https://www.swich-project.eu/

becomes an ongoing historical, political, moral relationship, a power-charged set of exchanges, of push and pull' (ibid., p.192). Central to Clifford's idea was the potential reciprocal nature of relationships with communities, which required museums and communities to find and cross their borders to meet in a contact zone. At the same time, Clifford contemplated the exploitative histories of various museum-community connections, and the potential conflicts in such meetings. In a critical response reflecting on Clifford's impact, Robin Boast observed that the contact zone proposal was followed by works with a 'general optimism about the nature of a new collaborative approach to representation in museums' (Boast, 2011, p.59). He highlighted the work of prominent museum scholars as Macdonald (1998) and Witcomb (2002), who grounded their argumentation for collaborative connections in anthropological discussions regarding material cultural, display, and issues of representation.

This argumentation for participation with a concern for communities, is thus frequently phrased within a critical perspective on the museum as an institution that had a crucial role to play in colonial projects around the world. As such, a significant number of studies about collaboration and participation focused on cases with museums that hold collections of indigenous peoples in North and South America and Oceania (e.g. Clifford, 1997; Kreps, 2003; Onciul, 2015; Phillips, 2006; Robinson, 2017; Silva and Gordon, 2013). Similarly, but even more diverse, museum projects within this type of argumentation are focused on various marginalised communities, such as refugees (Sergi, 2021; Skartveit and Goodnow, 2010; Boersma 2022), underserved youth (Boon et al., 2014), or psychiatric patients (Morse, 2021, 2022). Not only, however, as museums might hold collections important to various communities like electronic music enthusiasts (Boon et al., 2014), rock music enthusiasts (Knudsen, 2016), or telephone switchboards operators (Geoghegan et al., 2017). Central to the reflections on these collaborations has been to understand participants as experts (Pegno and Brindza, 2021; Taffe and Kelly, 2020), who can or should come to stand on equal footing with the museum in a type of 'contact' or 'engagement zone' (Clifford, 1997; Onciul, 2015). In some cases, this type of work has been presented as decolonising practice (Coombes and Phillips, 2020; Pierroux et al., 2020).

The second element of democratisation of the museum through participation with communities, regards the methods of such participation. For many, understanding communities as experts requires the museum to home in on that expertise by involving them in practices of exhibition making and curatorial practice (Golding and Modest, 2013b). Studies described situations where museums include several people in a consultation role for exhibition design (Boon et al., 2014; Fouseki, 2010; Lynch and Alberti, 2010) or building an exhibition with input from stakeholder or source community groups from the start (Knudsen, 2016; Smith and Iversen, 2014). Research has furthermore introduced various theoretical concepts to interpret this idea of

democratisation. Suggestions made include that participation is about 'shared authority', where participants are part of making cultural and interpretative decisions (e.g. Hutchison, 2013; Palaić and Rogelj Škavar, 2019), or that participation allows for 'polyvocality' in exhibition building, through which multiple voices and knowledges are understood as and presented as equal (Mason et al., 2013).

These types of collaborations have been discussed as particularly difficult and sensitive situations. Marzia Varutti (2013) suggested that shared practice requires the museum to not only reconsider who holds the 'expertise' but how each participant - including the museum - understands what knowledge is. From this perspective, the expertise necessary for appropriate representation should be found both in communities and practitioners involved. Similarly stressing the difficulty of this type of work, Taffe and Kelly (2020) reflected on a project where they designed a museum through a participatory design process together with the Kelabit community in Borneo, Malaysia. Their conclusions stressed the dynamism of 'exchanging expertise' in processes of shared decision-making 'from initial engagement, research, concept design and development' (Taffe and Kelly, 2020, p. 730). Earlier, Witcomb already stressed that working with communities requires an equalised approach, by naming the museum as a community as well, which then stands in discussion with other expertise-holders (Witcomb, 2002, p. 81). These authors all argued that the museum ought to not only reimagine the community as expert, but also that museum staff finds new understandings of themselves as professional. The impact of such a proposition on the work in museums and professional communities is discussed further in the third part of this literature review.

The third element of framing participation to democratise the museum, related to the complicated nature of equal collaboration with participating communities, is that these practices are critiqued. Criticism is both based on the difficult and unequal collaborations in practice and on theoretical contradictions. Bernadette Lynch has been instrumental in creating critical perspectives on participation in museums. Reporting on a group of museums who had worked with different communities through participatory projects, she has argued that these museums promised empowerment of communities but realised only 'empowerment-lite' (Lynch, 2011b). She has critiqued her own exhibition work, together with Alberti, focusing on how such false promises come to be through perpetuating prejudice and limiting the input of participants (Lynch and Alberti, 2010), and how projects maintain a 'centre/periphery relationship between museums and their partners' (Lynch, 2013, p. 10). Lynch found the cause of these problems in the execution of specific projects. Others, however, see the cause in underlying logics or philosophies of participation or heritage that contradict equal power-sharing (Graham, 2017; Morse, 2021; Robinson, 2017). Nuala Morse (2021) argued that plenty of museum participation is created from within a 'logic of

contribution', which frames such projects as a way for museums to gain new knowledge, economic benefit or public accountability and tends to discount a mutual beneficial potential of participation practices. Similarly, following Ashley (2014), Robinson (2017) posited that arguing for 'democratisation of culture' through participation usually means to allow for people to interact with pre-established and institutionalised forms of culture, rather than sharing agency with museums. Graham (2017) also found underlying contradictions within participation practice, but within ideas about heritage rather than democratisation. She pointed out that the political logic of heritage-decisions being made 'on behalf of' people, contradicts the political logic of participation (Graham, 2017, p. 76). At the same time, these authors still concluded that participation projects remain an important potential way to achieve democratisation of the museum institution, and that this democratisation is important to strive for.

In short, the argumentation of participation for the democratisation of museum practices builds on perspectives and critiques developed within anthropological and critical reflections on museums in society. On one hand, this is seen in practices of participation described in ethnographic museums, but also because it considers the museum as contributing to identity and community formations through practices of representation. What distinguishes this perspective from the following, is that here, participation is used to strengthen curatorial integrity and thus the legitimacy of the museum (Golding and Modest, 2013a; Onciul, 2018), and is seen by some as the only way for museums to properly do their work of representing (Lagerkvist, 2006, p. 64). In the next section, literature is reviewed in which participation is focused on the external role of museums.

The museum as a social actor in democracy

A third argumentation for participation is built on the perspective of the museum as a *social actor in democracy*. Here, participation is also imagined as necessary for the museum to fulfil their democratic duties, but their duties are considered as more broadly affecting society. Like the previous two argumentations, in this perspective the museum also ought to allow for dialogue and accurately represent people and respectfully collaborate. In addition, however, the purpose of doing participation is that the museum positively contributes to society. This role of museums includes two possibilities or responsibilities, according to Sandell (Sandell, 2002, p. 18). First, as an actor, the museum has the ability to contribute positively to society. It advocates an investment in social issues, for example by being active in social justice discussions (Abram, 2020), and taking on a role in forwarding social change (Chynoweth et al., 2021). For example, by collaborating with social service providers (Morse, 2022), or providing social services themselves, as some have argued (Morse, 2021; Silverman, 2010). Secondly, the museum has the responsibility to look inward, and as a social actor -

specifically, as an institution in a society with different social issues - to be 'consistent with the values of contemporary society' (Sandell, 2002, p. 18) The museum should not only strive for socially inclusive and just societies but also to create an environment like that indoors: visible to visitors, participants, and employees (Harper and Hendrick, 2017; Lynch and Alberti, 2010). Lonnie Bunch, secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, argued that the museum profession requires 'inreach', as a way to be more receptive to change itself (Bunch, 2019). In a more general sense, the museum should act ethically (Sandell, 2002; Marstine, 2011; Janes and Sandell, 2019a).

The museum as a social actor is both a popular way to theorise museums in recent literature, and seen in contemporary practice that responds to critical issues. In scholarship, Janes and Sandell (2019a) argued that museums have to fulfil three expectations as activist: 'to be open to influence and impact from outside interests,' 'be responsive to citizens' interests and concerns' and 'to be transparent in fulfilling these two expectations' (p. 15). In a recent collection, authors furthermore suggested museums should focus on being 'helpful' or 'useful', in order to achieve social change (Chynoweth et al., 2021). Meanwhile, museums all around the world attempt to find ways to act in support of activist movements and in response to activism against museum practice. A recent study focused on institutions' attempts to find proper ways to rally around Black Lives Matter activism through solidarity statements (Chevalier et al., 2023). The authors argued that even though such statements were showcasing the best effort of organisations, very few addressed museums' role or place in systemic racism and their potential in finding solutions (p.15). Similarly, museums grapple with how to respond to activists addressing climate change and museum's ties to fossil fuel companies (Serafini and Garrard, 2019). Most recently, having to find ways to respond to Extinction Rebellion's use of the museum space to garner support for their plight for system change, with striking, performative, actions directed against art and cultural heritage (Marshall, 2022; Message, 2022).

Within the perspective on museums as social actors that are able to foster change, the role of participation includes two interpretations. First, participation is phrased around the potential beneficial effects of partaking in projects (Lynch, 2011a, 2011b; Sitzia, 2019). From this view, participation ought to be not only 'good for us' (the institution), but rather 'good for them' (participants) or 'good for all' (society), as Helen Graham summarised different positions taken in literature about museum participation (Graham, 2011). That this idea does not just underline recent practice, is drawn out by Pierroux, Bäckström, Brenna, Gowlland and Ween (2020). They argued that projects in Norway and Sweden, developed a specific focus on forwarding social change through collaboration under the influence of a Participatory Design paradigm in the 1970s. They draw a distinction between participation through associations of heritage conservation and early versions of crowdsourcing in collecting practices. From the seventies, these practices

began to entail aims connected to social inclusion. One democratic principle was most important, namely: 'assuring all citizens equal rights to access and interpret cultural heritage' (Pierroux et al., 2020, p. 41). In this regard, participation is not just about the legitimacy of the organisation as a democratic institution, or the representation of marginalised communities. Rather, participation should contribute to participating communities' position in society, a motivation strongly underlined by Lynch (2021).

A keyword for research about participation from this perspective is empowerment, but authors find other social goals to strive for too. Lindström Sol (2019) traced how in cultural policy, participation has come to refer to a tool through which power becomes 'a resource that can and should be redistributed' (Lindström Sol, 2019, p. 3). As such, according to her, cultural policy stays close to democratic theoretical interpretations of participation, as a practice of sharing decision-making (Carpentier, 2011b; Cornwall, 2008). The critiques of Lynch discussed in the previous section, focused on the success and realities of such redistribution of power in museum projects. Lynch's (2011b) report of twelve participatory museum projects argued that in instances of 'empowerment-lite', a true distribution of power amongst all actors involved is promised but not reached. She further built out her argumentation against paternalistic approaches to participation, arguing instead to do co-creative projects based in 'solidarity' (Lynch, 2021, p. 22). Similarly, Morse's (2021) critique of participation from a 'logic of contribution' stressed that it inhibits empowerment through participation because of a too-strict focus on what museums can gain. Her counter-proposal is participation created within a 'logic of care', which centres care through participatory practices and points to 'social care' as museums' 'ability to create value for society in the twenty-first century' (Morse, 2021, p. 186). These authors, whether they look for empowerment, solidarity, or care through participation, all find the value of participation in it being a tool for museums to act within society through directly affecting participants.

Embedded within calls for care for, solidarity with, or empowerment of participants, lies a second, broader commitment to social justice efforts. Chynoweth, for example, explained it as an understanding that 'an exhibition is only the beginning' (2021, p. 179). Robinson (2020) has argued that this interpretation of achieving social justice through participation can be seen in policy. She critically reviewed such policies, arguing that they reflect an interest in moving away from goals like 'fostering dialogue,' and towards favouring 'moral adjudication on the cultural and social issues that matter most' (Robinson, 2020, p. 5). She critiqued this motivation, arguing that it presents the museum as an 'effective [tool] in the delivery of particular social and political interventions' (p. 15), and thereby put herself in conversation with a long-standing critical interpretation of the museum as a tool of government control (Bennett, 1995). Such a critical stance, again, should be understood to be part of the proposition that participation can achieve social

change in the first place. The literature that interprets and advocates for participation as a tool for the museum to act in society, simultaneously tends to be critical about its potential (Chynoweth, 2021; Chynoweth et al., 2021; Lynch, 2011b, 2021). Together with calls for participation comes a critical investigation of how genuine and far-reaching museums' 'will to empower' actually goes (Beel, 2017). To come closer to realise this potential of participation, Lynch and others make several suggestions: through critical reflection (Lynch, 2011a), working towards radical trust (Lynch, 2013), or a re-appreciation of participation as a place for struggle, discussion and discomfort (Carpentier, 2015).

New opportunities to learn and entertain in participatory culture

Parallel to the promises of participation building on the relation between museums and democracy, are the opportunities of participatory practices out of an interest and understanding of the pedagogical and entertaining role of museums. Research from Falk and Dierking (2000) and Hooper-Greenhill (2000) have been important in the move of museums to embrace constructivist learning approaches, where knowledge creation is understood as something constructed, in various social contexts, introducing a focus on learning rather than teaching in the museum (Hohenstein and Moussouri, 2017; Hooper-Greenhill, 2000, p. 24). Hooper-Greenhill (2000) proposed a view of museums in that regard as communicator, and placed this idea in direct relation to budget cuts and the necessity for museums to justify their value. To her, museums needed to '[find] ways to integrate audiences and their worlds, [which] means finding new ways of balancing power and knowledge' (Hooper-Greenhill, 2000, p. 31). Furthermore, learning in museums has been grown to be understood from a perspective of the visitor themselves, who are considered to experience a leisure activity when visiting (Falk and Dierking, 2000; Packer and Ballantyne, 2004). In this context, entertainment and education are considered to be complementary in a museum visit (Packer and Ballantyne, 2004).

Within this focus, participation methods are considered a way to bring both educational and entertaining experiences to museum visitors. This is one of the underlying arguments in Nina Simon's proposal of the participatory museum (Simon, 2010). For her, participation offers (new) ways for visitors to experience the museum, through giving their opinions, joining workshops or parties, or meeting new people. In that regard, participatory methods are employed not to offer a specific democratic engagement, but rather to make a museum visit more entertaining (Simon, 2010), or even therapeutic for the participant (Thumim, 2010, 2012). For the museum, these approaches are considered important as a way to attract new audiences (Dake, 2016; Simon, 2010), and stay relevant (Boon et al., 2014; Simon, 2016). Tøndborg argued within that understanding, when they stated that engaging people with difficult

topics, unpredictable and social objects is a way for the museum to compete with other forms of cultural production and entertainment in participatory culture (Tøndborg, 2013).

As such, this approach to participation tends to be phrased in connection to the understanding of contemporary society as inherently and increasingly consisting of a participatory culture (Gabriel and Jensen, 2017). The rise of social media, framed as participatory media, has provided new forms of interaction amongst people and with institutions (Loader and Mercea, 2012). Simultaneously, the actual participatory ability or potential of social media are questioned, with claims of inequalities being perpetuated online and through the use of social media (Kidd, 2011; Shaw and Hargittai, 2018). Still, our increased use of and dependence on social media drives an interest, culture and expectation of being able to participate in all levels of society. Henry Jenkins defines such participatory culture as one with 'relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement,' where working together with others is supported and there is access to 'some type of informal mentorship' (Jenkins 2009, p. 5–6).

Conversations on participatory culture are closely connected to what happens in memory institutions. Simon explicitly mentioned this culture and the resulting expectations when arguing that because of 'the social Web […] visitors […] expect the ability to discuss, share, and remix what they consume' (Simon 2010, 1). Framed like this, a participatory project in museums offers an approach to cope with a culture change, rather than to forward change itself. To cope with such a change, then, museums understood the need to play into this culture and answer their visitors' urge to be engaged in different ways, for example by allowing visitors to curate their own digital exhibit, together (e.g. Bello and Matchette, 2018; Confalonieri et al., 2015). Such applications of digital technology as well as the digitisation of collections, is a (slowly) growing practice in museums, and made way for an increase in scholarship about the specific issues and topics related to the application and integration of digital media technologies and digital collections in participation (e.g. Bonacchi et al., 2019; Kidd, 2016; Mucha, 2022).

This concludes section one of the review of literature. The purpose of the review of this particular group of studies was to highlight the high stakes connected to participatory practices in museums. The practitioners and scholars emphasised different promises of participation, connected to underlying goals and roles of museum institutions, largely informed by theories and research understood as new-museological, and found in critical heritage studies and critical museum studies. I presented two main ideas embedded within those studies: the link between the museum and democracy and education and entertainment in museums in relation to participatory culture. I focused especially on three democratic promises that scholars and practitioners connect to participation. These three ideas are slightly overlapping, but in the end present three different interpretations of

participation: participatory practices can enhance and allow people to engage in democratic processes, can allow for internal museum practices to change, and can allow the museum to act or instigate social change. The main take away for this particular study, is that researchers and practitioners tend to focus on the relationship between the role and social goals of museum institutions in order to use participatory practices. In the next section, different types of museum practices will be discussed, in relation to how researchers make categories of participation.

Categories of participation

Whichever arguments they put forward as the reason why, scholars tend to agree: participation is here to stay. Robinson (2020, p. 2) called 'participatory museology' the 'maturation' of new museology, Black (2018) regarded the current times as the 'age of participation' and Nina Simon has been advocating for the 'participatory museum' since 2006.[6] As surfaced through the various argumentations for participation presented thus far, the definition of what museum practice counts exactly as participation, however, is only sparingly explicated (Piontek, 2017; Runnel et al., 2014), and has been most often illustrated through the discussion of cases. In this section, definitions and categories of methods of participation in museums as proposed by researchers, and the challenges pointed out connected to these methods in practice, are discussed. Some of the work that was brought up in the previous section will come up here again, but now in order to discuss their contribution to categorisations of museum practices of participation, instead of underlying promises. This section discusses overviews, models and proposals for definitions by different authors, proposed in relation to participation in museums, or frequently applied by museum studies scholars. Some of these are all-encompassing, and focus on practical applications (Simon, 2010), others hierarchical (Arnstein, 1969), or starkly defined in order to 'rescue' the term participation from being too diluted (Carpentier et al., 2019).

The section is divided into five sub-sections following the perspectives through which museum practices of participation have been defined: the participatory process, the effects of participation, relationships, methods, and a wider lens. The purpose of this section is not to provide a clearcut set of categories that will be instrumental in this study's analysis. Rather, the goal is to have a better understanding of how others define and interpret museum practices as participation in order to highlight the nuances and difficulties of participation in practice. Furthermore, this section showcases that for several

[6] As museum director and writer of the popular 'Museum 2.0' blog http://museumtwo.blogspot.com/, to later author the book the Participatory Museum (2010) and the Art of Relevance (2016).

scholars, different categories of participation exist and definitions are debated, but that these definitions and categories do not always overlap as they 'make sense of participation' through different lenses.

Making sense of participation through processes

If they provide a more elaborate discussion about the meaning of participation, those advocating for participatory practices in museums build on arguments and theories developed outside of their field. One has been explicitly mentioned already, the idea that participation in museums is a response to participatory culture (Jenkins, 2009). Another one underlies many of the studies discussed in the *Museum and Democracy* section, and regards the interpretation of participation in democratic theory (Carpentier, 2011b; Pateman, 1970, 2012). Media scholar Nico Carpentier has greatly contributed to the scholarly debates about participation in media and culture, specifically by focusing on the theoretical and ideological grounding of participatory practices found throughout society by highlighting its relation to the ideas of participatory democracy (Carpentier, 2011b; Carpentier et al., 2019). Two of the models coming out of Carpentier's research have found fruitful ground in the discussions about the definitions of museum participation, and focus on participatory processes: an understanding of minimalist versus maximalist participation, and the AIP model (Carpentier, 2011b). These two models will be discussed, after which I introduce Arnstein's 'ladder of citizen participation' as another very influential idea in museum participation, focused on process (Arnstein, 1969).

Carpentier (2011b) grounds his models in democratic theories and their proposals of participation. For Marxist, Anarchist and Radical-democratic theories, participation is an embedded part of a utopian radical restructuring of our societies (Carpentier, 2011b, pp. 27–30). The democratic theories Carpentier reviewed make explicit suggestions of participation in society. He focused in particular on Pateman's participatory democracy theory (Pateman, 1970, 2012), and the idea of deliberative democracy (Dryzek, 2002), which have both been applied in democracies through for example citizen assemblies or participatory budgeting. Pateman (1970) built a case for a (utopian) participatory democratic society, in which people are directly involved in decision-making. By implementing participatory decision-making in all aspects of life (political, industrial, family) citizens will be trained in their political citizenship. They will also be able to have more understanding of issues on national-level politics where representative democratic institutions, will continue to be necessary. Through this 'multidirectional participation' (Carpentier, 2011b, p. 17), Pateman argued, people have further opportunities to have an impact and to become an 'educated, public citizen' (Pateman 1970). Reflecting on her seminal text in 2012, Pateman elaborated on her participatory democracy theory by reviewing a case of participatory budgeting

in Brazil which, she stated, shows that democratisation of institutions is possible and feasible. Participation that happens outside of the political field is considered productive as it is formative for participation in the political field and it broadens citizens' sphere of influence. But, she stresses, real participation requires the 'democratisation of democracy' (Pateman, 2012, p. 15).

Through Carpentier's (2011b) interpretation, it became clear that there is not one idea about participation in democratic theory. To bridge the different ideas about democracy, politics and participation, and overcome a too normative understanding of participation, he suggested to consider a dimension of minimalist and maximalist participation (pp. 17-22). To him, participation is always inherently (and importantly) a political process. Crucial to his understanding is that actors involved are equally involved in decision-making. This is never a straightforward process, but revolves around ideological struggles. From this understanding stems his minimalist-maximalist divide as a model based on process. Minimalist participation upholds a narrow definition of politics and thus seeks for participation only in governmental and institutional bodies, is mostly concerned with representative politics and is focused on influencing the political field only, limits participation to a selected few and tends to build on strategies of homogenisation, or consensus. Maximalist participation means to assume a broad interpretation of politics and seeks out participation in many (or, all) aspects of organised and social life. It does not shun away representative democracy, but balances this with more direct participation. So, the influence of participation can also be outside of the institutionalised, political sphere, and these processes are more open to heterogenous outcomes and actors.[7] Carpentier proposes to understand participation efforts to exist on a continuum between minimalist and maximalist, thereby arguing against a too normative understanding of participation.

Carpentier's AIP model discusses access, interaction and participation (AIP), with the latter being distinctly different from the previous two (Carpentier, 2011b, pp. 129–130). Each concept is discussed in relation to four elements of projects and processes: technologies, content, people and organisations. Writing within a media and audience theory framework, he further distinguished between the production and reception side of each of these elements. In short, participation requires, but is different from access and interaction. Access refers to the presence of all four processual elements, that furthermore ought to be appropriate and relevant for the task at hand. Interaction is defined as the construction of meaning created through lived

[7] Another distinction that Carpentier highlights in the democratic theoretical perceptions of participation is that between a protective and developmental argument: the former sees participation as the way to protect citizens from power imbalance and abuse, the latter as something intrinsically valuable, which strengthens civic identities, and is thus a pedagogical instrument for democratic societies.

experiences. He wants to warn against equating this with participation. Participation, rather, is about 'co-deciding on/with' technology, and content, and people, and organisational policy. A distinction that he makes in this model that is particularly relevant for the consideration of participation in museums, is that of placing 'co-producing content as group or community' under 'interaction' (Carpentier, 2011b, p.130), and distinguishes this from participation as 'co-deciding on/with' content and people. As will be shown later in this review, co-production is a popular museum practice that many others would argue is a form of participation, but in Carpentier's AIP model would fall outside of the participation category.

Another focus on processes of decision-making in participation, that found fruitful ground in museum-related literature, came from Arnstein (1969). Her 'ladder of citizen participation' introduced different degrees of participation based on the level of involvement of participants. She created this ladder from a public service standpoint and referred to governmental projects, dividing eight levels of participation under three degrees: nonparticipation (manipulation and therapy), tokenism (informing, consulting and placation) and citizen power (delegated power and citizen control). Measured against such a model, a participatory project is either more or less participative and thus allows for more or less 'citizen power.' In both Carpentier's models and Arnstein's ladder, the emphasis lies on the amount of decision-making power any participant has in a participatory process.

Investigations that look at participation in museums from this focus on participatory processes, highlight the importance of decision-making practices, how people were invited to join (Lenz Kothe, 2016), focus on power and agency of participants in these processes (Sitzia, 2019), and which tools or technologies are used and how they affect processes of power-sharing or decision-making (Graham et al., 2013; Jansson, 2018; Kelly and Taffe, 2022).

Making sense of participation through outcomes and effects

A second approach to how participation is defined in relation to museums is by looking at the effects or outcomes of projects. This is what Helen Graham bases her previously mentioned division of participation literature on, where she says there are projects that are framed as either 'good for us', 'good for them', 'good for both of us' or 'not good for anyone' (Graham, 2011; Graham et al., 2013). Here, she points out that museums can think about participation as something that advances the museum institution, through contributions or affecting change to the institution itself, that would be 'good for us,' the 'us' being the museum institution. Similarly, Nuala Morse, whose work will be discussed in more depth throughout this thesis, concluded in her review of literature that many museum projects are organised and reviewed from, what she called, a 'contributory' logic (Morse, 2021). Graham's (2011) second category refers to how participation is framed as improving the public. She

provides a similar critical lens to this as Robinson (2020), who asked if participation is about 'curating good participants', thereby pointing out a potential instrumental perspective of participation in this view. Graham (2011) mentions skill-building as a way for participants to be positively affected through participation, but also brings up the lack of financial benefit for participants even though they invest their time. The third category refers to participation where benefits of project(s) are felt by both the institution and participants. She adds a fourth category, of participation that is 'not good for anyone' to mention the ways in which participation has been criticised to be 'a means of exerting control' (Graham, 2011, p. 11).

Tatsi and Aljas (2014) also propose a way to distinguish participation methods through the effects they have, specifically focusing on the effect on the museum's collection. In relation to Graham's (2011) proposal, Tatsi and Aljas thus make a suggestion for a further distinction within the 'good for us' category. They apply Carpentier's AIP model in conjunction with his maximalist and minimalist interpretation of participation to make their case (Carpentier, 2011b). In order to make their point, however, they clarify that they mostly engage with projects that fall withing Carpentier's understanding of access or interaction. They propose another layer to better qualify participation in which objects are central, in the museum context. They argue that 'participatory interventions can be theorised as having either "virtual" or "physical" influence on collections' (Tatsi and Aljas, 2014, p. 151). Here, 'virtual' refers to interventions that do not lead to a change in the museum collection or interpretations; 'physical' interventions do affect this.

In scholarship and practice, when looking at participation through (potential) effects, evaluation of museum projects becomes an important topic, to see if goals were met (Boersma, 2022). Part of this focus also brings up a relation between a project's output and process that can be found in many museum projects, as Knudsen analysed in a case study in Denmark (Knudsen, 2016). Where Knudsen argues that this relation is defining of participation, Boersma (2022) argues for a stricter focus on outcomes of participatory projects, challenging museums to move away from exhibition-focused projects only and considering potential long-term outcomes for participants and museums as equally relevant. Furthermore, such a focus on outcomes of participation has also been found to be present in policy documents, especially thinking about the potential of empowerment as mentioned in the previous section (Kershaw et al., 2018; Lindström Sol, 2019; Robinson, 2020).

Making sense of participation through relationships

For others, participation is categorised and defined through the relationships between participants and the museum (Goodnow, 2010; Lotina, 2016; Runnel et al., 2014; Simon, 2010). Goodnow (2010) elaborated Carpentier's way of relating access, interaction and participation to further the concept of

participation in relation to the museum field, by distinguishing four forms: access, reflection, provision and structural involvement (Goodnow, 2010). It is noteworthy that she includes access as a form of participation, rather than as separate from participation as Carpentier (2011b) argues.[8] For Goodnow (2010), access relates to the museum making efforts to lower barriers for people to enter or engage with the museum (p. xxvi). Here, participants are considered in their role as (potential) visitors to the museum. She frames reflection as 'one step beyond' participation through access, and argues that it requires the museum to provide programmes and content that is of significance to new audiences (p. xxvii). The participant is now someone who will be involved in other programmes of the museum, outside of the regular visit. Provision, then, refers to including contributions of 'community members' instead of audiences, in the museum's programmes (p. xxvii). The participant thus stands in a more reciprocal relationship with the museum and does not only receive information, but also brings in something. Goodnow's final form regards a structural involvement of community members in advising roles, in boards or as curators. In this form the participant is envisioned as someone with decision-making power to affect the museum.

Lotina similarly discusses different forms of engagement based on how people stand in relation to the museum (Lotina, 2016). She proposed and discussed the term audience engagement, and understands that to consists of the overlapping categories of participation and interactivity. Building on communication studies, she investigated and proposed 'modes of engagement' that structure museum and audience relationships. Based on empirical studies of Latvian museums' online and onsite activities, she suggested the following modes: marketing & advertising; informing; connecting with stakeholders; collaboration; consulting; connecting with professionals; connecting with other participants/audiences (Lotina, 2016, pp. 59–61). She argued that these modes go from least power-sharing to more sharing of power, but she bases the categories firstly on how specific groups interact with the museum, rather than processes of power-sharing. She distinguishes the modes according to three key groups: school children, general audience, and stakeholders, and pinpoints corresponding objectives for the museums in each engagement mode. Again, phrasing participation based on a museum-individual relation.

Perhaps the most famous proponent of participation in museums, Nina Simon also offers categories of participation based on relationships between the institution and its public (Simon, 2010). She also includes discussions of effects in terms of skill development and values for the museum, but differentiates between types of participation based on how the museum and individual or group relate with each other. Furthermore, although Lotina

[8] Goodnow (2010) refers to earlier work by Carpentier (2007) in which he discusses the relationship between access, interaction and participation as well.

(2016) and Goodnow's (2010) categories can be placed in an order of least reciprocal to most reciprocal relationships, Simon explicitly states there is no hierarchy in her categories. Building on categories based in citizen science projects, she suggests cultural institutions and visitors relate according to the following categories: contribution, collaboration, co-creation and hosting. Projects might have elements of several categories, but the modes of relating remain distinctly different. Visitors involved through contribution, are invited to contribute to ongoing processes in the museum such as giving opinions in an exhibit through interactive stations. Through collaboration, they would actively shape processes or exhibits through active input. Here, visitors would have discussions with museum staff. In co-creation these discussions are extended and visitors - now called community members by Simon – are involved in making processes and exhibits from beginning to end. Hosted, Simon's addition to the citizen science categories, refers to a mode where there is less active involvement of museum staff but at the same time more direct use of institutional resources by people, through use of collection data, museum spaces, or networks.

Throughout these three proposals of categories, the terms used for the non-institutional groups of people involved fluctuated. They are called visitor, audience, community member or participant. Runnel, Lepik and Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt (2014) defined categories of people, and while doing so distinguish ways of relating to the museum, including participation. Their proposal in pyramid form starts with the public as everyone outside of the museum at the bottom, to then follow with audiences and visitors. The second tier is described as users; who are assumed to use 'either museums' resources or part-taking museum activities' (Runnel et al., 2014, p. 222). The final, and smallest, group of people are called participants. They are defined through a contributory relationship which influences 'the power-relations in some way' (ibid.). In a way, their categories stand apart from the previously introduced three. The propose to categorise all potential relationships between people and museums, not only how different forms of participation could be built on different types of relationships. Presenting them together with the other categories, however, shows that calling someone participant and some project participation, or not, is somehow overlapping and can be somewhat arbitrary. Following their definition of user, distinguished from 'participant', would qualify the user-museum relationship to fall within the category of 'hosting' presented by Simon (2010), or 'reflection' by Goodnow (2010), which they include within their understanding of participation. Simultaneously, Runnel et al.'s (2014) definition of participants leaves open a multitude of relationships that encompass different ways of doing participation in the museum.

Looking at relationships, different hindering and fostering properties to participation are discussed. Lotina (2016), for example, refers to the audience's properties, political, cultural and economic factors, and the museum properties. Runnel et al. (2014) also look at the impact of institutional

factors such as access to information, ideology, and the motivation of institutional staff, in addition to individuals' information literacy, their relation to the institution from the get-go and their various social and cultural capitals to rely on. Transparency is furthermore heralded as an important aspect to equalising relationships between museums and communities (Marstine, 2013).

Making sense of participation through applied methods

In addition to processes, relations and outcomes, perhaps the most common way of discussing participation in museums, has been to refer to applied methods of participation. That is to say, describing *how* people participate in a specific museum project. This section will discuss the most common methods and terms discussed in literature as they take place in practice, and how they relate. Specifically, I include: community engagement, audience engagement and interaction, dialogue, co-creation and co-production, online and digital participation, and advisory or institutional participation. Each of these methods have an extensive group of literature connected to it. The purpose here is to clarify what is understood in general to happen in practice in these methods, and only briefly introduce some related debates. In this study, the premise is that all these different methods can fall under the umbrella category of participation.

First, community engagement is a general phrase used in practice to describe a multitude of projects in which specific groups of people, for example stakeholders to the museum, are involved in a specific programme of the museum like workshops or workshop series, or met through outreach programmes. It can also be used on more strategic level to include various types of public programmes 'that usually involve individuals or groups who do not or cannot use museums, and that may take place both in museums and in a range of community spaces' (Morse and Munro, 2018, p. 358). It is sometimes used interchangeably with participation and can include different types of methods such as finding a new purpose for a space in the museum (Willis, 2016), or organising a symposium to strengthen a network (Cort and Harisson, 2016). From a process point of view, community engagement is different from participation because it does not necessarily stress the redistribution of power (Carpentier, 2011b). However, some authors argue that a redistribution of power can be part of community engagement too, when this stressed as important by museum staff (Willis, 2016). Furthermore, Morse (2021) treats community engagement as one of many participatory museum practices (p. 29). Because it still is quite a broad term as well, a multitude of methods can be called community engagement and thus the effects can be multivarious, but for the museum this would be focused on building or strengthening relationships with (often) local stakeholders (Munro, 2013), and benefits to the different groups of people tend to remain implicit. Both Morse

and Munro, however, suggest community engagement can be understood as a form of (social) care, and highlight the collaborations with various partners such as health organisations (Morse, 2021, 2022; Munro, 2013).

A second diverse group of methods, audience engagement and interaction, takes place in museum spaces that are open to the public, such as in exhibitions or in the museum's digital spaces (Lotina, 2016). Lotina (2016) and others have applied the concept engagement from a media and communications perspective in order to assess different modes of interaction between museums and people (Ashley, 2014; Moussouri, 2014; Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt and Runnel, 2018). When connected to the word 'audience', it can also be understood to be a group of methods applied in practice. Nina Simon gives examples of instances where audiences are invited to vote to give their opinion, or are invited to answer a question, as part of the design of an exhibition (Simon, 2010). She regards audience engagement as contributory, where audience's input is streamlined according to a process or program completely organised by the museum institution. As such, audience engagement does not tend to be built with the focus of a redistribution of power, and as a result has been criticised as being purely symbolic or therapeutic (Thumim, 2010). In Carpentier's AIP model, audience engagement would count as interaction, or remain an extended form of providing access (Carpentier, 2011b). However, others provide evidence of audiences being motivated and strengthened in the importance of giving their opinions on political topics (Coghlan, 2018), or argue that by using their voice participants are active and exercise choice (Witcomb, 2011). Understood like that, audience engagement fulfils some democratic-related promises underlying participation as outlined previously. A variety of tools and methods are used for this type of engagement, of which many are digital, including: sensory and affective response to movement in exhibition spaces (Liu and Lan, 2021), leaving voice recordings for next visitors (Ciolfi et al., 2008), or writing and leaving behind post-its in response to discussions questions (Noy, 2017a).

Third, some museums are particularly invested in their democratic and educational mission, upon which they build methods of dialogue as a form of participation. Russell-Ciardi talks about the Lower East Side Tenement Museum in New York which engages all visitors in dialogue through their tours and include recent immigrants (Russell-Ciardi, 2008). As such, this connection to building citizenship can also be found in some studies mentioned in the first section of this literature review, regarding the idea of using participation as a way to enhance and support engagement in democratic processes. This underlies Coghlan's previously mentioned exhibit about democracy, where dialogues were created in the exhibition space (Coghlan, 2018), as well as Sherman's case of conversation in exhibitions (2014).

A fourth, well-established, more confined, and frequently discussed method of participation is the co-creation and co-production of exhibitions

(Barnes and McPherson, 2019; Davies, 2010; Mygind et al., 2015). These are methods through which people, sometimes community groups and sometimes individuals, are included in the production of an exhibition in the museum. These are usually longer projects that run over several months and tend to have a political rationale (Mygind et al., 2015). The literature describes such projects set in science museums (McSweeney and Stewart, 2017), history museums (Boon et al., 2014; Knudsen, 2016), and ethnographic museums (Modest et al., 2019). The discussions about this form of participation essentially build on the involvement of participants in decision-making, where some people argue that co-production can 'create a space that is truly inclusive for the communities it serves' and '[lead] to the transformation of people's lives' (Barnes and McPherson, 2019, p. 257), and others are sceptical of the amount of influence participants can have in such instances (Lynch, 2011b; Lynch and Alberti, 2010). From a literature review, it became clear that different processes and levels of power-sharing can be discovered among such projects (Mygind et al., 2015). In some of the reviewed projects by Mygind, Hällman and Bentsen (2015), participants were included in setting a theme and choosing objects from the collection; in others, they represented a specific viewpoint not internal to the museum. Furthermore, co-creation can also involve work with digital collections that does not necessarily revolve around exhibition making, but engagement with cultural heritage (Mucha, 2022).

A fifth group of applied methods can be grouped around their use of digital and online tools. This includes a vast, and growing group of methods with a vast and growing group of research connected to it. Some of the dialogic, audience engagement and community engagement methods also happen online or use digital technology (Arrigoni and Galani, 2019; Kist, 2022a, 2022b). Arrigoni and Galani argued that digital technologies offer 'new forms of reciprocity between institutions and communities' (Arrigoni and Galani, 2019, p. 39). One of such forms of reciprocity has been crowdsourcing, where people are involved in collecting or producing information about objects (Bonacchi et al., 2019), or the museum collects personal stories or objects through online engagement (Jansson, 2022; Oswald, 2020). These methods have been applied broadly in memory institutions (e.g. Andersdotter and Nauwerck, 2022; Hetland et al., 2020; Jansson, 2018). In addition to institutions benefiting from potential enhancement of their collection-records, research also suggest potential personal and community-wide benefits to participants in such projects (Reinsone, 2020). At the same time, researchers critically reflect on the ethics and policies through which such projects are envisioned and practiced (Kidd, 2020).

Another recurring method of participation discussed in literature is what Goodnow called participation that is 'structurally integrated' through the presence of an advisory board or community-member curator (Goodnow, 2010). Indeed, there is a longer history of museums working with advisory boards representing source communities, which have an advising role

(Fouseki, 2010; Scott and Luby, 2007). That this can still provide plenty of discussions and conflict becomes clear when reviewing the critical advice given but not taken by members of such a board for the redevelopment of the Afrika Museum in Tervuren, Belgium, (Hochschild, 2020) or the described fall-out of an advisory board working with Lynch and Alberti on an exhibition (Lynch and Alberti, 2010).

Making sense of participation through a wide lens

So far, the four different groups (processes, effects, relationships, methods in practice) have been presented based on the most particular aspect of categories proposed by the respective authors. As has been gestured to, however, most of the proposals include nuanced discussions with mentions of other elements of their respective categories. Nina Simon (2010) refers also to effects, Carpentier (2011b) includes descriptions of relationships forged through or lying at the basis of the participatory processes, and Graham refers to the processes through which certain effects come about (2011). Still, they distinguish participation types first and foremost through either of these three lenses. Others combine them more deliberately, or rather take a wider perspective on participation by explicitly discussing various elements that influence the formation of a project. Such lenses include a spatial approach (Clifford, 1997; Mucha, 2022; Onciul, 2015) and of logics of participation (Morse, 2021).

Clifford's, previously brought-up, idea of the museum as 'contact zone' has been introduced as a proposal through which collaboration between communities and museums could be reconsidered, in the 1990's (1997). Ontologically, his proposal of a contact zone is a spatial metaphor in which relationships between people and the institution are set out to be more equal. It can be an actual physical space, but the contact zone is mostly determined through the processes of making and sustaining contact and the types of relationships that are (re)produced there. Bryony Onciul furthered this spatial view by proposing 'engagement zone' as 'a physical, temporal and conceptual space created through engagement' (2015, p. 83). This is a space in flux, through negotiating relationships and power, blurring of boundaries, and finding collaboratively new practices of curation and knowledge creation. Relationships, processes and effects within this engagement zone can be imagined variously. Presenting such a wide lens actively goes against the division of participation and engagement in different categories. As Mucha (2022) suggests, building on Onciul's concept, these engagement zones are 'structured and facilitated' spaces, through which various practices of co-creation and collaboration can come about (2022, p. 252).

A similarly wide lens is cast by Nuala Morse in her proposal to look at participatory projects through the logics on which they are built (Morse, 2021). She argues that most descriptions of participation in scholarship, and

the projects about which they write, are based on a 'logic of contribution.' Such a logic mostly presents participation through the potential benefits to the museum and a contributory relationship between visitor/participant and institution. The critiques against this participation, she argues, fall within the same logic. What she argues is that the logic of contribution only allows an evaluative view on participatory projects, based on the core-periphery dynamic between participant and institution, and the level of choice and control of participants. She problematises this as a narrow view of participation, or in her terms, community engagement, and proposes an alternative logic upon which to build, conduct and review participation in museums: that of care. In this logic of care, participatory practices are viewed from the specifics, contextually, and relationally. Community engagement can be a way of practicing care by centralising relations, focusing on the processes through which the resource of power is reciprocally redistributed, to be understood in more 'distributed terms', including 'content, product, processes, materialities, relationships and emotional dimensions' (Morse, 2021, p. 189).

In a way, both wide lens approaches refrain from explicitly distinguishing categories of participation. Instead, they offer a multitude of dimensions to consider when designing, describing, or reviewing participatory projects. The difficulty with the previous four groups is that it becomes hard to make these different categories correspond to each other outside of the authors' proposal. What Carpentier (2011b) sees a minimalist participation, is Goodnow's (2010) understanding of most progressive. Similarly, the different types of effects Graham (2011) distinguishes can exist through multiple processes of power distribution, as well as through various relationships. Therefore, this study is inspired by these wide-lens approaches, as it provides a way out of a too normative view on participation placed on a progressive ladder, in a pyramid or on a scale. It also is away to be able to include a large variety of participation methods, which will prove to be beneficial in the analysis. This study's particular interpretation of participation will be further discussed in the next chapters.

Work in the museum and with participation

The literature discussed so far comes from journals such as *Museum and Society, Museum Management and Curatorship*, and *Curator: the Museum Journal*. As has been argued, they are filled with reflections of professionals on their work in museums. However, as a field primarily run for and by museum professionals themselves, studies explicitly dealing with professionalism in and work in the museum are rather limitedly represented in Museum Studies (Tlili, 2016, p. 1101) and only recently more present (e.g. Alberti et al., 2018; Morgan, 2018; Morse, 2021; Tran, 2021). Questions of what makes a museum professional or what museum professionalism is, can

be answered by reading between the lines of works dealing with museum ethics, publications aimed at professional development or texts on different types of museum practice, like participation. The professional network International Council of Museums (ICOM) discusses the museum profession in a commissioned piece on key concepts in Museology:

> There is not one profession, but several museal professions, that is to say a range of activities attached to the museum, paid or unpaid, by which one can identify a person (in particular for his civil status) and place him in a social category (Desvallees and Mairesse, 2010, p. 67).

ICOM highlights that professions are identity markers, socially constructed and defined by the range of activities one executes within the museum. Notably, they include both paid and unpaid professions. The text continues by naming 20 different professions in the museum field, including curators, administration, communication and educational staff. Literature specifically focusing on museum professions highlight similar careers (Burcaw, 1975; Glaser and Zenetou, 1996). Rather than talking about professions, the more contemporary handbooks and companions to Museum Studies discuss practices in museums: collecting, caring for and managing collections, curating and creating exhibitions, communicating, marketing, interpretation, educating and digital media (Macdonald, 2011b; Macdonald and Leahy, 2015). The professionalisation of museum work is generally considered to be propelled by the increase of museum studies programmes (Simmons, 2006; Teather, 1990). At the same time, these programmes contributed to a certain academisation of the field, where the museum is taken as an object of study (Dubuc, 2011).

Museum studies literature can thus be understood as having two approaches understanding museum professions. It offers practical guidance for the professional development of practitioners either as part of an academic museum program and it is a means for professionals to reflect on practices in their museums as well as read about others'. The former includes handbooks introducing various career types and museum professions (Macdonald, 2011; Macdonald and Leahy, 2015; Williams and Hawks, 2006). The latter includes work reflected on in the first section of this literature review, where case studies form the basis of reflection and museum scholars add critical and theoretical perspectives to these experiences.

In this section of the review, literature is reviewed that discusses professionals and organisational explorations of museum work in general and work with participation in memory institutions, in specific. The goal is to find out what is known about participation as a work objective and the practices connected to it. This is done by investigating information studies literature about professionals in memory institutions, museum studies scholarship dealing with professional and organisational questions and the discussions of

work practices for participation professionals in fields where this has been further discussed. Taken together, they give insight into professionals' attitudes and understandings of participation within ALM, identified competencies and skills for this work, the impact of this practice on professionals' roles and identity, and what we know about the organisational setting of participation. Finally, a brief scope of literature concerning the work and organisation of participation in participatory design and public governance is briefly discussed.

Attitudes towards and understandings of participation in ALM

Within the broader field of information studies, museum professionals are approached as one of several information professionals (Bates, 2007, 2015; Bates and Maack, 2009). Bates proposed information studies as a meta-discipline, that, amongst other things, studies the professions connected to memory institutions as they are, like the discipline itself, concerned with the 'collection, organisation, retrieval and presentation of information' (Bates, 2015). As such, staff in archives, libraries and museums (ALM) are frequently grouped in empirical studies. Several larger surveys have been conducted amongst such professionals in Northern Europe in the last ten years that provide insights into attitudes towards and perspectives on the role and future of their institution(s), their willingness to create services of various social engagement efforts (Andresen et al., 2020; Audunson et al., 2019, 2020; Huvila, 2014, 2016; Johnston et al., 2022).

Audunson, Hobohm and Tóth (2019; 2020) report on the results of the same large-scale survey, of librarians, archivists, and museum professionals in Denmark, Germany, Norway, Sweden and Hungary (N=5390), of which 910 respondents worked for museums. Their research questions refered to what they consider two defining perspectives on these institutions: the so-called social turn, which they explain similarly to the new and critical museological tradition examined previously, and the increase of digital technologies services in these institutions. The survey was set out to find indications for new services and new forms of working, and how professionals see their role within their institutions marked by these two moments. Mapping the presence of 'social turn' services, they surveyed if the respective museums offered open meetings/lectures, co-creation, makerspaces or creative activities, or help groups present their history (Audunson et al., 2020, p. 172). The data suggests that a majority of professionals' home institutions indeed offered such services, with some differences between countries. In Sweden, the majority of institutions surveyed provided all services: the open meetings being the most common (92%), followed by co-creation (74%), makerspace (72%), and helping groups to present their history (66%). Surprisingly, regarding the role of the museum in society, professionals in all countries gave on average (slightly) higher scores to the 'traditional' roles such as facilitating research

and providing an arena for learning. They gave lower scores to the museum as a space for public debate or creative making. Finally, the survey included questions to measure professionals' attitudes towards the (most important) role(s) of museum professionals in relation to these social services. These questions mostly focused on the difference between active engagement with communities or offering a platform for people to explore independently.

Some interesting differences between Sweden and Germany are worthwhile to highlight here, in light of the setting of this study. The results (Audunson et al., 2020) suggested that Swedish and German professionals both consider it more important to promote critical reflection on a common identity, rather than contribute to the development of such identities. They differ on their stance regarding neutrality versus taking a stand: the group of Swedes were more inclined to aim for objectivity, and the German professionals were more open towards promoting engagement. The final question posed by the authors regarded how museums might engage in telling stories of minorities: the surveyed Swedes were more inclined to approach this as a professional responsibility, and the surveyed Germans had a slight preference for presenting the museum as a platform for minorities to represent themselves. Overall, the study suggests a general positive attitude towards possible social roles of the institutions and individuals alike, but suggests that the professionals have different interpretations as to how to fill these in exactly.

These results mirror some of the outcomes of Huvila's most recent single-authored survey of ALM professionals in Swedem, which reports on their perspectives on change and continuity in their respective institutions (Huvila, 2016). Again, social engagement within and of the institutions and the embeddedness of digital technologies, came out as influential. Huvila asserts that there is a split between a group of professionals that are keener on implementing and applying digital technology and offering social engagement services and a group that does not. He further makes a distinction between professionals wanting to offer more active engagement versus infrastructural or empowering services in the museum. It suggests that although they mostly agree on the relevance of the respective institutions 'in terms of providing access, serving the society, providing experiences, preserving, developing and communicating collections and memory,' the schism regards how this relevance ought to be provided. In short, the museum's social and democratic role in society is recognised by professionals in the ALM sector as important, but, again, how they should fulfil this concerning external or internally forced change, is conceived of differently.

A third survey measuring how professionals think about participatory practices in ALM institutions is Andresen, Huvila and Stokstad's (2020) study with a focus on crowdsourcing. In the survey conducted in Norway, Denmark and Sweden, the Swedish professionals were more positive than the others to 'engaging people to participate in the work of LAM institutions [...] [and] to

empower them as individuals.' In general, all were positive towards general statements regarding the possibilities of crowdsourcing, but it became clear that using or planning for crowdsourcing was rare for professionals in all countries.

Taken together, these studies of ALM professionals, indicate that different attitudes towards the social goals of museums exist amongst professionals across the Nordic museum world. It is not possible to read the studies as measuring the exact same, or to know what each professional means when referring to 'social engagement' services (Andresen et al., 2020; Audunson et al., 2020). Rather, the ambiguity found within all of the studies suggests that not all museum workers have similar views and understandings of what the social role of the museum might or should be, and how this could be reached in their specific institution. It suggests that a one-size-fits-all method for participation in museums, or other social engagement methods, is not feasible nor useful in this ambiguous professional landscape. Some museum workers appear to be reluctant to a socially-engaged museum in the first place, and those who indicated to be open to it have diverging ideas of how this is best fulfilled.

Competencies for museum participation

In addition to the attitudes and perceptions of information professionals, scholarship focuses on their development and education, and the skills that are considered necessary for working in memory institutions. When it comes to working with participation specifically, an interesting find from Andresen et al. (2020) is that the educational background of professionals appears to influence their attitude towards the active involvement of users of the memory institution. The authors speculate that professionals with an ALM education were more concerned with the institutional implications of working with users and the role of the professional, whereas others – without such educational background – stressed the importance of including users as stakeholders and letting them decide. At the same time, however, practitioners have also reflected in writing on what type of training would better prepare professionals for work with more participation of citizens or users (e.g. White, 2016; Lankes et al., 2015).

With the changes in focus within museum practice and museum scholarship, as outlined in the discussions earlier about new museology, the museum professions have been considered to change (Hooper-Greenhill, 2000). Looking at Hooper-Greenhill's work, we can see that the education for museum professionals has been changing alongside museums' aims and values (Hooper-Greenhill, 2000). She stressed the changing communicative function of the museum and reflects on the direct effect on the museum profession. As a result of these changes, she argued, a change is occurring in the types of roles present within the museum, and the knowledge these

professionals hold. Museums tend to have a better understanding of differentiated audiences, and professionals have a renewed focus on how audiences best learn and include this in how exhibits are displayed, as well as choosing different narratives for exhibits (Hooper-Greenhill 2000, 28–30).

The trend that Hooper-Greenhill discussed in 2000 seems to have continued, as researchers reported a shift toward the growing importance of soft skills over academic knowledge in job ads posted in Denmark (Jensen, 2019). An earlier study amongst Canadian graduates of Museum Studies programmes, similarly stressed their reliance on developed soft skills in their jobs, as well as knowledge of public and educational functions of museums (Duff et al., 2010). In both studies, what was continuously stressed, was the need for practical experience. This finding correlates with what came out of an investigation of interviews conducted in the early 2000s (Hakamies, 2017). Hakamies analysed interviews with museum professionals and found that some distinguished themselves as 'museum people' from others working in the museum, specifically based on their relationship to practically handling objects. At the same time, Hakamies reported a differentiation between the 'old guard' and new employees, who had different ideas about how much work with objects should or could be central to their expertise. As a whole, these studies suggest that museum professionals have been and continue to be judged and trained for a specific 'practicality of museum work' (Jensen, 2019, p. 482), but that what counts as museum work in practice has been changing.

In response, professionals have been urged to be better – or differently – equipped to, amongst other changes, work with participation. Museum practitioner Helen White explicated that this means to have different skills and skillsets present in the museum (White, 2016). Her museum invited external communication consultants to improve their practice, but others argued for a change in the education of museum professionals themselves (Lankes et al., 2015). White (2016) highlighted competencies previously outlined by Visser (2017),[9] which can be summarised as communication, collaboration, creative problem solving and being mission-driven, socially aware, responsible, curious, and a 'people-person', in addition to having technological skills. Lankes, Stephens and Arjona (2015) reported on a workshop specifically focused on identifying skills for library and museum professionals in 'participatory culture,' suggesting similar 'key core skills' with accompanying competencies:

- Transformative social engagement (activism, social responsibility, critical social analysis, advocacy, and understanding community needs)
- Technology (crowdsourcing/outreach; the ability to engage and evolve with technology; ability to impart technical skills to

[9] White (2016) refers to a text by Visser that was posted online and later included in his 2017 compilation, referred to here.

community across generations; and creating and maintaining an effective virtual presence)
- Management for participation (institutional sustainability; advocacy for the institution; economics; ethics and values; understanding the benefits and barriers of sharing; collaborating with peers and within interdisciplinary teams; and assessment, analytics, and impact)
- Asset management (the preservation and safeguarding, collection, and organisation of materials)
- Cultural skills (communication; intercultural skills that happen at both the micro and macro level; languages and terminology; and support for multiple types of literacies)
- Knowledge/learning/innovation (the construction of knowledge; improvisation or innovation; interpretation; dissemination; and information seeking) (Lankes et al., 2015, pp. S64-S67)

Again, (inter)personal skills, rather than topic knowledge are stressed. In particular, the ability to work together with communities or participants is highlighted throughout the two suggestions of skillsets by Lankes and colleagues (2015) and White (2016). Thereby, these two practical skillsets mirror competencies for practices of participation that scholarship pushes for, in order to embrace more creative, collaborative exhibition-making practices, such as the work discussed previously in this literature review. That is not to say that topical and specialist knowledge is undervalued by professionals themselves, as became clear in the discussion of the surveys in the Nordic countries (Andresen et al., 2020; Audunson et al., 2019, 2020; Huvila, 2016).

Professionals' roles and identity in museum participation

The 'practicality' of the museum work of participation (Jensen, 2019, p. 482), however, is only limitedly studied. Others have previously pointed out the lack of empirical data about professionals in memory institutions working with participation (Huvila, 2016), and the lack of a general understanding of a museum profession (Tlili, 2016). One potential reason why this is lacking, is that in practice, there is not one explicit group of professionals responsible for participatory projects, but studies about museum professionals tend to focus on practices of separate professional groups as curators (e.g. Ashmore, 2015; Grande, 2017), educators (e.g. Kletchka, 2021; Kristinsdóttir, 2017), conservators (e.g. Eastop, 2011; Graham, 2019; Dominguez Rubio, 2020) or management, leadership and administration (e.g. Alberti et al., 2018; Casadio, 2021; Pegno and Brindza, 2021). Furthermore, roles of museum professionals have been reportedly 'widened' through policy focused on new-museological ideas (McCall and Gray, 2014, p. 30). As such, it is unsurprising that many of

the groups above have been discussed to be involved in participatory work in some way, but not as their core responsibility. Especially the curator's job is highlighted in case studies and surveys about participation (Coghlan, 2018; Kershaw et al., 2018; Lynch, 2011b; Lynch and Alberti, 2010; Tatsi, 2011). Some museums, however work with dedicated departments or teams, such as outreach teams as Morse (2021) and Munro (2013) have focused on, or participation is done by artists or education staff (e.g. West, 2013). For curators, work with participation is often presented as a significant shift from their previous role; previously, a curator would draw on their expertise in a specific topic and now they might be asked to facilitate co-creating processes to make exhibits (Huvila, 2014). Sharing with non-experts a process that was earlier exclusive to curators or teams of curators, it is unsurprising that studies quote professionals voicing a fear of 'loss of control' (Coghlan, 2018; Kershaw et al., 2018; Lynch, 2011b; Lynch and Alberti, 2010). Tatsi (2011) suggests that professionals working in a museum that introduces participatory methods in their exhibition design might show resistance, to conclude that a better 'integration of the autonomous curatorship skills and knowledge of museum professionals' in these participatory processes would be beneficial (Tatsi, 2011, p. 77).

Taking the stance that it is the curator's job to do participatory projects, should be understood as a somewhat controversial suggestion, as seen in a 2012 discussion featured in *Museum Management and Curatorship* (Cole, 2012; Lasser, 2012; Wilson, 2012). Lasser argued that the curator's job is perfectly suited for this type of outreach: because of their specialist knowledge of the museum's collections, they can act as a 'collection-community matchmaker' (Lasser, 2012, p. 209), and the curator has something to learn here as well from direct contact with people which might offer profound insights (p. 211). A respondent to Lasser underlined how important it is that the curator itself, instead of another staff member does this work (Wilson, 2012). On the other hand, Cole (2012) responded by questioning how 'curatorial' the task of the curators in the project actually was. She implied that there is a specific type of task that curators ought to do in these community-related projects, which at its core should still revolve around curatorial knowledge and decision-making and involve answering 'basic curatorial questions' listed by Cole (2012, p. 213), and not regard community-building, outreach or facilitation of this participatory work.

The last point brought up by Cole (2012) in the *Museum Management and Curatorship* discussion, touches upon an important question to consider for this study: regardless of *who* does participation, what is the practitioner expected to do? In literature describing or recommending tasks, practices, and processes the following can be distinguished: facilitation, collaboration, and critical reflection.

The facilitative role is recognised and deemed important by professionals themselves (Huvila, 2014) and recognised amongst professionals in other

memory institutions as important to co-creation processes and user-service (Moring and Schreiber, 2022; Tasker and Liew, 2020). In general terms, the changing role of the cultural heritage expert in participatory culture, is that now it is supposed to be someone able to facilitate others in engaging with (cultural heritage) material (Gabriel and Jensen, 2017). What facilitation exactly looks like in museum practice, is most elaborately discussed in relation to museum education (Pattison et al., 2017, 2018; Pattison and Dierking, 2013; White et al., 2021). There, facilitation is discussed as the means through which staff helps people 'progress in the complexity of learning, connects [them] to assorted activities at a reasonably fitting challenge level, and encourages interest and engagement' (White et al., 2021, p. 133). In a study aiming to create more empirical data about the practice of facilitation, Pattison and Dierking (2013) analysed videotaped instances of unstructured facilitation and specify facilitation to consist of initiating interaction, facilitating learning and introducing new goals. In the museum education literature, the discussion of challenges of facilitation's includes a moving away from content-based teaching, limiting the learning experience or providing too little structure and support (White et al., 2021, p. 134).

A facilitative practice in participation, however, seems to have many different forms, and not necessarily focus on facilitating learning. Facilitation looks different depending on the chosen method of participation: co-creating exhibits involve curators hosting (several) meetings with participants (Boon et al., 2014) or facilitating dialogue amongst participants (Brekke, 2013). Others argue that in community engagement, facilitators' work is defined by the 'relational' character and analysed as involving 'care' and 'emotion work' (Munro, 2014, p. 50). The facilitation practice is similarly analysed from a broad perspective, by Benson and Cremin (2019), who introduce themselves as facilitators. For them, facilitation by museum staff is about:

> Creating an environment, a social space where communities and individuals are connected and may talk to each other; the role of museum staff, in other words, becoming one of facilitation, of setting the tone for conversations to happen and, moreover, supporting such a dialogue to take place from the very outset. Such a process is about enabling a sense of "inreach", since "outreach" can only get us so far, is too one-way and unidirectional (Benson and Cremin, 2019, p. 19).

They further distinguish the importance of listening within this facilitation practice, as does Munro (2013). Complicating and challenging factors of this work can be derived from Munro and Morse's analysis of the emotional toll of this work, specifically resulting from the personal investment and lack of structural support facilitators can experience in their institutions (Morse, 2021; Munro, 2014). Facilitation can furthermore include navigating diverse opinions from participants, especially when it regards contentious objects or topics (West, 2013), one of the ways in which museums aim to stimulate

debate in an effort to engage visitors in democratic practice (see the earlier section *Museums advancing processes of democracy*). Most often, however, 'facilitating' is included as a gerund to explicate participation goals of the museum, such as facilitating 'connections' or 'engagement' (e.g. Onciul, 2018). Overall, the focus then lies on a process of facilitation, rather than a specific practice.

Closely related to facilitation is the idea of collaboration as part of participatory practice. This has been particularly developed in the literature regarding ethnographic museums and their indigenous communities' collections (Boast, 2011; Brown and Peers, 2005; Golding and Modest, 2013b). Where facilitation is more directly described as a process that someone – the outreach staff, curator, or community engagement facilitator – does, collaboration tends to be more described as a strategy of the museum as a whole. Brown (2016), however, goes into detail to describe how the Pitt Rivers Museum collaborates with Blackfoot communities. She shows the nuances of such work and the various practices it actually includes: waiting for members of the Blackfoot group to reach a consensus, inviting communities into the museum, and going to Blackfoot territory (Brown, 2016). Collaborating is described to also involve specific logistical or technological tasks, as Dewhurst and MacDowell (2015) described, stating that they had to '[understand] and creatively [navigate] logistical challenges of working through differences of connectivity, technology, time zones, institutional and community priorities, work schedules, and cultural calendars' (p. 54). Reflecting on collaboration with source communities as she introduced in her seminal co-edited book (Brown and Peers, 2005), Laura Peers (2019) also discussed the practical issues in the logistics of collaboration which involves creating new procedures and processes of financial reimbursement and allowing short notice visits and requests. She argued that these lay bare some structural issues for such collaboration in museums, when she states: 'why [do] special projects always rely on external funding, and why funding applications need to be written in the language of scholarly research or foundation agendas in order to fund activities designed to meet community needs' (Peers, 2019, p. 48). Collaboration, in short, can both be understood as a general strategy of museums that can lie at the base of participatory projects, as well as require specific practice in museum work.

Finally, from the critical voices within museum participation literature comes the notion that professionals ought to take a critical and reflective stance in their work with participants. This is related to the other two processes discussed: museum staff should be critical when facilitating and collaborating (Brown, 2016; Tooby, 2019). Tooby argued that while facilitating, curators 'must recognise the potential impact of disadvantage on individuals, and engage with personal priorities of ethics, politics and spiritual values' (Tooby, 2019, p. 19). Noticeably, in the papers and books which purport such collaborative practices because of a need to democratise museum practices,

such critical reflection is frequently included (e.g. Boon et al., 2014; Graham, 2012; Knudsen, 2016; Lagerkvist, 2006; Lynch and Alberti, 2010; Modest, 2013; Stuedahl et al., 2019; Taffe and Kelly, 2020). Their general critique includes scrutinising the term 'community', not only as distinct from public but also as including 'a wide diversity of people', that thus requires unpacking and problematising (Douglas, 2017; Golding and Modest, 2013a, p. 20). In addition, the difficulties of attempting to achieve a collaborative practice on uneven grounds, where some communities are privileged (the museum) and others are not (the 'community'), is extensively discussed (e.g. Lynch, 2011b; Lynch and Alberti, 2010). In turn, this inequality brings up concerns regarding participants' agency (Sitzia, 2019), or potential misunderstandings regarding agreements and copyright (Graham et al., 2013). Not only is this critical reflection performed in the many case-based studies, but practitioners themselves argue for a reflective practice integrated within the design of participatory projects, where practitioners reflect together with participants on the processes (Lynch, 2013, 2011a; Smith and Iversen, 2014; Stuedahl et al., 2019). Brown (2016) makes some specific suggestions for what collaborative reflection might look like when working with source communities: learning others' protocols of collaboration, knowing the inequalities present and providing 'assurances that [the museum is] serious about working together' (p. 140).

Altogether, who does participation in museums is debated in literature and done differently in various institutions. Furthermore, the role of the professional involved is described to include processes of facilitation, collaboration and critical reflection. The latter two being similarly discussed as general strategies of museums when it comes to participation, as well as processes that practitioners engage in. I furthermore highlighted that the descriptions of the three processes are not very specific, when discussed in relation to participation projects. Some researchers and practitioners reflect on what these processes look like in their specific museum, gesturing to, but not explicating the specific practice of such work.

Organisational perspectives on museum work and participation

An important angle for this study about how museums do participation, is to consider how participation is organisationally situated. Previous research that included organisational angles in relation to participation, has focused on how organisational or institutional structures hinder or foster participation (Boersma, 2022; Graham et al., 2013; Kist and Tran, 2021; Morse, 2018, 2021) and the implementation of policy in practice (McCall and Gray, 2014; Robinson, 2020). In a more general way, throughout discussions of participatory projects, an oft-cited critique is that the particular short-term project-based style in which participation appears in museums can be

problematic (Morse, 2021; Bienkowski, 2018). These three organisational perspectives on participation will be discussed next.

First, researchers have discussed elements of museum organisations that hinder or foster participation (Lotina, 2014; Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt and Runnel, 2018; Runnel and Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt, 2014; Tatsi and Aljas, 2014). Here, they considered how aspects of the organisation either make it easy for people to participate or easy for professionals to successfully organise a participatory project. Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt and Runnel (2018) discuss several barriers to participation from the museum worker's side, referring to Metsmaa (2015). The barriers include fears, external pressure and aims, how well a project is designed for the specific context, lack of understanding, lack of resources and lack of participants (Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt and Runnel, 2018, pp. 151–152). Earlier, Runnel and Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt (2014) collected several studies where colleagues touched upon organisational issues in relation to various participatory interventions. Tatsi and Aljas, for example, discussed the importance of participatory projects overlapping with existing procedures and structures of decision-making within an organisation (Tatsi and Aljas, 2014, p. 158). Furthermore, organisational responsibility and potential to inhibit or support individual motivations of people to participate, has been discussed (Runnel et al., 2014), in particular providing 'access to information' about participation and procedures in the museum (p. 233).

A more recent trend has focused on infrastructures in memory institutions and how they support participatory efforts or not. These include information infrastructures (Jansson, 2018; Kist and Tran, 2021), as well as the more general organisational structure of a museum (Boersma, 2022). Kist and Tran (2021) discussed how professionals working to increase online access to collections are guided by the infrastructures in place and need to negotiate user needs within their institutional context. Jansson (2018) also discussed digital infrastructures, by analysing how participants and practitioners interact on a digital forum as part of a crowdsourcing project. She suggested that the infrastructure can at once support such a project as a way to identify what concepts are used by different actors involved, but can also limit participant involvement. In addition, non-technical structural elements of museums have been discussed in relation to participation. Boersma (2022), when analysing projects with 'flight migrants', pin points several hindering elements of the organisational structures of the respective museums. In particular, she addressed how museums' departmentalisation can hinder collaboration between different departments and in turn limit sustainable outcomes of participatory projects through, for example, collecting (Boersma, 2022, p. 227). Morse called such a division within an institution 'organisational silos' (Morse, 2021, p. 105). The problem she observed with such seperation is that management maintains a different understanding of the value of community engagement, from the facilitators. Ultimately, these studies all point out that it is important that participation and democratic decision-making is recognised

and valued throughout the organisation (Boersma, 2022; Morse, 2021; Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt and Runnel, 2018).

In addition to these structural and internal elements of organisations that authors point out, researchers also have focused on external policies addressing participation (Kershaw et al., 2018; Lindström Sol, 2019; Robinson, 2020), thereby investigating the 'organisational field' of museum institutions (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983). Some studies have focused on how these policies are or are not applied in practice (McCall and Gray, 2014; Morse, 2018), and both Lindström Sol (2019) and Robinson (2020) investigated how participation is defined and described in such policy. Lindström Sol (2019) followed how the value of cultural participation was phrased as 'equal access to culture' in policy documents and then interpreted as 'empowerment' by the staff working with these policies in the broader cultural sector in Gothenburg (Lindström Sol, 2019, p. 11). Robinson (2020) analysed several policy documents geared towards museums, ultimately to argue that new-museological ideas continue to award a 'regulating' role to the museum institution. While doing so she highlighted the different interpretations of 'participation of museum stakeholders' found across the sample, based on how much level of influence is awarded to various participants (Robinson, 2020, p. 475). Importantly, both studies note the increase in focus on participation on a policy-level. This makes McCall and Gray (2014)'s study very valuable. Their study does not explicitly deal with policies regarding participation, but they investigated how 'new-museological' policies are implemented in practice. The study revealed different attitudes towards change pushed for by policy amongst professionals within the same institution, but also that differing definitions found in policy can provide space for staff 'to pursue their own activities in creative ways' (McCall and Gray, 2014, p. 28). A later study by Morse (2018), gives an indication of one possible contributing factor to different implementations of policies, considering the many accountabilities staff have when working with participatory projects. Policy can be a driver, but one of many drivers such as personal motivation and professional standards, needs of participants or funder requirements (Morse, 2018, p. 179).

Finally, a third organisational perspective on participation can be understood as a more distributed critique. Namely, that participation in museums tends to be organised as one-off, short-term projects (Bienkowski, 2018; Dewhurst and MacDowell, 2015; Lynch, 2011b; Morse, 2021). Lynch (2011b) pointed out how the short-term funding that museums use for participation, made that these projects were often not really integrated within the museum organisation. As such, it was hard for museums to work towards more sustainable impact of such projects. O'Neill (2010) and Lynch (2011b) both argued that this is problematic, as it refrains museum organisations to be truly impacted by participants' input (Lynch, 2011b), and also limits the museum's ability to impact participants (O'Neill, 2010). Moving away from

short-term projects is seen as an important step by practitioners who are focused on finding ways to '[embed] participatory practice' in their organisation (Bienkowski, 2018, pp. 6-7). Similarly, reflecting on collaborations with community groups, Dewhurst and MacDowell (2015) referred to the challenge of moving beyond 'one-off' engagements, or what Peers (2019) discussed as 'special projects', and stressed the importance of sustaining communication and partnerships. Bienkowski (2018) also makes suggestions for sustained communication, or more structural involvement of stakeholders in official roles.

In sum, research has highlighted a few different organisational issues when it comes to participation in museums. Structural elements of the museum organisation, such as divisions into departments, procedures and information infrastructures, can inhibit how participatory efforts and participants' input can be integrated into the museum. Furthermore, interests in cultural participation on a political level has increased external pressure on some museums to implement participation. These policies can include different interpretation of what participation is, and is one of several 'accountabilities' museum staff can face in their work (Morse, 2018). Finally, researchers and practitioners pointed out that the short-term project funding they often use to fund participatory projects, leads to project-based, peripheral participation that is not embedded in museum institution. Both practitioners and researchers argue that more sustained contact with communities would be beneficial for increasing impact of participation to the museum and participants.

Work practices of participation outside the museum

Participatory practices are present and popular in multiple fields. With the limited empirical studies on professionals' practices with participation in museums, it is relevant to consider what is known about such practice as it takes shape in fields that can be understood as related to museum work. Museum scholars and professionals apply participatory or social design methods or theories, and design scholars have completed projects in museum institutions (Ciolfi et al., 2008, 2016). A second field of study to consider in relation to memory institutions, is public governance, where civil servants are organising citizen participation.

In the social design field, including participatory design, scholars reflect on their and (often) combined role of researcher, designer, and facilitator. As such, the participatory design literature has included a focus on professionals' roles and the organisational processes that impact projects. For example, Maria Eggertsen Teder (2019) analysed six roles and corresponding practices of design professionals in participatory placemaking processes. The first role identified is that of overseer and connecter, or curator. This regards the convenor of all people and things involved. The facilitator engages stakeholders. The metadesigner designs a project over time, and a negotiator

handles conflict. Two roles were not observed by the researcher in the two case studies she addressed, but identified through literature study: involver and enthusiast. Eggertsen Teder (2019) argues that designers can take up one or more of these roles in respective projects. The practices described through this discussion of roles, include facilitation and collaboration, but simultaneously gestures to organisational responsibility of the design of these projects. Mosleh and Larsen (2021) and Bødker, Dindler and Iversen (2017), however, point out that there, in general, is a lack of focus on the organisational tasks of the designer. Both studies include such a focus by taking on a processual view on participation. Mosleh and Larsen (2021) ultimately argue that the designer is also an actor in participation and 'cannot stand outside' the project (p. 18). Bødker et al. (2017) furthermore argue that multiple organisational stakeholders interact through 'knotworking,' taking place both horizontally and vertically, which connects the 'messy activities that go on before, between and after the participatory workshops' (p. 269). In both these processual approaches, the designer is not seen as a separate professional in charge of a project, but as one element in a larger structure or network through which things are designed. As such, facilitation of participatory projects is introduced as a complex practice.

Research about participatory projects in public service, has also investigated the roles and work of professionals. Reviewing literature within public governance studies, Steen and Tuurnas (2020) argued that professionals need to focus both on enabling participation using interpersonal skills and providing support as facilitators, as well as keeping an eye on diverging interests within and outside their institution by '[supporting] and ["orchestrating"] the collaboration' to create public value beyond the interaction (Steen and Tuurnas, 2020, p. 84). Highlighted as influential in professionals' willingness to work with participation in their literature review (Steen and Tuurnas, 2020), are both the attitudes of professionals towards citizen participation and the experienced support in their respective organisation. For example, Zhang and Yang (2009) showed that public administrators' attitudes towards citizen input in participatory budget processes influence their likelihood to invest in such processes and efforts to incorporate citizen contributions. Another study by Yang (2005) specifically highlighted the importance of trust in citizens for professionals' willingness to implement participation in public governance. Steen and Tuurnas (2020) reiterate the impact of professionals' attitudes on different coproduction efforts in public governance. The studies, however, also suggest that motivation and attitude alone is not a defining factor, and that environment and organisational support are crucial to support staff's motivation. Steen and Tuurnas argue that organisational culture is important to support and nurture professionals' motivation by allowing, through appropriate policies and processes, for citizen input (Steen and Tuurnas, 2020, p. 88). Similarly, Zhang and Yang (2009) point to the political environment as directly impacting the

municipal workers' context. A stable political environment would encourage managers to engage with citizen participation (p. 307). Furthermore, their study found that, the higher up in the organisational ladder, the more negative, professionals tended to be towards citizen input (Zhang and Yang, 2009, p. 307). Together, the studies in public governance also highlight roles of professionals in participatory endeavours, but instead of connecting them to specific practices, the studies focused on professionals' specific organisational embeddedness and their personal motivations and attitudes.

The brief look into research in these two fields illustrate the different approaches taken in both, but offer two important perspectives to consider when studying practices of professionals in participation in museums. First, participatory design suggest that professionals can take on one or multiple roles in projects, the processual view highlights their embeddedness in these projects, rather than being an external designer of a project. Second, in public governance studies, the multivarious roles of professionals in co-production was highlighted as being both about facilitation and organisation. Furthermore, studies suggest that both personal attitude and the institution's organisational culture can contribute to the likelihood of civil servants including co-production in their service design. Altogether, outside of the museum world, the combination of both facilitation and organisation, as well as the combination of personal attitude and organisational support, is highlighted as typical for and impacting professionals' roles in participation.

Conclusion

The literature review approached participation in three ways: as a concept, a multitude of museum practices, and a job for professionals. The first part focused on the underlying argumentation and promises of participation in relation to museum institutions. It revealed the political nature of participation, as it builds on new-museological ideas and on political theory. A closer look into these underlying ideas suggested that three promises of democratisation attached to participation can be identified: to engage people in democratic processes, to democratise museum practices of collecting and representation, and for the museum to be a social actor in society. A secondary argumentation for participation builds on redeveloped understandings of the museum's educational mission in participatory culture, signified by quickly developing technological innovations.

The second section investigated how participation in museums has been defined through the development of categories of museum practices. This section showed that the chosen lens to look at, and for some authors, valuate, specific participatory projects can create different categories that rely on different argumentation. I suggested that the focus on the participatory process and redistribution of power centres the level of influence participants have as

the denominating feature. Here, power and agency become important terms through which to discuss projects. A second group distinguished participation categories based on the effects on both museum and participant actors, which in turn emphasised empowerment and contribution. Then, authors discuss participation through the different relationships between participants and the museum institution. Through this lens, hindrances, motivations and catalysers in participatory projects have been brought to the fore. A fourth group focused on methods used in practice, using different names and categories: community engagement, audience engagement and interaction, dialogue, co-production, crowdsourcing and online participation and advisory boards. Finally, I discussed how a spatial and logics-focus gave some authors a broader perspective in order to defy categorisation. The benefit of such a view was pointed out as it draws attention to contextuality, processes and relationships as constituting participation.

The third section reviewed literature that explicitly dealt with the museum practitioner, the museum organisation and work, in relation to participation. Surveys suggested that European professionals in ALM institutions are generally open towards various participation-related services in their institution, but not every practitioner is convinced, and discrepancies were found in their understandings of the purpose and execution of these services. The review furthermore showed that for several years, people have argued to reconsider the competencies required for museum work, based on the changing practices in museums. The roles of museum practitioners have broadened, but participation seems to be a responsibility that is distributed differently within institutions. Attention has been given to the changing role of curators especially. Research named collaboration, facilitation and reflection as important processes, but they have only sparingly been investigated empirically in the case of participatory projects. Studies furthermore gestured to the influence of organisational structures, external policy and short-term funding for the organisational setting of participation in museums. A brief investigation of professionals' roles in participatory design and public governance revealed the various roles and tasks professionals take on in participation and co-production in these fields, where both organisational tasks and facilitative tasks are pinpointed, as well as the relation between individual attitudes and organisational culture as potential motivating factors to organise participation.

Taken together, the literature review stressed a broad spectrum and approaches to participation in practice and research, with a focus on projects and various democratising promises. It furthermore suggests that to understand how participation is organisationally situated in museums, a research approach that could account for and bring together multivarious processes and elements, in various types of projects, is crucial. In the next chapter, I outline how this study will employ practice theory to study participation in the museum organisation.

3 Theoretical Framework

The aim of this thesis is to explore practices that contribute to participatory projects in order to understand how participation is organisationally situated, maintained and done in museums. This has two theoretical implications for the study. First, its focus on practices warrants a practice theory approach (Nicolini, 2012). Second, the museum will be approached as an 'assembled organisation' and meaningful institution (Morse et al., 2018). After the discussion of these stances leading the empirical study, I will provide the theoretical grounding for two themes that emerged from analysis and will be brought up in the discussion and conclusion. First, two types of work are embedded in practice in participatory projects: maintenance and emotion work. Second, the various practices can be understood to relate to each other as infrastructure.

Practice approach: zooming in and out of practice

An understanding of our world as constructed through action underlies practice theory (Schatzki, 2012, p. 13). Practice theory can best be understood as a collection of theories (Nicolini, 2012; Schatzki, 2012, p. 13) that have been developed as a response to bring together micro and macro perspectives in scientific thought (Schatzki, 2001). Giddens (1984) and Bourdieu (1977) focused on practices as a way to oppose rigid opposition between individual action and social structure. This ultimately became a popular approach to studying composites of our social world in a myriad of fields. Studies following this so-called 'practice approach' either map out practices or study how practices shape other objects of study (Schatzki, 2001, p. 11). The popularisation of this approach has been termed a 'practice turn' in, amongst others, information studies (Cox, 2012; Knorr Cetina et al., 2001). In the following, I briefly introduce information studies' investment in practice theory, after which I draw out my understanding of Nicolini's (2012) practice approach in relation to others'. The section ends with an explanation on how practice theory will be applied in this study.

Gullbekk (2021) proposes that in relation to the afore-mentioned practice turn a 'research programme' within information studies emerged, that started to draw attention to practices in relation to information professions and

information use (p. 21). In particular, information studies has long had an interest in information practice (McKenzie, 2003; Wilson, 1999). The collective understanding of information practice has been largely developed from a social constructionist understanding of human action (Talja et al., 2005). This focus can be seen as having been started with an interest in everyday life information seeking (McKenzie, 2003; Savolainen, 1995). Such a contextual or 'situated' approach has been leading in the further development of information practice from a social-constructionist paradigm (Savolainen, 2007; Talja et al., 2005). It is here where the link with practice theory, or a practice-approach appears, with a tendency to define information practice in terms of the social (Cox, 2012; Pilerot et al., 2017; Savolainen, 2007).

A second investment in practice found in information studies, has been its interest in communities of practice. Andrew Cox (2012) picks out the community of practice concept as being particularly influential in information studies in general, and in knowledge management (KM), in particular. Especially conceptualisations of knowledge as developed by Gherardi (2009) have found fruitful ground in KM research, putting forward a more relational, embedded and practice-based understanding of knowledge in organisations (Cox, 2012, p. 179). According to Cox, this is closely related to the information studies' interest in Wenger's communities of practice concept to signal research into group learning and information practices (Wenger, 1999).

Overall, practice theory has been applied using different theoretical strands and qualitative methods in information studies (Pilerot et al., 2017). Some identify a narrowing into domain-specific information practice research, as it occurs in specific work or scholarly environments (Savolainen, 2007). Practice theory has been used to study work practices, of for example librarians when working with immigrant and refugee populations (Pilerot, 2018), or scholarly research practices (Gullbekk, 2021; Palmer and Cragin, 2009). In Pilerot (2018), we can see the benefit of bringing together different viewpoints on practice, as he discusses three dimensions: cultural-discursive, social, and material-economical. In the present study, a similar approach is followed by using an 'eclectic approach' to practice theory as advocated for by Davide Nicolini (2012, p. 242).

Nicolini's practice approach as developed in organisational studies is key in this study as it offers a way to bring together various practice theory views with the goal of studying practices in organisations (2009, 2012). In his work, he draws together various strands of practice theory, arguing that the differences between those theories are smaller than the ways in which they relate (Nicolini, 2012, p. 214). Building on those similarities, he summarises the following characteristics of practices as developed in different practice theories:

- Practices are discursive and material actions made meaningful and possible
- They are situated in a specific context, 'inherently contingent and materially mediated'
- All practices are social
- All practices are carried out and contingent on actors who are reflexive and have agency
- Practices are connected and structure our 'social co-existence' through which power is made (p. 214)

Understood as such, practices are organised activities, which at the same time can be divided into smaller tasks (Byström and Lloyd, 2012) and are constitutive elements themselves of social phenomena (Schatzki, 2012). Practices can be both mundane activities or specialist actions, but relevant to all theoretical understandings of practice is the consideration that practices are organised activities, the constitutive element of social phenomena, embodied and materially-bounded (Schatzki, 2012, pp. 13–14). Their social and embodied nature are recognised, as advocated by Bourdieu (1977), and considered to stand in relation to each other in structures, as developed by Giddens (1984). Specific to Nicolini is the study of practice in organisational settings, and his focus on practice approach as applied theory (Nicolini, 2012; Nicolini and Monteiro, 2016).

Central to Nicolini's contribution to the practice theory discourse is his proposal of a 'toolkit' or 'eclectic approach,' shaped around a distinction of 'zooming in' and 'zooming out' on practice (Nicolini, 2012, p. 213). He thereby provides a way to overcome a problem of plenty of practice-oriented studies, as identified by scholars in information studies, of ill-defining their theoretical stance which is often pluralistic, but not described as such (Cox, 2012; Pilerot et al., 2017). When looking at Pilerot, Hammarfelt and Moring (2017), in their review of practice theory approaches in information studies, this pluralism becomes apparent, as all qualitatively reviewed papers include at least two practice theories on which they build. Nicolini offers a 'theory-method package' of practice theory, with 'sensitising concepts' based on such different theoretical underpinnings, through which to investigate practices, by:

> [Z]ooming in on the accomplishments of practice; zooming out to discern their relationships in space and time; and using the above devices to produce diffracting machinations that enrich our understanding through thick textual renditions of mundane practices (Nicolini, 2012, p. 219).

It provides a very practical application of theory as it makes suggestions on where to look, using various theoretical underpinnings but breaking with 'extreme formalization' following one approach (p. 222).

In this study, 'zooming in on practice' entails a strong focus on seemingly boring, everyday tasks, as they happen in the process of creating conditions for (Chapter 6) planning of (Chapter 7) and the doing of participation (Chapters 8 and 9) in museums. This close-up investigation will broaden the perspective on museum participation as presented in the literature review by mapping out and analysing practices that underly and constitute the promises, differing definitions and organisational structures involved in participation. Going with Nicolini's approach to practice, means that I take cues from several practice theorists. In the descriptions of activities, attention will be given to 'sayings and doings' of practitioners and participants, their practical concerns, the subsequent interactional order that this produces, and the role of certain tools and objects in these mundane practices (Schatzki, 2002, p. 87). Important as well, however, are embodiment of skill (Bourdieu, 1977), and Schatzki's 'teleo-affective structures' as a practical concern, or a focus on purpose in practice as experienced by practitioners (Nicolini, 2012, pp. 221–223). Rather than keeping with one of these theorists, I agree with Nicolini who suggests that 'zooming in is not obtained by putting the practice under an ideal microscope but rather by expanding the number of tools in our bag of tricks' (ibid., p. 223). As such, 'zooming in' on practice requires an interest in the specific, everyday contexts in which the practices that contribute to participation occur, through considering the tools and materials used in practice, experience and skills, as well as motivation and purpose. This 'eclectic approach' fits the move towards a more processual view on museum practice and participation (cf. Morse, 2021; Mucha, 2022), and affords a practical application of theory.

In order to 'zoom out', Nicolini (2012) suggests applying two considerations: how do practices relate to each other and how do they produce effect (p. 231). This is proposed to overcome a difficulty of researching practices: that it is at once locally and contextually bounded, but also contributes to an understanding of organisation. This means that practices are never *only* about what happens on the ground, in practice and what actions are involved. Rather, they relate to each other and produce effect beyond the direct action. This has been approached by practice theorists, previously. Most noteworthy is Anthony Giddens (1984), who developed his understanding of practice in relation to constituting of more general social structures and Latour – whether or not he is a practice theorist should be left to debates taking place outside of this dissertation – works with networks to consider relations (Latour, 2005). Nicolini largely follows Latour's thinking, when he purports to think about a 'nexus of connections' between practices (Nicolini, 2012, p. 229). Studying the relations between practices, then, requires following them 'in space and time' and considering how they are retained (ibid., p. 231).

In this study, zooming out on practices of participation in the two museums is firstly about the relation between practices and secondly about how practices effect each other. This first entails an investigation of practices

throughout different participatory projects as they happen in distributed moments and in relation to different people. I follow Nicolini's (2012) suggestion to look at 'mediators' of practice, by considering material such as funding applications, but also turn to the previously identified organisational structures and systems encountered throughout practices (p. 232). These relations between and the continuation of practices as they are mediated, ultimately serves to better understand the effect of the various practices. Second, it will be argued that the practices analysed in this thesis produce effect and relate beyond the successive order in which they are presented. The ways in which these practices produce effect (differently) in both museums, will be taken up as a way to reflect on this part of 'zooming out'. In this study, Chapter 10 discusses the relations and effects between practices. Ultimately, the concept of infrastructure will be applied to consider these relations in a final proposal included in the conclusion, Chapter 11.

The museum: an assembled organisation and meaningful institution

An important part of studying practices, is to consider their situatedness in social and historical contexts, because practices are understood to have structuring qualities in their environment (Cox, 2012). In this study, museums are the context of practice. The museum as a context of practice is understood two-fold. Centring firstly on the professionals' practice, the museum is considered from an organisational perspective, particularly as an 'assembled organisation' (Morse et al., 2018). Simultaneously, as the practices also concern the interaction with participants external to the museum, the museum is also approached as an institution with a societal relevance. This is a way to bring several theoretical influences together.

In this study, viewing the museum as an 'assembled organisation', a term proposed by Morse, Rex and Richardson (2018), signals three moves. First, I put myself in conversation with other museum studies scholars who study the museum as an organisation (Macdonald, 2002; Morgan, 2018; Morse, 2018, 2021; Rex, 2018; Saaze et al., 2018). Morse and colleagues advocate more organisationally focused investigations of the museum, with a strong emphasis on practice (Morse et al., 2018, p. 113). In their proposal, they argue that such an organisational approach contributes to our understanding of museums in three ways. First, embedded in their call is a striving for more theoretically grounded examinations of how topics that are central to critical museology, like politics, power and representation, are included in everyday museum work (Shelton, 2013). This has been done through studies in which museums' backstage spaces have been fore fronted, most importantly by Sharon Macdonald in her ethnographic account of exhibition making in the

Science Museum in London (Macdonald, 2002). Her text can be seen as a starting point for other scholars to investigate such spaces (Morgan, 2013; Dominguez Rubio, 2020; Turner, 2016). Morse, Rex and Richardson (2018) point out a second contribution of organisational approaches to museums: they provide closer accounts of everyday museum work. This provided for example investigations of conservation practices (Graham, 2019; Dominguez Rubio, 2020), but also management (Morgan, 2018; Rex, 2018), cataloguing (Saaze et al., 2018) and community engagement (Morse, 2021). An important instigator of this organisational approach to participatory practices is Helen Graham, who argued for '[making] the museum small (by locating it in much wider contexts) and moving up close (to practice)' (2012, p. 568). Here we can understand Graham's 'moving up close' in the same way as Nicolini's 'zooming in.' Morse and her colleagues point out knowledge production as a third strand of organisational investigation of museums (Morse et al., 2018, p. 115). Interestingly, these authors do not refer to it themselves, but it is imperative to mention here as an example the important work done regarding knowledge management and organisation of museums in information studies, such as Huvila's investigation of knowledge creation in museum settings and Jansson's specific case of knowledge organisation in regard to data created through crowdsourced projects (Huvila, 2013; Jansson, 2018).

The second move involves taking an interest in the underlying premise of Actor-Network Theory (ANT) (Latour, 2005): that human and non-human actors connect structurally. Although that is where my relation to Latour stops, it is important to highlight it as ANT perspectives run through both the science and technology studies (STS) understanding of infrastructure introduced later, as well as the approach to practice theory that I take. This particularly revolves around the fact that I include, in my descriptions and analysis, an understanding of the place and influence of non-human actors as well. Morse and colleagues explain that an organisational approach to museums and heritage from an ANT or assemblage perspective (e.g. Bennett, 2015; Macdonald, 2009), is typified by 'its embrace of the myriad processes, the people and things involved in museum work, as opposed to its finished products' (Morse, Rex and Richardson, 2018, p. 117). As such, the museum is considered to be 'assembled' out of all these things. But, whereas much of ANT revolves around identifying properties of networks (Latour, 1996), the organisational perspective rather necessitates a focus on how these properties relate through practice. In this study, that is done through the method of zooming in and out on practice to investigate participation.

Finally, the way that Morse and her colleagues propose the 'assembled organisation' bares similarities with ethnomethodologically grounded workplace studies (Trace, 2011). Describing the museum as such thus involves taking cues from this research. The field of workplace studies is particularly concerned with technologies and digital media, and how they are integrated, and included in organisations (Garcia et al., 2006, p. 394; Heath et

al., 2000). Theoretically, this work is largely built on Garfinkel's idea of ethnomethodology, which considers the interactions between people and the processes of achieving mutual intelligibility through (mundane) actions (Rawls, 2008). Typical for these studies, and what they take from ethnomethodology, is the strong emphasis on descriptions of practice (Nicolini, 2012, p. 146). What follows is that to study organising in museums from such a perspective, it is important to study actions of organising, rather than the 'organisation' itself. Aligning with this approach to museums means that I put an emphasis on the everyday work practices of museum practitioners, as the locus where structural and practical demands of museum work come together with the ideological promises and different interpretations of participation. I explicitly engage further with an ethnomethodologist view on practice when applying Suchman's (2006) concept of planning in Chapter 7.

Simultaneous to focusing on the internal workings of the museum, this study acknowledges the importance of the place of a museum in its societal context. As became abundantly clear in the literature review, museums and scholars alike are concerned with museums' roles in society, especially when it comes to participation. As such, the empirical study firstly approaches the museum as 'assembled organisation', whilst acknowledging its broader societal context through an understanding of the museum as a meaningful institution. This is particularly relevant when considering participatory practices in museums, where people external to the museum take an active role as participants or bring in important perspectives as external stakeholders. It means that there are many different people involved in participation in museums, all of whom come with ideas and expectations about, or critiques of the museum as an institution. These expectations can be based on the value and meaning they give to museums, or is given to the museum by a specific community, group or society.

The relevance of considering that and how people relate to institutions has been extensively studied as part of the field of institutionalism. Broadly speaking, institutionalism considers 'structures in which institutions are embedded […] at multiple levels in society' (Haveman and Khaire, 2006, p. 280). Traditionally, institutions are understood to be both comprised of and created by 'rules, norms and cultural-cognitive beliefs' (Scott, 1995, p. 57). This latter understanding has formed the basis for neo-institutionalist theory, which centres on an understanding of behaviour as social action to which meaning is ascribed through symbols. Neo-institutionalism considers which commonly defined ideas are adhered to in order to provide legitimacy to organisations (Scott, 1995, p. 74) and highlights 'the shared conceptions that constitute the nature of social reality and create the frames through which meaning is made' (ibid., p. 67). Ideas about museums 'out there' matter to museums and their practices, because by adhering to this they are able to provide legitimacy to their organisation.

The meaning of museums, their value and role in society has been heavily theorised and critiqued. Historical research in the field of museum studies by amongst others Tony Bennett, has spearheaded an understanding of the museum as an institution of modernity which originally aimed to educate the population (Bennett, 1995). The institution has been reimagined as a 'contact zone' (Clifford, 1997), or as the holder of cultural memory (Assmann, 2010), criticised as a neo-colonial institution (Boast, 2011), and more recently the potential activist or transformative roles of museum institutions are being considered (e.g. Bayer et al., 2017; Janes and Sandell, 2019b; Sitzia, 2019; Sternfeld, 2018). Many of these various argumentations for or against the specific value of museums in contemporary western society have been brought up in relation to participation, as explicated in the literature review. The main take-away point for the theoretical perspective taken in this study, is that these discussions exist in academic and public discourse (Scott, 2010) and that people (visitors, museum workers, academics) have ideas and opinions about museums and their (potential) role in society as an institution. Simultaneously, the literature review showed that laws and policies provide a political influence on many (public) museums. This 'organisational field' of museums, from a neo-institutionalist perspective (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983), including associations and internationally recognised institutions such as ICOM, provide another sphere of influence and context. As such, participation investigated in this study take place in specific institutions embedded in societies and organisational fields, about which people, politics and associations have opinions. In this study, this means there is attention to the motivations from within and outside of the museum about what a museum and museum participation should do or be, carried by both practitioners and participants.

In short, the practices of participation in the two museums are investigated in an 'assembled organisation' which, through its embeddedness in society, is awarded different values and roles as a meaningful institution. The assembled organisation perspective signals this study's position in museum studies research and two theoretical underpinnings: ethnomethodology and ANT, which guide the practice theoretical study. Ethnomethodology, understood through its application in workplace studies, stresses the relevance of considering all work practices in the museum and proposes to write thick descriptions of practice in order to understand organisation. Taking cues from ANT means understanding the museum as being made up of various human and non-human elements that are structurally related. Finally, neo-institutionalist theory points to considering the different actors' understanding of what the museum is and should be or do as part of the practices they are engaged in.

Beyond-project concepts

Thus far, the theoretical framework that guides this study has been introduced. The discussion of practice theory concluded by taking on Nicolini's (2012) approach to 'zoom in and out' of practices as they take place in the museum as an 'assembled organisation,' that is awarded different meanings and values through its relation to society. This will firstly frame the analysis of the empirical data generated in the two museums to investigate separate practices, as will be presented in Chapters 6 to 9. The literature revealed a strong focus on project-based work in practice as well as in research, when it comes to participation in museums. As such, the analysis includes an investigation in practices as they occur in and make projects. The study aims to understand how participation consists of distributed practices within and between different projects, however, by focusing on the relation between the different practices and how effect is produced through these relations. Chapters 10 and 11 will include discussions about this relation between participatory projects and participation. Based on themes emerged through analysis, the discussion builds on the concepts of maintenance work and emotion work, and the conclusion includes a proposal based on the concept of infrastructure. The theoretical grounding of these terms is relevant for that discussion, as such I introduce them here first.

Maintenance work

In the discussion, the practices of practitioners are interpreted as maintenance work. Maintenance and repair studies have attempted to shed light on the ways in which social order is maintained through continuous interaction between actors and things (Denis et al., 2016). In our complex societies, maintenance work includes those activities which contribute to the 'learning' of society through the repairing and maintaining of 'things' (Graham and Thrift, 2007), such as electricity infrastructures (Henke, 1999), buildings (Jones and Yarrow, 2013) or signage (Denis and Pontille, 2015). Physical objects and materiality are critical in many of the studies grounded in science and technology studies (STS), but crucial to the maintenance perspective is to underline the unstable character of these seemingly stable things (Denis and Pontille, 2011). As such, in a seminal text, Graham and Thrift (2007), scrutinise the material focus: 'it becomes increasingly difficult to define what the 'thing' is that is being maintained and repaired. Is it the thing itself, or the negotiated order that surrounds it, or some 'larger' entity?' (p. 4). Later, Henke (2019) provides some clarity and argues repair is about maintaining a 'negotiated order' that creates complex social and technical systems. In the literature these systems are frequently referred to as infrastructures, as discussed by Star, Bowker and Ruhleder (Bowker and Star, 1998; Star and Ruhleder, 1996).

In cultural heritage institutions, maintenance work has been studied in relation to different 'infrastructural underpinnings of knowledge and cultural heritage' (Fürst, 2019, p. 62). Studies stress both material and social aspects of the practices involved, some divide their attention equally, others mostly stress either. One of the 'infrastructural underpinnings' could for example be 'authenticity,' as Jones and Yarrow (2013) put forward in their ethnographic study of conservation practices of a cathedral in Scotland. They argue that only through interaction – or negotiation – between people and things, do meanings of 'authenticity' emerge. Similarly, Fürst describes how librarians' digitisation work involves repair and maintenance in their conservation practices, but he extends this by discussing how order is also maintained through their cataloguing practices (Fürst, 2019). Both Fürst and Jones and Yarrow carefully relate the objects repaired by the 'repair workers' (conservators, builders, librarians, lay-persons with scanning duty) to the maintenance of something bigger. Furthermore, repair and maintenance comes up as an explicit social endeavour in cultural heritage institutions. Dindler (2014) refers to relation work in his paper about infrastructures in museums which allow for creative engagement. These practices involve 'the creation, exploration and maintenance of more or less stable networks of people and institutions,' (ibid., p. 215) and as such can be understood in a similar light as Henke's (2019) discussion about the relational aspect of repair. Kist also stresses the social aspect of repair practices and draws connections to care, as do others (Denis and Pontille, 2011; Kist, 2022b). She argues that in order to create feelings of safety amongst elderly participants in an online setting, museum staff engage with existing conditions through processes of repair (Kist, 2022b).

Following Henke (2019), the definition of maintenance work suggested in this study is 'a practice for negotiating order in contexts where heterogenous elements come together to create complex social and technical systems' (p. 257).[10] Within this line of thinking, it becomes clear that maintenance work is constitutive of that which it maintains. Based on studies of the maintenance of different infrastructures and social orders, a few different characteristics of this work will be considered in the discussion of practices constituting participation:

- Maintenance work is embodied. Maintenance workers described in studies by Henke (1999, 2019) and Jones and Yarrow (2013) use their bodily senses to distinguish 'normal' from abnormal. They smell, look at and touch the material at hand. Connected to this is the notion of embodied knowledge that can be considered performative, in a Goffmanian sense (Goffman, 1959).

[10] Henke (2019) describes repair work, but following his and others' explanations, I take both repair and maintenance work to be represented in the term 'maintenance work'.

- Maintenance work is relational. Henke (1999, 2019) proposes this as an extension of the embodied aspect, as he proposes to understand the body in these practices as networked: between people, things and practices. This aspect stresses work such as communication, management of expectations, or emotional work.
- Maintenance work is ongoing. This is argued in relation to maintaining as a type of caring for 'fragile things' (Denis and Pontille, 2011). Denis and Pontille build on Mol's (2008) logic of care to specifically highlight the material aspects of maintenance in their study of Parisian subway signs, which require constant caretaking. In a wider perspective, this all comes down to the idea that the negotiated, social order achieved through maintenance is always temporary and maintenance practices have to be repeated continuously (Denis and Pontille, 2015; Graham and Thrift, 2007).
- Because maintenance work is ongoing and about structuring disorder, improvisational aspects of the work are stressed by Henke (1999). As new resources present themselves to the repair worker informant in Henke's study, he engages in different actions to try out his hypotheses. This aspect is understood as oppositional to routine, because maintenance practices are taking place in an ongoing relationship between broken-down and fully functioning systems (or order and disorder) (Graham and Thrift, 2007, p. 3).
- Maintenance work carries with it three aspects of invisibility (Star and Strauss, 1999). The work itself can be invisible, to those users of the infrastructure being maintained or repaired (Henke, 1999). If we understand the maintained social-material entity as an infrastructure, it also relates to the general understanding of infrastructures becoming visible upon breakdown (Star and Ruhleder, 1996). Finally, the position of the maintenance worker is stressed as rather invisible in society. Linked to this final point are concerns regarding socio-economic status, gender and race in relation to work (Henke, 2019).

Emotion work

Chapter 10 will discuss emotion work in participation. The place of emotions and affect in relation to cultural heritage has been well-researched and discussed, leading to Smith, Wetherell, and Campbell (2018) arguing that an affective turn in heritage studies can be identified. The terms emotional and affective labour will be used together in this study, following Munro (2014), although they refer to different aspects of emotion work and have different theoretical grounding. Emotional labour and emotion work were originally introduced and theorised by Arlie Hochschild (1979; 1983/2012). Both terms

refer to the performance and management of one's own and others' emotions, where emotional labour most explicitly implies this performance being ascribed through the organisational context of one's job, in relation to profit-making. Hochschild's work sparked great attention to the performance of emotions as central in various professions (Wharton, 2009). Most classically explained through the work of flight attendants, emotional labour has been an especially useful concept to discuss service professions such as customer service (Hampson and Junor, 2005), librarians (Matteson and Miller, 2012), as well as creative or cultural work (Butler and Stoyanova Russell, 2018; Hesmondhalgh and Baker, 2008). In relation to cultural work, the particularities of working as a freelancer, has been highlighted as contributing to the need to manage emotions that arise from 'financial insecurity' (Butler and Stoyanova Russel, 2018, p. 1682). Emotional labour has also been applied in the study of service providers in memory institutions, such as tour guides (Walcott-Wilson, 2020) and interpreters (Giustini, 2021; Tyson, 2013). Tyson (2013), for example, discusses how interpretation staff are engaged in performing their emotions – either showing or not showing emotions that are naturally felt, while interacting with visitors to a historical site, as ascribed by their organisation.

In addition to emotional labour, this study considers affective labour to be part of emotion work in participation. Affective labour goes back to Michael Hardt's (1999) work. Hardt's focus lies on how professionals are engaged in the production of emotions and feelings in others, as part of their job (Hardt, 1999). In cultural heritage institutions, this can be further understood to revolve around creating affective or emotional practices in visitors or participants (Wetherell et al., 2018). This is what Munro (2014), Morse (2021) and Mucha (2022) touch upon in their respective studies of community engagement and co-creation. At once this affective element of participation is considered crucial for engagement, whilst simultaneously adding a complicated layer to the job of professionals and gesturing to an element of care work embedded in facilitator-participant interactions (Morse, 2021; Morse and Munro, 2018; Munro, 2014). Mucha argues for the development of socio-affective spaces for engagement to allow for emotional exchange in co-creative events, which she identifies as contributing to engagement (2022). Simultaneously, Munro and Morse report that the professionals included in their empirical studies felt that their respective museum institutions devalued this particular emotional aspect of community engagement (Morse, 2021; Munro, 2014). Morse (2021) argued that this was because community engagement work is largely immaterial, resulting in a lack of organisational support and recognition of the emotional aspects of their job.

In this study, affective and emotional labour will be collectively discussed as emotion work in participation, following Munro (2014). The related term affective practices will be used to discuss how emotions are enacted in relation

to participation in more general terms, aligning with Mucha's (2022) terminology.

Practice-based infrastructure

The conclusion includes a proposal that frames the analysed practices as occurring in and between three contexts that connect practices in a type of infrastructure. These three contexts are the museum as 'assembled organisation', the moment(s) of interaction between museum and participant, and the social context of the museum. The particularities of these three contexts will be elaborated upon in the conclusion, in Chapter 11. In the current section, I give a short overview of the study of infrastructures, and then present the particular qualities of infrastructure upon which this proposal for a practice-based infrastructure of participation is made.

The study of infrastructures fits within a tradition of studying social worlds on a structural level, with Anthony Giddens as an important initiator through his structuration theory (Giddens, 1984), and the field of Actor-Network theory building further on a relational understanding of what constitutes our world(s) (Latour, 2005). These structural perspectives have been popular in the field of information studies steeped in the tradition of collectivism (Talja et al., 2005). Information studies scholars use Giddens' theory and concepts to 'study the social contexts of information seeking and use in social and organisational settings ranging from the private and public sectors to public and digital libraries' (Rosenbaum 2010, 127).

In the 1990s, these structural perspectives were further developed within the study of information infrastructures (e.g. Bowker and Star, 1998; Star and Ruhleder, 1996). To at once broaden the application of the term 'infrastructure' and make it more specific, Star and Ruhleder (1996) proposed dimensions of it: embeddedness, transparency, multiple usages, learned as part of membership, links with conventions of practice, embodiment of standards, build on an installed base, and becoming visible upon breakdown. With this list of characteristics, the theoretical underpinnings for information systems became simultaneously more defined and more social with a focus on infrastructures as relational and made-up of people's practices in addition to materialities.

Broad definitions for the inclusion of various types of infrastructures followed. Marttila and Botero (2017) defined infrastructures as 'common-purpose structures that are designed and built to support human action, a sort of assemblage that carries and transports other things' (p. 103). Such a broad and multifaceted definition of infrastructure, makes it equipped to be operationalised in the study of both brick-and-mortar and information systems and beyond, as has been done in information studies and science and technology studies, ultimately to be proposed as a whole separate field of study (Bowker et al., 2010; Edwards et al., 2009).

In the context of the museum, infrastructure has been used as a theoretical concept to describe museum catalogues as 'relationships of individuals and technologies' (Turner, 2016), to discuss museums' information infrastructures in relation to crowdsourced material (Jansson, 2018; 2023) and user access (Kist and Tran, 2021). Recently, in her study of participatory projects with 'flight migrants', Boersma (2022) included a discussion of different infrastructures which inhibited or advanced this work in the respective museums, in particular she focused on organisational and financial infrastructures. As explained in the previous chapter, in all these studies, specific infrastructures are identified and understood as consisting of relations between material, structures, and museum staff. While drawing on the knowledge produced by these museum and infrastructure scholars, which point to multiple, interlinked infrastructures within and outside of museums, this study's use of infrastructure will diverge slightly. In this study, infrastructure will be used as a concept to describe practices of participation as they occur in and connect three contexts, rather than an element of museums that either inhibit or support practitioners' efforts. As such, it is closer to other information studies' application of the term, especially Juneström's (2019) interpretation of journalists' practices as constitutive of and shaped by 'infrastructural arrangements.'

Four particular qualities of infrastructures, as proposed and studied in infrastructure studies scholarship, will be central to the application of infrastructure in this study. First, infrastructures consist of and appear through practices. Second, they are designed and built. Third, they produce practices and, fourth, in addition to their direct function, infrastructures can hold symbolic value.

The first infrastructure quality is its appearance through practice (Star and Ruhleder, 1996, p. 113). The study of infrastructures has largely focused on the socio-material condition of these structures: meaning that infrastructures are created through people's interaction with materials, technology and other people. These practices can be considered to be part of infrastructures themselves. Star and Ruhleder (1996) make this point by stressing that infrastructures are 'learned as part of membership,' and that these memberships of communities of practice can produce a specific use of and view on any infrastructure (Wenger, 1999), which might be different from another's usage or viewpoint. Star (1999) gives the example of a plumbing system at once allowing water for the chef in a restaurant to create a dish, whilst also being one of many elements of a development project of a city planner (p. 380). Similarly, for the museum professional who is responsible for developing a participatory project, participation is a work objective that needs to be designed, delivered and reported on. For the involved participant, it is rather a way through which contact with the museum is made possible. The idea that infrastructures include both practices of engaging with and creating the structure, stresses a 'relational' quality, and is best summarised by

Star and Ruhleder when they say 'infrastructure is something that emerges for people in practice, connected to activities and structures' (1996, p. 112).

This consistency of practice should be further scrutinised into two more specific infrastructural qualities. Infrastructures are produced through practices and produce practices. That first point simply refers to the idea that infrastructures are 'designed and built' (Marttila and Botero, 2017, p. 103), the second infrastructural quality to be highlighted here. There are people who create, make decisions, or embed infrastructures into systems. Not only do they attempt to make infrastructures as invisible as possible so that they work smoothly, but their work itself can be rather invisible (Bowker and Star, 1998; Star and Strauss, 1999). These designing and building practices mean that an infrastructure 'never [stands] apart from the people who design, maintain and use it' and furthermore point to an intention behind infrastructure (Star and Bowker, 2002, p. 231).

Third, in addition to being created through practices, infrastructures produce practices. This idea is part of Star and Ruhleder's suggestion that infrastructure has links with conventions of practice, as they stated: 'infrastructure both shapes and is shaped by the conventions of a community of practices' (1996, p. 114). The design of infrastructure, in turn produces, or in their words 'shapes', how people use it, or act in or with it. This idea that infrastructures produce or do something is embedded in the most straightforward definitions of infrastructure. Larkin (2013), for example, summarises that infrastructures 'facilitate the flow of goods, people, or ideas and allow for their exchange over time.' More specifically, and building on Larkin (2013), Jensen and Morita (2016) argue that infrastructures produce not only practices, but 'novel configurations of the world – new *practical ontologies'* (p. 618, emphasis in original). In doing so, they combine the relational quality of infrastructures with their productive quality. When looking at participation as infrastructure, produced practices are at first sight the activities participants are involved in. The literature review in the previous chapter suggested the variety of such practices: participants contribute to the design of exhibitions and leave behind stories or votes in an exhibition space. Throughout the analysis of practices in this study, however, a more nuanced and diverse picture will be painted of the relation between the practices that produce an infrastructure of participation and the practices produced through this.

Finally, infrastructures are also awarded symbolic functions, which is the fourth quality considered in relation to participation. This idea has been vocalised by the aforementioned anthropologist Larkin, who argued that the symbolic meaning of an infrastructure can take over from its technical function (Larkin, 2013, pp. 336–337). He argued that historically, infrastructures have been entangled with the project of modernity, the concept of progress, and as a symbol of man's ability to create and master tools. Larkin brings up some examples of contemporary anthropological research about

infrastructures that come to stand for certain feelings, wishes or desires of people in a community or society at large. He aptly summarises what these scholars and theorists suggest:

> Roads and railways are not just technical objects […] but also operate on the level of fantasy and desire. They encode the dreams of individuals and societies and are the vehicles whereby those fantasies are transmitted and made emotionally real (Larkin, 2013, p. 333).[11]

Similarly to infrastructure, participation can come to stand in for 'dreams of individuals and societies' (Larkin, 2013, p. 333). This element is clearly visible in Sørensen's definition of participation, for example, saying that 'participation and participatory design are performative concepts to imply a transformative action that involves people, things/technologies and procedures' (2021, p. 187). Taking in the potential symbolic or performative role of participation, the discussion of practices will include what and how practices gain symbolic value.

To sum up, this study employs a practice-based understanding of infrastructures, which centres how practices connect materials, people, and technologies in an infrastructure that in turn produces practices. Together, they do not only have a function, but also take a symbolic meaning. The proposal in Chapter 11 builds on how the practices analysed in Chapters 6 to 9 stand in relation to each other as constituting an infrastructure shaped by three particular contexts: the organisation, moment(s) of interaction and the social context of the institution.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this chapter outlined first the theoretical framework through which practices of participation will be studied, and secondly a group of theoretical concepts that will be applied in the discussion of these practices.

[11] Larkin has been criticised for this argument being solely human-centred (Jensen and Morita, 2016). Jensen and Morita argue that because of this focus, the perspective on the non-human elements of infrastructure and their activity and agency, is lost. Rather than focusing solely on the human actor as experiencing subject, they theorise the more-than-functional meaning of infrastructure as 'matters of concern' to some people, resulting from 'complex entanglements between infrastructures and nonhumans' (Jensen and Morita, 2016, p. 621). The distinction between these two perspectives lies in where the attribution of 'symbolic' is placed: in the infrastructure itself as it represents peoples' 'fantasies' which is thus a direct reading of the person on the infrastructure (Larkin, 2013), or as 'imaginative capacity' that is created relationally between human and non-human elements (Jensen and Morita, 2016). Interpreting infrastructures as socio-material structures with a specific focus on practices, as done in this dissertation, includes a consideration of non-human entities too as standing in relation to those human actors who are practicing. In my understanding, the ontological distinction can be left unsolved in order to discuss the symbolic quality or interpretation of infrastructure.

With the aim of exploring practices of participation, to understand how participation is done in museums, this study's main theoretical underpinning comes from practice theory. Practice theory was introduced as a collection of theories, and will be applied through Nicolini's (2012) theory-method package for the study of practice. From this eclectic approach, which is inspired by multiple practice theoretical contributions, follows the general idea that practices are organised, discursive and material activities of different people, constitutive of social phenomena, and situated in specific contexts. Nicolini's theory will most specifically be applied through an effort to both 'zoom in' and 'zoom out' on practice (Nicolini, 2009). Zooming in will happen through the investigation of practices of participation, in Chapters 6 to 9. Zooming out by discussing the relations between these practices, and how effect is created through these relations, is dealt with in Chapter 10.

Secondly, the theoretical approach to the particular context of the practices being studied in this thesis was introduced as taking into account both the museum's inner and outer workings by proposing to understand the museum as an 'assembled organisation' which through its embeddedness in society has been awarded meanings, values and roles as a meaningful institution. The museum will be approached as 'assembled organisation' (Morse et al., 2018), which will lead the analysis of practice to be focused on those 'everyday' work practices as a means by which to understand organisation, and an attention to how various human and non-human elements are structurally related within these practices. In addition, the fact that museums are awarded different meanings, values and roles through their positioning in society, is considered as an important external factor impacting different actors' understanding of the practices they are engaged in.

The second part of this chapter functioned as a theoretical introduction to concepts that emerged through the analysis and will be applied in the discussion and conclusion, by means of 'zooming out' on practices, following Nicolini (2009, 2012). The concepts maintenance work, emotion work and practice-based infrastructure will be operationalised in order to go beyond an understanding of participation-in-practice as appearing in projects specifically.

Now that the theoretical grounding for the empirical study has been set, the next chapter will introduce the practical application of this framework, through a discussion of research methods and materials.

4 Methods and Materials

The previous chapter introduced the theoretical framework of this study, largely based on the method-theory package from Nicolini (2012) that advocates a 'zooming in' and 'zooming out' on practices. The aim of this thesis is to explore practices that contribute to participatory projects to understand how participation is organisationally situated, maintained and done in museums. In order to do so, a combination of well-established qualitative methods is employed for data collection and analysis, with cues taken from the tradition of ethnography as developed in three disciplines: information studies, anthropology, and organisational studies. This chapter describes in detail the methods used to generate and analyse data for the empirical study and describes the type of data generated. The chapter is structured as follows. First, I present and discuss the use of ethnography in information studies and in relation to museum studies in order to further contextualise this study in the respective scholarly domains and the particular use of ethnography in this study. Then, I explain the reasoning behind the selection of the two fieldwork sites, the Fisksätra Museum and the Museum Europäischer Kulturen, and describe in general terms the research participants in this study. Third, I provide detailed information about the four main methods of data generation and collection: participant observation, interviews, and document collection. For each method I describe the material generated and analysed. The fourth section describes the methods of analysis, and includes a description of the management of research data. The chapter ends with a discussion of the limitation of these methods and ethical considerations as they came up in this study.

Ethnography

Concerned with the 'doing' of practice and the organisational impact of the museum, I generated empirical data from participant observation, interviews and document analysis in two museums. As such, this study employed a combination of research methods that are typically found within ethnography. A traditional understanding of ethnography, which includes the research method as well as the written report (Bryman, 2012, p. 432), warrants that the research is concerned with the study of culture (Wolcott, 1990). As culture

can be found anywhere, ethnography-as-method has started a life of its own, away from its origins in anthropology and sociology. Relevant to this study is the application of ethnography to study work culture and work practices, which have developed into relatively separate fields of organisational, institutional and corporate ethnography (Smith, 2005; Tummons, 2018; Van Maanen, 2006; Yanow, 2012). This approach has also been used to study museum organisations (e.g. Bunzl, 2014; Handler and Gable, 1997; Macdonald, 2002; Dominguez Rubio, 2020; Tyson, 2013). Before I discuss the use of ethnography to study museum organisations, I contextualise this study by considering the use of ethnography in information studies in relation to anthropological theory. Then I explain how ethnography is employed in this study.

Among the qualitative research methods that are used within information studies, ethnography has been steadily growing in popularity (Griffin, 2017; Hider and Pymm, 2008; Khoo et al., 2012), but the meaning of 'ethnography' is differently applied throughout the field. Two reviews of the trend in information studies, reveal different elements of this changing understanding (Griffin, 2017; Khoo et al., 2012). Griffin argues that the use of ethnography in information studies is frequently assumed to explain an author's ontological stance, but that there are actually various uses of ethnography in the four main ontological frameworks used in information studies as described by Talja, Tuominen and Savolainen (2005). In his discussion of ethnography Griffin relates almost exclusively to Geertz' (1973) ideas of thick description and thereby does what anthropologist Wolcott warns against: equate any ethnography with one of its analytical methods (Wolcott, 1990). However, by doing so, Griffin is able to jump to his main concern about the stance of ethnography in information studies: he argues that journals privilege brevity over depth as they originate from the scientific and positivistic start of information studies, and thus, there is a poor tradition of explaining one's methodological choices or ontological stance (Griffin, 2017). A similar complaint about methods in general, particularly in the qualitative tradition, within information studies is heard throughout Wildemuth's widely used methodology book (Wildemuth, 2017).

Another review of ethnographic methods in information studies, Khoo, Rozaklis and Hall (2012) also provide a valuable overview of applications of ethnography within the field. Here a specific focus lies on studies concerned with libraries. As the institution that is classically connected to information studies, this is an important field. In their review, however, Khoo and colleagues fall into a similar trap as Griffin, one that Wolcott (1990) mentions as the most common issue in the transfer of the ethnographic methodology outside of its originating disciplines of anthropology and sociology: the conflation of methodology, method and product. Khoo and colleagues (2012) switch from describing the included studies as having an ethnographic 'approach,' to using 'ethnographic methods,' or as 'ethnographies.' In the end,

their review defines the 'ethnographicness' of the studies included by their employed methods, which are in decreasing order of frequency: observation, interviews, fieldwork, focus groups and cultural probes (Khoo et al., 2012, p. 84). This review stresses the popularity of ethnographic methods as applied in the study of the library institution, gesturing to the potential of applying such methods in research concerning other memory institutions, such as museums.

Another area of information studies that has been studied through ethnographic methods is that of information behaviour and practices (Wildemuth, 2017). Examples of such work include studies into performing search (Andersson, 2019); learning during archaeological excavations (Huvila, 2019); or information exchange in online communities (Rubenstein, 2015). Of particular relevance to this research are studies which concern professionals in their work environment, a topic approached in information studies through ethnographic methods with a specific focus on those working in knowledge professions (Howlett et al., 2016), healthcare (Dalmer, 2019) or a variety of professions carrying out types of 'information work' (Dalmer and Huvila, 2019).

With this interest in professional practice in information studies, the application of ethnography in information studies can be understood within a similar vein of organisational ethnography or institutional ethnography. French and Williamson (2016), reflecting on their use of ethnography to study information practices in a community organisation for example, actually explain their ethnographic methodology as organisational, to signify their cultural 'closeness' to their informants. John van Maanen (2011) and Watson (2012) greatly contributed to the contemporary understanding of organisational ethnography. Watson (2012) stresses the importance of understanding the social context, or organisation, as contingent on the formal organisation (p. 18). Van Maanen (2011) phrased organisational ethnography as being concerned with the perspective of those working in an organisation, but intending to provide a meaningful account for those outside. Both write from a perspective of knowledge production within the field of organisation studies, which comes with its specific set of concepts and theories (Watson, 2012). With a focus on the practices of professionals in formal organisations such as memory institutions, it can be argued that organisational ethnography is employed in many studies using ethnographic methods in information studies, but using information studies concepts instead. In this field, ethnography is often operationalised as a method in combination with practice theory (Carlsson et al., 2013; Cox, 2012; Knorr Cetina et al., 2001). Another ethnographic framework employed by information studies researchers is institutional ethnography, as developed by Dorothy Smith (2005), which 'prioritises the experience of the individual and then moves to explore just how those experiences are put together by social relations of coordination and control' (Kearney et al., 2018, p. 293). In studies within information studies working with an institutional ethnographic perspective, the ethnographically

studied information practices of professionals are contextualised within the institutional frame created by documents (Dalmer et al., 2017; Pilerot, 2016).

In addition to the information studies context, it is relevant to consider the use of ethnographic methods to study museums. This has been slowly growing as a research practice over the past decades, both producing full-length ethnographies of specific museums or departments, as well as studying specific projects or phenomena in a museum. Several noteworthy full-length ethnographies of museums have been produced, providing insight into the work of curators and museum staff in various high-profile institutions, such as Bunzl's (2014) investigation of the Chicago Museum of Contemporary Art, Handler and Gable's (1997) study of Colonial Williamsburg, Sharon Macdonald's (2002) book about the Science Museum in London, and Fernando Domínguez Rubio's (2020) study of the conservation department at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. These studies all built on long-term fieldwork and participant observation or 'deep hanging out' (Bunzl, 2014, p. 8) in the respective institutions. The respective authors used this to build empirically grounded understandings of how museums create 'public understanding of science' (Macdonald, 2002, p.5), 'historical truth' (Handler and Gable, 1997), art through conservation (Dominguez Rubio, 2020), or how an art museum's attempt to advance the 'avant-garde' can conflict with organisational and economic pressures (Bunzl, 2014). Simultaneously, ethnographic methods have been employed to study managerial and administrative work in shorter texts and based on 'short-term ethnography' (Pink and Morgan, 2013), for example focusing on organisational change (Morgan, 2018), and the use of documents (Rex, 2018). Most recently, the Berlin-based anthropology research group CARMAH published a collection of ethnographic studies about the museum and heritage field in Berlin, investigating how ideas of 'diversity' are employed, developed and created in an impressive amount of institutions and spaces (Macdonald, 2022). These ethnographic studies of museums have greatly contributed to our understanding of the museum as an organisation (Morse et al., 2018), as well as their role in cultural production.

Taking cues from the above-mentioned traditions in ethnography, signified by the multitude of varieties in application, this study is ethnographic in nature in the following ways. Firstly, I employed ethnographic methods for data collection. With short but nonetheless significantly embedded fieldwork, a rigorousness of method was achieved with 'focused fieldwork' or 'short-term ethnography' (Knoblauch, 2005; Pink and Morgan, 2013). The fieldwork is introduced in detail next. Secondly, I took an iterative approach to the qualitative analysis of practices, following Nicolini (2012), with less of an eye on 'culture' (Clifford and Marcus, 1986), and more on the organisational setting in its social context (Watson, 2012), taking into account the institutional framing of the practices (Kearney et al., 2018). Where the study diverges from classic ethnography is in its writing. The chapters follow a

format and order more typical of general qualitative research in information studies. This means that I prioritised the analysis of practices in my writing, rather than the presentation of a full ethnographic account of the two museums. In the four analysis chapters, however, I still provide thick descriptions of practice (Geertz, 1973), inspired by the use of the excerpt-commentary unit in a thematic narrative (Emerson et al., 2011), as advised for ethnographic studies in information studies (Hartel, 2020).

Furthermore, guided by Carlsson, Hanell and Lindh's (2013) introduction of an explorative phenomena-led ethnography, this study was undertaken as a multi-sited ethnography of practice (Marcus, 1995). This means that the study centred on practices as they developed in different locations, rather than on presenting a typical or representative case, as one might find in case study design (Yin, 2003). Following practices as they originated in two different museums makes the analytical object of this study 'practices', firmly rooted in their contexts but assumed to be shaped by more actors and actions, and does not aim to offer a full representation of the museums in question. As warranted with ethnographic research, I focused on the complexity and particularity of the practices at two sites by embedding myself in the museums. At the same time, the goal of the multi-sited ethnography was not to build a comparison between the two museums, but rather to sum up the practices as they developed in two diverging locations, in order to create a richer understanding of the complexity of participation in memory institutions as a whole.

Data generation

With an eye on practice, the empirical data has been generated at two museums: the Museum Europäischer Kulturen and Fisksätra Museum. As a study on ongoing participatory work in museums, the two sites of study were selected based on two characteristics: the institutions profile themselves as doing participatory work, and should have been doing so for at least five years. As described in the next chapter, the museums included in this study focus on the use of participatory methods in their mission and descriptive statements in publications, their websites and other public documents. This indicated their commitment to participation in their museum practice and their employment of methods they consider to be participatory. In addition, both museums had partaken in previous academic studies or undertaken academic writing themselves in relation to the term participation, which furthermore signified their interest in this concept and practice. In both cases, it was because of the museum's engagement with academic networks that I learned about them.

The second characteristic, of having at least several years' experience with participatory practice, comes from this study's interest in participation as ongoing, rather than emerging practice. This provided a ground to counter the

idea of 'newness' that has motivated studies of participatory work in museums and memory institutions previously. As such, the two sites included are at once unique and typical (Yin, 2003). They are typical, as they were chosen because of their longer engagement with themes and practices of participation. This does not mean they exemplify museums in a specific geography or of a certain type. Rather, it means that the study of participation in these settings, is the study of a somewhat 'typical' practice for the respective museum. I did not start fieldwork or join the museum at a time that they were starting something particularly new or unique, but joined while they were and would be working on participatory projects, as they had been doing before. As such, these work practices in the two museums are some type of 'everyday and commonplace situation' (Yin, 2003, p. 48). Simultaneously, throughout the thesis, it will become clear that the two museums are very different and as such present two unique sites of participation. In the analysis, these specific contexts are recognised and discussed, but the sites have not been chosen because of their specific differentiating qualities (Bryman, 2012, p. 72). Therefore, this study does not include extensive comparative conclusions, but builds on those two settings to create a contextual and empirically grounded understanding of participation in practice.

In this section, I will further describe how data were 'generated' specifically during the fieldwork in these two sites (Mason, 2018, p. 21). Following Mason (2018), this signals the fact that the data have been created as part of a research project, acknowledging the researcher's and research participant's perspectives and practice as the specific context in which the data and subsequent analysis arose. The interview and observation data were not merely collected, they were generated in a specific moment. I will now outline the main groups of research participants and describe the processes of doing fieldwork, conducting interviews and collecting documents.

Participants

The main group of research participants worked for the two museums studied in this doctoral dissertation. They have diverse professional backgrounds, job titles and job descriptions. However, the majority of those interviewed and observed are trained as anthropologists or ethnographers and have curatorial roles. For some this is elaborated with other managerial or administrative tasks, in an official capacity. For the sake of anonymisation, the staff from the Museum Europäischer Kulturen are referred to generally as 'curator', 'practitioner' or 'staff' including those who primarily had a managerial role at the time of the fieldwork, or a pseudonym is used. These are only used when there is no explicit mention of a project or exhibition they worked on. The research participants from the Fisksätra Museum preferred to be included with their real names. Neither of the museums is particularly large and thus some names or pseudonyms will come up very frequently. When I have to refer to

more than one of them, I will refer to these participants as 'museum staff', 'practitioners' or 'museum professionals.' I discussed the particularities of this research with each of them, and they agreed verbally and on paper to be included in this study.

A secondary group of informants were those involved in the projects the museums organised and created. These were the people the museum staff referred to as 'participants,' organisational partners, neighbours, or external freelance staff who were occasionally present. Being secondary to this research means that I did not actively seek a representative sample of this group, but I did include descriptions of our conversations, interactions and their work in my notes. All of them were aware of my role as a researcher and were made aware of the option to not be included in my notes. Some did indeed request this. Furthermore, I conducted a semi-structured interview with one participant at the MEK, and reviewed evaluation videos from six participants at Fisksätra Museum. I do not include specific descriptive information about them so that they could be identified. A third group of observed people – but whom I would not call informants – were people who were 'also there' when I attended meetings. These included other staff members or visitors and, interestingly, Sweden's Minister for Culture.

Finally, a note on language. The relationship between participant observation as implied and described in this research method chapter and the use of the word 'participants' in this particular study about participation, could complicate reading this thesis. Simply because of that, I will refer to those participants described above as research participants, or refer to them as curator. The use of the word participant is solely reserved for actors in the type of practices I observed and studied, usually named as such by the research participants. Whatever the term, the research participants' contribution to this research cannot be stressed enough.

Fieldwork

As a descriptive research study that employed ethnographic methodology, participant observation was the main method of data collection used. The process of keeping track of my observations was as follows: during or right after conversations I wrote down my thoughts as 'jotted notes' (Bryman, 2012, p. 450). These notes functioned mostly as aides-memoire for when I sat down at the end of the day to type out the events of the day, either in the museum, on the way back home, or once at home. The amount of detail in these typed notes depended on my interactions on that particular day and included reflections on my own thoughts and moods, but mostly consisted of detailed accounts of interactions. In total, I generated 61 fieldnotes, some are directly referenced in the thesis and others were instrumental in shaping my general understanding of the museums. In this section, I describe how I conducted participant observations during my fieldwork in the two museums. I also

include a description of entering the field, establishing a rapport and procedures of observation, and leaving the field.

Fisksätra Museum

A former student of Inga-Lill Aronsson, supervisor of this PhD project, used Fisksätra Museum as a case study in her Master's thesis on participation and empowerment (Waldenström, 2018). Stella Waldenström's study described in detail their work on organising a women's group, work I have since also observed. Upon review of the work of the museum, it became clear that they centre *deltagande (*participation) in their museum practice and that it is applied by the museum itself to describe its work ('Om Fisksätra Museum', n.d.; Tham and Madsen, 2015). Since her study, Stella had started working for the museum. After I reached out to her, I met with her in Fisksätra, in March 2019. She subsequently introduced me to the founder and current co-director of the museum, Amelie Tham. After several meetings with Amelie, I proposed to include them in my research study. The museum fit my requirements for a site and the museum was in the close vicinity of my home-town of Uppsala. Upon my request, Amelie discussed this with the museum board and co-director Cristina Schippa, after which they all enthusiastically agreed to take part.

After three meetings to learn about the museum through informal conversations, I offered to help out during an event they referred to as the 'Carnival', taking place in mid-September 2019. Retrospectively, my participation in the event can be considered a rapport-establishing engagement and the start of my participant observation. I helped to paint decorations, 'man' the kitchen and offer general support during the day. Subsequently, I attended board meetings, workshops, exhibit building days and staff meetings. In-between these meetings I talked regularly with Amelie. From March 2020 until January 2021, contact took place solely over the phone: because of the COVID-19 pandemic the museum significantly reduced their activities and opening hours, and Amelie herself was careful to meet people and go to the museum. During this period, a phone call took place on average every three weeks, to stay updated about their work, projects and plans. This was initially a way to keep in touch while we waited until more regular in-person fieldwork could continue. As the pandemic lingered on, these phone calls continued. Eventually, my detailed account of these conversations ended up including important descriptions and insights about work with participation. As such, I included the notes from this period in the analysis as well. In the spring, summer and early autumn of 2021 Fisksätra Museum's work picked up again and I visited Fisksätra on average every other week for one full day, about half of the time that the museum was open, with some more intense periods. In the summer I stayed in Fisksätra full time for three-and-a-half weeks, during which I took part in their three-week filmmaking workshop discussed as the

Sommarjobb project in this study. In total, I generated 37 fieldnotes describing full days, phone calls and meetings over the course of 2020 and 2021.

My role as participant observer shifted throughout my collaboration with Fisksätra Museum. There were moments of different lengths between my visits, and most visits had different purposes. I took on the role of observer in board or staff meetings, but also took part in a future-planning workshop and board meeting in small group discussions. In other moments I assisted more explicitly with practical work, especially during the building of the retrospective anniversary exhibit, early 2020. Whenever others – museum visitors, neighbours, or organisational partners – visited the space, I was at times introduced specifically as a researcher and at other times just as 'Inge' and considered to be also working there. As there were few different people working at the museum, and it was not uncommon for visitors to linger, or hang out in the space; this felt quite natural.

Depending on the type of day when I visited, my recording method changed. During the 'practical' events, I mostly focused on doing the task at hand, while having and keeping up conversations with my informants. Whenever possible I would jot down some notes in my notebook, in between conversations. During visits while meetings took place, it felt more appropriate to have my notebook out and write, so I had the chance to write more extensive notes while in the museum. On the way back from the museum to Uppsala, I took the time to extend the notes in my notebook or to write down notes directly in note-taking software while on the train. In the evening or the next day, I sat down to elaborate them on my computer. When writing the notes by hand, I sometimes stated what was said verbatim and noted that, as well as signalling it in the typed-up notes, allowing for the use of direct quotes from fieldnotes.

Upon the shift to mostly phone calls, the note-taking became more elaborate, but the observations changed to be more second-hand. The conversations with Amelie ranged from sharing our experiences in relation to Covid-19, to updates about grant proposals or meetings or events that had taken place without me being present. During these phone calls I constantly wrote notes, including direct quotes.

My last visit to Fisksätra as researcher took place in November 2021, for an interview with Amelie, after which I had a few email and phone exchanges with her throughout 2022 and I visited her then as well. In early 2023, the three main research participants, Amelie, Joanna and Cristina, were sent parts of the research study which included their descriptions, and had a chance to comment on this before publication. Furthermore, I have presented and discussed the results with them.

Museum Europäischer Kulturen

An established relationship through our mutual connection to the POEM research project created the base for a relationship with the MEK. The director

of the museum, Elisabeth Tietmeyer, was one of the supervisors in the POEM research project. My visit was initially a so-called secondment as part of the POEM project and had been planned in advance of my employment. Upon discussing this study's themes with the director, we agreed on a specific timeframe for me to visit and that I could use this placement to conduct ethnographic fieldwork. In preparation for my two-month stay in October and November 2019, the director put me in touch with one of the curators working on a project at the time, which was planned to involve two local Berlin communities. Contact took place over email before I went to stay in Berlin, conducting ethnographic fieldwork at the MEK.

Upon arriving at the MEK, I had several formal and informal introductory meetings with administrative, managerial and curatorial staff that I would want to include within in my study. Administrative actions needed to be completed as I was officially working as a guest researcher on the premises, which was an existing administrative path provided by their overarching organisation. I had to sign a document related to my use of the informational infrastructure and computers of the museum, as well as receiving a pass to enter all museums connected to the overarching organisation for free. After a few days, my official account was established and I had access to the computer and email system. I used the desk of a researcher who was away for the duration of my stay, located in the library. From day one I was included in biweekly meetings between the scientific staff in the museum, called the *WIKO*.

For two months I followed a curator and curatorial assistant who worked on an exhibition with the working title *Perlenhochzeit*. The exhibit was originally planned to be opened in October 2020, one year from when I started. In conversation with the main curator, the museum's director had suggested I should follow this particular exhibit, as it centred around the stories and experiences of two distinct communities within Germany and there were plans to include them in the production process at some point, aiming for a type of co-creative participatory project. My participant observation was framed by me contributing to this project by doing theoretical research they considered relevant to their content, and I joined meetings about the planning and production of the exhibition, as well as other ongoing work in the museum. The project was furthermore co-curated with a professor and her class from a higher education institution in Berlin. In the museum's offices, I took part in several general meetings amongst curators, and interviewed all but three of the curators then working at the museum about their views on and experience working with participation. I completed some small tasks for the curator and the curatorial assistant, joined their meetings and 'hung out' at the office. In addition, I also co-organised a workshop about participatory methods with two colleagues from the POEM project, Susanne Boersma and Franziska Mucha. The stay in 2019 finished with a presentation for staff about memory studies and museum work. I returned in late January to visit the final exhibition of

Master's students' coursework, talk with the students and briefly visit the museum. Altogether, I generated 24 fieldnotes describing the working days, meetings and visits, produced in a similar fashion to those at Fisksätra Museum.

After early February 2020, I stayed in sporadic contact with my two main contact persons. By the time the Covid-19 pandemic had influenced work and life all over the world, I had a call with the curator who informed me about changes in the *Perlenhochzeit* project. The exhibit would now be developed by the next group of Master's students, on an online platform, and with three museum partners, amongst them the MEK. Because of the limitations and uncertainties the pandemic brought, and since the involvement of the museum and my contact persons had shrunk significantly, we jointly decided I would not be actively involved in this part of the project. In early 2023, the director was sent and commented on sections of the study.

Interviews

During this fieldwork, in addition to doing participant observation, I conducted 14 hours of semi-structured interviews with nine individuals: the two co-directors at Fisksätra Museum, six curators at the MEK and one student involved with an MEK project. I used slightly personalised interview guides as aides-memoire for the types of questions I planned to ask. A general version used as a template for each interview can be found in Appendix A. The interviews were semi-structured as I followed the order and the themes of questions in each interview, but adjusted the phrasing and follow-up questions to each individual interviewee. The questions were designed to move from more general to more specific and centred first around questions regarding their job and working tasks. The second part of each interview concerned their perspectives and views on the topic of participation in their job and in general. The types of questions largely followed Kvale (1996), where those written down in the guide were the direct, introductory and specifying questions. The order of questions in my interviews was as Charmaz suggests, starting with open-ended, intermediate follow-up and finally ending-questions (Charmaz, 2001). I used probing, silences, follow-up, indirect, interpreting and structuring questions as I saw fit throughout the interviews, relying on interview skills such as those that Bryman describes (2012, p. 471).

The interviews lasted between 53 minutes and 3.5 hours, with the longest interview being spread over two sessions. All but one of the interviews were recorded with a voice recorder and subsequently transcribed. The one-hour interview with the student was noted by hand during the interview and typed out immediately after because of a poor setting for audio recording. Appendix B provides an overview of the nine interviews.

In five interviews, the interviewee and I both spoke English, in the other four interviews, I asked questions in a mix of German and English and the

interviewee answered in German. This method was chosen so that both interviewer and interviewee were able to speak in a language they were comfortable with. Integrity of translation and understanding across languages was established through mutual agreement and established trust: all interviews but one took place after several weeks of interacting within the space of work. Clarifying questions came up a few times, often enough to ensure both parties were comfortable asking for clarification, but little enough to trust that both parties understood each other well enough to have a cross-language interview. The recorded interviews were transcribed in the original languages. For the sake of transparency, the quotes included in this study are presented in English in the text, with the original included in a footnote. In the coding stage, memos and codes were written in English and further analysed in English.

Documents and audio-visual material

Appendix C provides an overview of the documents collected during the fieldwork and referenced in this study. These internal documents were used for analysis or triangulation. They include working documents created by research participants and shared with the researcher, such as application materials, speeches, meeting agendas or meeting notes, which were approached as empirical data and included in the analysis. Other documents collected were official organisational documents such as annual reports, created by institutional bodies such as the SPK in the case of the MEK, or museum staff, in the case of Fisksätra Museum. These documents were either shared with me, or available by the institution online, and used for analysis and triangulation. Furthermore, some materials and documents that were produced during participatory workshops and meetings were collected, either processed or scanned into a PDF document by facilitators and shared with me, or through pictures taken by myself. These were used in the analysis. These documents are referred to in the same way as the interview and fieldnote data, as footnotes at the bottom of each page. A second set of documents are available publicly and were used for analysis and triangulation of participant observation data. As they are published materials, they are referenced in the same way as literature and included in the list of references at the end of the thesis. These include documents such as flyers, exhibition catalogues, websites, and books produced by the museum, as well as material created by funding agencies and governmental bodies, describing guidelines for applications or public meeting notes.

Finally, a small amount of audio-visual material has been collected and generated. As described above, I took pictures of notes and material created in processes of participation, as well as in the workshop environment. These were used as reference material for fieldnotes, and subsequently in analysis. The pictures never included faces of research participants who did not consent to that. A second set of visual material was generated through drawing, as an

extension of fieldnotes. Spaces and materials were drawn, no people. The drawing process was approached as part of the participant observation note-taking, and the drawings were used as reference for fieldnotes and the visualisations included in this text. A third set of audio-visual material was shared with me directly by research participants. This was a set of six videos recorded by the facilitators of the three-week summer workshop at Fisksätra Museum. The videos each lasted about 4 or 5 minutes and were filmed directly after the end of the workshop series. They were evaluative interviews through which the participants shared their opinions and experiences. The participants knew I would see the videos too, but I had not asked for consent to keep the material on my computer. Therefore, I viewed the videos and wrote detailed notes, anonymising the participants, but quoting them verbatim. Their answers are used in the analysis. Finally, Fisksätra Museum has documented several of their past events in videos, made available online. These were used in the analysis and as reference material in triangulation.

Data Analysis and Management

The data generated from interviews, participant observation and collected documents were analysed through an abductive method, drawing on Blaikie (2009), Mason (2018), and Coffey and Atkinson (1996). They describe abductive research strategy as an interpretivist and iterative approach. The data were read, re-read and then coded using computer software. The qualitative data analysis largely adhered to the phases described by Nowell et al. (2017), following their recommendations for 'trustworthiness' in the process (Lincoln and Guba, 1986).

After initially processing the data in Microsoft Word, the MEK fieldnotes and first interview transcriptions were eventually uploaded in MAXQDA, a software program for coding qualitative data and transcribing (Kuckartz and Rädiker, 2019; Marjaei et al., 2019), directly after fieldwork at the MEK ended. The last three interviews at the MEK and the two Fisksätra Museum interviews were also transcribed using the software. In addition, I used MAXQDA 2020 for the coding of the data and writing of memos. After the licence expired for this version of the software, the project data were transferred to the newest version, MAXQDA 2022.

The fieldnotes and interview transcripts were coded in three stages (Saldaña, 2009). The initial coding was inspired by grounded theory and the codes were purely descriptive (Charmaz, 2001). They included *in vivo* codes, condensed versions of the event, or affective states. As data were collected in two stages, firstly the condensed fieldwork at the MEK and secondly the extended fieldwork with Fisksätra Museum, the first round of coding was with the interviews from the MEK. The codes were grouped into initial categories: work practices, exhibitions and presentations, dimensions of participation,

institutional structures and reflections, experiences of professionals, and memory projects. Each of the categories had multiple subcategories. The second round of coding was again descriptive, and now also included the fieldnotes of both museums and the interviews with Fisksätra Museum's practitioners. At that point, informed by the generated data, literature and the then-developed theoretical framework around practices, coding focused on actions and descriptions and kept track of beliefs, opinions or dichotomies presented (e.g. visitor versus community, systematic contacts versus developed friendships). As an analytical tool, these were again structured into loosely-defined sets: time, infrastructural, organisational, professionals, participation, conflicts, unfinished work, museum, goals, space, applications, Covid, participants. During both rounds of coding, I also wrote memos in which I brought together specific themes and thoughts represented in the different codes. While coding, I would add individual codes and sections to specific memos describing related topics. In retrospect, these memos became the most important tool in the iterative process of further distilling categories. During stage three, based on the codes and memos, I decided to frame the analysis around three 'moments' in participation: pre-project work during which certain conditions for participation are established, planning for specific projects, and the moment of interaction between participants and practitioners. After deciding on these three foci, I reviewed all the raw data for a third time, during which the first version of the categories of practices as presented in the four analysis chapters came to the fore. Eventually, those categories were approached as themes to conduct thematic analysis (Nowell et al., 2017), making space for a more narrative-focused explanation of observations of work practices, and descriptions of participation using 'thick description' (Geert, 1973). These themes have been included in drafts shared with other researchers within and outside of the POEM project. Finally, through an abductive process of writing, feedback and reviewing the data and codes, the draft categories were further considered in relation to each other through diagramming. After a final return to the raw data in relation to these themes, the final categories of practices as presented in the analysis were established.

Over the course of study, the fieldnotes and interview data were stored as follows. The handwritten notes were kept in a locked cabinet, and anonymised when elaborated upon and processed with Microsoft Word. Informants were assigned confidential identification numbers, the key was stored separately from the documents and only known to the researcher. These digital notes were stored on a password-protected local hard drive during data processing and subsequently saved on an external password-protected hard drive. The interview audio was transcribed, anonymised and translated using Microsoft Word and MAXQDA software. During this processing time, the audio files were stored on the password-protected local hard drive. After transcribing had been completed, the audio files were anonymised, by deleting names and personal details, and stored on an external password-protected drive. The

digital documents described in the previous section were stored on the password-protected local and external hard drives, and uploaded onto the university's online drive, after being encrypted using BoxCryptor. Physical documents were organised and kept in a folder in a cabinet, only accessible with a key kept by the researcher. Upon completion of the research project, Uppsala University's guidelines for archiving and retention of research data will be followed, following Swedish law (Uppsala Universitet, 2023). The guidelines require all research data, cleaned from personal data, to be preserved for 10 years in local storage.

Throughout the text, I will refer to my data as follows. First, an acronym name of the institution, then the type of data, then a specification of the data or confidential identification number. For example, 'MEK Interview C1' refers to an interview conducted with anonymised curator C1 in the MEK. Then, 'FM Fieldnotes 14 June 2021' refers to a fieldnote generated during fieldwork at Fisksätra Museum, on that specific day. Documents are referred to slightly more descriptively, for example, 'MEK Document RC Table' refers to an Excel sheet with answers created as part of the Revisiting Collections workshop at the MEK. Because of the agreed anonymisation of the curators at the MEK, when a project or exhibition name is explicitly mentioned and I build on information or quotes from the curator of this project in the analysis, I refrain from specifying exactly which interview the quote comes from. This is done because information on which person curated which exhibition is in the public domain, and referring to their anonymised interviews would reveal the identity behind the confidential identification numbers.

Limitations and trustworthiness

As with any study, particularly purely qualitative research employing ethnographic methods, limitations to the study design and results have to be taken into account by the researcher and the reader. The first limitation regards the condensed fieldwork periods and what at first sight appears to be a limited amount of generated data. This was partly caused by the global, overarching disruptions to everyday life caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, which affected the research sites and research for most of 2020 and 2021. The original research design included a third museum, in a third country, with fieldwork planned to begin in March 2020. This fieldwork was initially delayed indefinitely and the museum in question had to remain closed for several lockdown periods. In the research process, this turned into a period of extended uncertainty about the research design, and lasted up until the moment the museum's planned renovation started and it subsequently closed until 2022. In consultation with the main supervisors of this project, two strategies have been applied to deliver a thorough research study under these circumstances. First, after considering potential other research methods for

data collection, a prolonged and elaborated field study with the geographically closest site was determined to be a better fit. As such, the fieldwork with Fisksätra Museum was extended over a period of two years, and contact over the phone was continued during the period Sweden's government advised against close and regular contact. The data generated in the fieldwork at Fisksätra Museum might appear limited in number, but the majority of the fieldnotes (23 of 37) and the most elaborate ones based on physical participant observation, as well as the interviews, were all generated at the end of the extended fieldwork (June–October 2021). They are thus believed to greatly benefit from the established rapport, which had been built up over time since the first meeting two years earlier. Second, in writing up the study, a more elaborate theoretical framework has been applied than initially planned, expanding this study's contribution to include a theoretical dimension.

This strategy resulted in a second limitation related to the two main fieldwork sites: there is an uneven amount of data generated across the two field sites, with different types of fieldwork, and different types of data generated at each respective site. The extended period of fieldwork conducted with Fisksätra Museum resulted in a greater number of fieldnotes than the fieldwork done with the MEK. The more extended curatorial team at the MEK allowed for more interviews to be conducted. Furthermore, because the fieldwork at Fisksätra Museum was done over a longer period of time and mostly after my return from Berlin, I was simultaneously processing and beginning to analyse the initial data from both fields, while continuing data collection in Fisksätra. This informed my ethnographic lens in the final stage of data collection. The main steps in data analysis, however, took place after October 2021, after the end of the fieldwork. Furthermore, the approach to the fieldwork remained the same at both museums, and is inspired by some of the qualities of 'short-term ethnography' drawn out by Pink and Morgan (2013). Like them, I focused my participant observation on 'action' and thus intensified my engagement in the moments that the museum staff were working on participation projects, by taking part in the planning meetings, or the actual workshops or events, which greatly intensified the 'research encounter' (Pink and Morgan, 2013, p. 355).

When comparing the two moments of fieldwork, the shorter time period in the MEK, and the fact that it was the first study, contributed to a limited embeddedness in the field. I have attempted to deal with the skewedness of the data and the sense of embeddedness by meticulously referencing which fieldnotes, documents or interviews the presented analysis is based on. Whenever possible, I directly reference them in the footnotes. This is to ensure that the reader can keep track of the type of data used to build the arguments. Where relevant, I explicate differences between the situation or experiences at the two sites. Nevertheless, this study does not claim to be comparative in nature. As will be described in the next chapter, both museums are quite differently organised and are different in size. It will be argued that these

particular contexts contribute to how the museum staff and participants do participation, but I do not include stark conclusions based on comparison, as the data does not allow for this. The difference in data will be visible in the research study, which includes more detailed and thick descriptions of observed situations at Fisksätra Museum and builds more on described experiences and opinions from the MEK staff, from their interviews.

A last point to consider about the fieldwork and data regards language. My native language is different from the staff at both sites. Furthermore, my command of German and Swedish is limited, but grew over the course of the fieldwork and time period of this PhD project, through taking language classes and training independently. Most importantly, however, my skill allowed me to sufficiently understand both written and spoken languages and together with the research participants' command of English, I was able to follow and take part in meetings and conversations, as well as workshops and events. In Sweden, the majority of communication with the museum staff was in English and with visitors and participants in Swedish. It is noteworthy that for many inhabitants of Fisksätra, Swedish is their second or third language. In Berlin, the communication was mostly in German, and if necessary, I replied in English or asked clarification questions. In the case of the interviews that were conducted in German, I carefully transcribed the interviews and relied on the recordings during the first phase of data analysis and cross-checked. The quotes taken from those interviews are included in English translation in the text itself. Translation was done by myself, and checked with a native speaker. For short phrases or single words I provide the original quote in italics and translation in brackets or in a footnote. Translations of longer quotes from documents are included in Appendix D.

In spite of the limitations, the ethnographic method allows for detailed, in-depth descriptions that contribute to a close understanding of phenomena. As explained, this was judged to be a valuable and relevant method of data collection for the explicated research questions and theoretical framework. The flipside of multi-sited ethnography, much like the case study, is that it carries an inherent limitation regarding generalisability (Marcus, 1995; Yin, 2003). This is a recognised element of and issue for much qualitative research (Nowell et al., 2017). As an alternative to claiming generalisability, Guba and Lincoln rather argued for establishing grounds for potential transferability (1985). In this study, the value of generating ethnographic data in order to answer the research question was deemed crucial. In the final text, the ethnographic tool of thick descriptions, as well as direct quotes and fieldnote vignettes, are subsequently used to establish grounds for other researchers to make a judgement on transferability (Nowell et al., 2017, p. 3).

Finally, the two sites chosen to be investigated in this study have their own style of participation, which does not fall clearly into any of the categories proposed by scholars discussed in the literature review. This is considered to be part of the problematisation presented in this research: participation looks

many different ways, and what counts as participation is probably always context-dependent. One particular style that is missing warrants a short discussion here, namely digital participation. Although the two museums have websites and social media accounts, neither of them approached their work on their digital channels as being participatory. Digital participation is an important contemporary practice for many institutions as discussed in the literature review. It is estimated that the COVID-19 pandemic has enhanced museums' offers of digital and online access and engagement (Cipullo, 2021). The fact that this research focuses on non-digital participation does not mean that facet is considered irrelevant or unimportant in the museum world. The main reason why it has not been included was that neither field site worked in this way. It was furthermore not sought out to be included in the sample as non-digital participation was judged to be a continuously, equally relevant and challenging practice for many museums that warranted further research. Research suggests furthermore that engagement with digital collections can be enhanced through non-digital participatory processes (Mucha, 2022). As such, an investigation into the work of participation in museums that does not explicitly include digital practices might contribute to furthering such border-crossing style of participation by providing further descriptions and better understanding of the constituting practices of participation.

Ethics

Below I outline the most important considerations and moments pertaining to ethical questions over the course of this study. All throughout the research process, I have been committed to meeting the highest standard of research ethics and integrity. I followed the European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity as published by ALLEA, along with Uppsala University and Sweden's research ethics standards, as set out in the Swedish Research Council's 'Good Research Practice' guidelines (Swedish Research Council, 2017). Through the connection to the POEM research network, the ethical standards of Horizon2020 and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union have also been taken into account. Through continuous discussion about ethics over the course of the study, with the research project's supervisors and peers, as well as with research participants, I have done my best to implement these guidelines in practice.

This was firstly done in relation to the consideration of applying for approvement with the ethics board, as determined in the Ethical Review Act (2003:460). Although the research involves human subjects, no sensitive personal data would be required and therefore processed over the course of the study. Based on this, in consultation with my supervisors, we determined that the research falls outside the scope of studies requiring ethical reviewing as determined by Swedish law, as practiced in 2019. This notwithstanding,

most of the recommendations and standards proposed by the Ethical Review Board regarding informed consent and data processing have been followed.

All research participants from the first two groups described earlier in this chapter were explicitly informed and asked for consent to be included in the research study. Those research participants I worked with most closely, the museum staff, were given an information sheet about the research and signed an informed consent sheet. Examples of these documents are attached to the digital version of this thesis, in Uppsala University's repository DIVA. Those research participants whom I encountered through my participant observation in the museums, but whom I did not interview or work with extensively, were informed about the research either verbally or additionally received the information sheet and provided verbal rather than written consent to be included. There is a small group of visitors, organisational partners or, in the case of the MEK, museum staff whom I did not engage with extensively, but encountered in the research process and was not able to explicitly make aware of the topic of my research project. When I was in contact with them, however, I always introduced myself as a researcher connected to Uppsala University. Personal descriptions of these people are kept to a minimum, and anonymised, in order to reduce the possibility that they could be identified through this text. At Fisksätra Museum, I furthermore made the effort to introduce myself and my research project through their newsletter, to increase the visibility of my presence as a researcher.

There are two particular moments to be mentioned in relation to informed consent. In the MEK, after signing the informed consent forms, I consulted with the director of the museum about the reality of keeping the museum anonymous in the final text. This had been my initial proposal to all research participants and was included in the information sheet. However, based on the discussion with the director and with one of the project's supervisors, it was decided that this type of anonymisation would not be realistic, and also not beneficial to the research. I then informed all the research participants verbally and they agreed to this amendment, providing their names and positions would be anonymised.

Secondly, once it became clear I could be present full-time for a filmmaking workshop at Fisksätra Museum in 2021, I considered the ethics of my involvement there. This was especially important because of the age group of the participants in the museum's project. I again consulted the Ethical Review Act, and the Ethical Review Board's requirements and recommendations for involving younger participants. In consultation with my supervisors, and once it had become clear that the group of participants involved with this project would be considered adults because they were all 15 years or older, we concluded that it would thus not be necessary to apply to the Ethical Review Board. I did, however, put in effort to ensure the participants and their guardians understood what I planned to do. I did so by providing information sheets about my research project adjusted for their age

group in *lätt Svensk* (plain Swedish), plus an additional, more extensive information document in Swedish that they gave to their parents, and giving a verbal presentation in Swedish of my work as a researcher and this project. Furthermore, I consulted the museum staff about ethics, resulting in a second presentation to the group because the staff thought the participants would benefit from learning more, as well as a decision that I would not be the person to take photographs for the museum's Instagram account, so as not to cause confusion.

As mentioned previously, the staff at the two museums agreed to different forms of anonymisation. The Fisksätra Museum staff agreed to be included with their actual names, and the MEK staff agreed to be anonymised. In the data processing stage, the MEK data was assigned and processed using confidential identification numbers. As long as no project names are mentioned, I provide the interview's identification number. In order not to be able to connect the identification number to a specific project, I refrain from doing so when mentioning an exhibition name.

Furthermore, as an ethnographic researcher, my presence and positionality undoubtedly impacted the data generated. I employed reflective practice and consulted with peers and my supervisors about this impact throughout the course of the research project. In relation to the museum practitioners, I attempted to find a balance between not taking up too much time from the busy professionals' days and finding ways to understand their day-to-day work. This resulted in an effort to make myself useful by performing small tasks, and joining meetings, as described in the section detailing the fieldwork. At times, the professionals asked for my opinion explicitly, about their work and plans. At those moments, so as not to impact their work or decision-making further while also refraining from gatekeeping knowledge I gained through my research, I tried to be as general as possible and mostly pointed to external examples or literature. In relation to participants in the museums' projects, I was aware of the fact that I joined the projects from the museum's perspective. Even though I was an external researcher, it is likely that some participants would see me as being together with the practitioners, and probably looked at me similarly. I attempted to balance this by occasionally distancing myself from the practitioners in order to talk with the participants, separately and by introducing myself and my research project.

Finally, it should be noted that the MEK's director took part in the overarching research project POEM, as a supervisor to another researcher. This meant that we met several times outside of the scope of this research as well, but this is not believed to have impacted this study.

5 Two sites of participation

One of the things that came out of the literature review and will remain visible in the empirical study: participation can look many different ways. This variety appears clearly even when just briefly investigating the exterior of the two museums central to this thesis. Figure 1 shows the Museum Europäischer Kulturen (MEK), looking like a classic museum building, the one embedded in the UNESCO symbol: six pillars hold a pediment, marking the entrance of the rectangular *Bruno-Paul-Bau*. Visitors have time to look at the building as they walk through the fenced-in park-like garden in front. Figure 2 shows Fisksätra Museum: a former apartment on the ground floor of a high-rise block. Visitors enter from a public square, and the pink and blue letters above the entrance, occasional red carpet and sandwich board gesture to the fact that something different is happening here.

Both museums are sites of participation. Inside both of these buildings,[12] practitioners write applications, make project plans, meet participants and visitors, write emails (and emails and emails), have meetings (after meetings, after meetings), a quick lunch, a coffee, a chat – to do it all again the next day. In this chapter, the introduction to the ethnographic study, I introduce the two particular contexts for these and other practices of participation, by describing the exhibitions, public programming, collections, and organisation of both museums. Per museum, I give a brief overview of the projects that were discussed or observed during the fieldwork and that will be brought up in the analysis and discussion of the material.

[12] Or, most of the organisational work for the MEK happens in the offices, located a 10-minute walk from the exhibitions.

Figure 1: Museum Europäischer Kulturen. © Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Museum Europäischer Kulturen / Christian Krug.

Figure 2: Fisksätra Museum. 14 June 2021. Photograph by author.

Museum Europäischer Kulturen (MEK)

> *My temporary desk at the MEK stands in what everyone calls the Grafik, a room you have to pass to enter the library inside the office. Along the guest researchers' desks there is storage for the postcard and picture sheet collection and educational materials, a printer and scanner. It is a Monday, I just organised a workshop with two other researchers, and we return to the desk. A curator enters to print a new poster for the participation station in the permanent exhibition. We start talking about participation in the MEK, while she tries to make the computer and the printer work. 'A complicated element is the expectation of the visitor: because we are a state museum, there is a specific expectation, a certain quality that the visitor expects. What we present has to meet these expectations, but it means that things move slowly, especially when it comes to participatory projects.' The curator describes feeling that work with collections and participation has to be done on the side, it cannot be registered in the SPK hour registration system. She prints her poster and explains: 'it is possible, this time, but simply because I know a graphic designer, who works for the SMB in another museum actually, and we get along. So, we made a quick design for a poster. Although it is not the best quality, this is how you have to make things happen.'*[13]

The *Museum Europäischer Kulturen (MEK)* is one of the 19 institutions that make up the *Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (SMB)* of the *Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz* (SPK).[14] The scene above played out in the office building, located about 500 metres from their exhibitions in the *Bruno Paul Bau* shown in Figure 1. I spent most of my time there, on the same floor as the offices of the director, curators, museologists, education and communication staff, and the museum's library. The organisational structure of the museum means that the museum staff have to register their hours, and find ways to make the work on participatory endeavours worthwhile and legible within that system. The staff, like the curator in this vignette, find ways 'to make things happen'.

History and Exhibitions

During my fieldwork in 2019, approximately half of MEK's exhibiting space presented their permanent exhibit. The exhibition showcases objects included in their collections that best represent the MEK's exploration of cultures in Europe (Tietmeyer and Ziehe, 2011). Called *Kulturkontakte. Leben in Europa* (Cultural Contacts. Living in Europe), the exhibition highlights contact points between cultures throughout the continent because 'mobility in the broadest sense results in cultural interconnections' and puts forward questions of

[13] MEK Fieldnotes 11 November 2019

[14] At the time of fieldwork, the SMB encompassed 16 institutions. At the time of writing, the SPK is going through further reform processes (Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz, 2021)

identity (Museum Europäischer Kulturen, 2019). With top pieces like an eleven-metre-long Venetian gondola, a mechanical 'Christmas Mountain' and a plastic Döner, the exhibition presents everyday objects from different parts of Europe spanning several centuries.

The exhibition opened in 2011, when the museum moved to its current premises. The museum was officially founded twelve years earlier, initially exhibiting in the building that is now used for their office. The relatively young museum was established out of collections from two institutions: *Museum für Volkskunde* (Museum of Folklore) and the European Collection from the *Museum für Völkerkunde* (Museum of Ethnology) (Tietmeyer and Ziehe, 2011, p. 8). The particularities of this merger should be seen in light of 'heated debates about folklore in the 1990s,' as Magdalena Buchczyk describes in one of her studies about the collections of the MEK, which outlines that the idea of Europe central to the museum at that point was the understanding of 'cultural contact' (2022, p 5). When the MEK was established, it became one of the smallest of the museums included in the SMB in terms of budget and organisational make-up, but with a large collection of circa 290.000 objects. The museum's institutional colleagues include institutions such as the world famous *Pergamonmuseum* and *Alte Nationalgalerie*. In 2019, the MEK was a literal outsider within SMB. In 2016 the museum became the last one left in Dahlem, a borough on the southwest outskirts of Berlin. Where their large premises were previously shared with two other museums with ethnographic and Asian art collections, now these institutions have moved to the Humboldt Forum on the well-known Museumsinsel in the middle of the city. With a separate entrance in the older connected building, the MEK remained. At the time of my fieldwork, I took note of the occasional discussions about potentially renewing the permanent exhibition. At the time of writing, the beginning of 2023, the exhibition remains mounted, but a curator has been officially tasked with the development of a new permanent exhibition.

The two remaining exhibit spaces, both spanning three large rooms, hosted two *Sonderausstellungen* (special exhibitions) at the time of my fieldwork. A timely and relevant exhibition, 'Fast Fashion Slow Fashion*'* was considered hugely successful and consistently drew in new audiences to the MEK. The exhibition was originally created by the *Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe Hamburg* and opened in September 2019 in Berlin, with the *Slow Fashion* part being locally-crafted and focused. The second *Sonderausstellung*, titled *'*ComiXconnection'*,* tells stories from the independent comic and graphic novel scenes of Southeastern Europe. A curator at the MEK created the exhibit with co-curators from seven different countries in Southeastern Europe. After it had travelled around that part of the continent for five years, the exhibit had its twentieth and final installation in Berlin.

Public Programmes

The MEK has a full agenda that includes many activities outside of the exhibition programme. In interviews with the curators about participation, these other types of outputs, referred to as *Veranstaltungen,* were frequently brought up. Deemed most important, judged by the repeated mention of these programmes in interviews, were the so-called 'European Cultural Days'. The MEK has hosted these series of events every summer for the past twenty years. These programmes are several weeks long, presenting a geographical region, city, country or community in Europe. In 2019, they celebrated the museum's 20th anniversary with a special programme around a theme, the food cultures of Europe, inviting communities representing different European regions they had previously worked with. The annually recurring European-focused programme entails a myriad of events such as lectures, public discussions and performances or presentations and an accompanying exhibition. Other events that came up in conversation were events typically related to exhibitions such as vernissage, thematic workshops and public discussions. Other annual programmes include the Textile Day, and the Bead and Textile Market. During my stay in Berlin they also hosted an 'Action Day' which filled the whole reception hall and studio exhibit space with references to the environmental impact of the fashion industry, as discussed in one of their exhibits. In addition, various guided tours by the curators of the respective exhibits were held, which were open to the public. Over one weekend in November, a Wikipedia workshop for volunteers of the SMB was held, as well as an Edit-a-thon by Wikipedia volunteers dealing with objects in the museum's collection. Some of these events are discussed in this study – those that are will be described in more detail later in this chapter.

Collection

The MEK's collection represents everyday cultures in Europe, with a large amount of their 287,000 objects focused on German and Eastern European cultures, as well as some European ethnic minorities. At the time of my fieldwork, several curators were working on a Collection Concept (Csutor et al., 2019). The curious and complicated history of the establishment of their collections through the merger in 1999, lingers on in the way the curators and staff approach the collection and collection acquisition today (Buchczyk, 2022). They reflect on this in their Collection Concept, explaining how many of their collections were developed within a nationalist and colonialist timeframe, the possibility of 'doubtful provenance' of some objects, and the National Socialist ideology behind collecting German Folklore (Csutor et al., 2019, pp. 4–5). The types of objects they currently hold are 'textiles, popular imagery and photographs' as well as collections thematically connected to 'naive art, childhood and youth culture, rituals and forms of religious

expression' (ibid., p.7). Now, in review of their collections and hoping to establish an acquisition strategy, the Collection Concept summarises the goal of their collections as 'to preserve contemporary and historic manifestations of cultural identities in Europe', and highlights four functions of the collections that represent the 'diversity of European cultures': to preserve these cultural expressions for the future; to make them available for research; to make them available for experience through exhibits; and to use them as an 'engine of social processes' (Csutor et al., 2019, p. 8).

Organisation and use of participation

The MEK shares a mission statement online, which reads:

> Our work at the Museum Europäischer Kulturen – Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (Museum of European Cultures – National Museums in Berlin; MEK) is concerned with the lifeworlds and intertwined cultures of Europe from the 18th century through to the present day. In our collecting and exhibiting, we address not just current social and cultural processes but also highlight historical and global connections. Through this, we seek to foster a broader understanding of our shared European history and culture, in all its diversity.
>
> We promote dialogue. At the MEK in Berlin-Dahlem, we provide a forum for public dialogue and a home for research, conservation, education and outreach. Our working methods are participative, cosmopolitan, forward-looking and sustainable. Original everyday objects and cultural forms of expression from Europe are the indispensable foundations of our activities.
>
> We work collectively. Our work is aimed at a diverse society made up of all kinds of people and social groups. We place great value on incorporating the unique perspectives and insights of the people we work with. Furthermore, we maintain productive collaborations with other museums, cultural institutions and universities in Berlin, Germany, and right across Europe.
>
> We take a stance. Throughout history, museums have contributed to the marginalisation of different groups of people. We are conscious of this historical shortcoming and the responsibility this brings with it. We actively oppose all forms of racism and discrimination in our team and in the public spaces of the MEK, and treat all people with respect and dignity. We welcome them to our museum, where they can experience culture and history, examine lifeworlds, take a breath and feel at home. (Museum Europäischer Kulturen, 2020)

Several elements of their mission statement refer, explicitly or implicitly, to participation methods and social goals, and motivations similar to those discussed in this study's literature review about the promises of participation. As presented here, promoting dialogue is an oft-cited way to signal a commitment to offering people engagement in democratic processes when visiting the museum. They specify that their methods are 'participative' and link this to being a 'forum for public dialogue'. A second participation promise is highlighted in stating that they 'work collectively'. Here, they talk

about collaboration, and 'incorporating the unique perspectives and insights of the people we work with'. This is reminiscent of another motivation for participation, regarding the democratisation of museum methods through collaboration. Finally, their reference to 'taking a stance' suggests their interest in making the museum a just actor in an unjust world, much like what the literature presented as the third 'democratic' argument for participation in the review. All in all, their interest in participation is motivated by three closely-related but different ideas, each connected to their collections as representing everyday life and cultures from all around Europe.

The projects that were discussed and observed as part of this research, and analysed in this study, are all connected to exhibition or public programming. This is the typical structure for the museum's participatory projects. It is important to note that not all exhibitions have such a participatory element, and it is mostly up to the individual curators to decide whether they will work with participation. As such, the people responsible for the planning and realisation of participation are usually employed as curator, or at least have curatorial responsibilities. These also include those employed through the German *Volontariat* system, through which people attain curatorial training and learn about the inner-workings of the respective museum institution, or those with firstly administrative responsibilities. The institutional structure of the MEK, as a museum member of the SMB, and thus SPK, impacts their employment, departmental and funding structure. People working in the MEK are employed by the SMB. The director of the MEK is the head of the museum, and supervises the curators. But, as the curator in the opening vignette indicated, they have to register and justify how they spend their working hours to the SPK. This happens through clocking in and out at the office, but also through reports describing their outputs such as exhibitions, people reached or conferences attended. Organisationally, the MEK's education, exhibition design and communication staff do not fall under the direction of the museum's management, but under that of the SMB. This staff also does, or can do, communication and education for other museum institutions.

Overview of projects discussed

This focus on participatory engagement and collaboration more broadly can be traced back to the beginning of the museum. The director referred back to projects from the early days of the MEK. Between 2002 and 2004, the museum collaborated with different people representing associations and organisations, photographers and other museums for several exhibitions that came out of the European project 'Migration, Work and Identity. A European history, told in museums' (Museum Europäischer Kulturen, 2003). As part of this project, the museum formed the Berlin Platform, together with other museums, such as the Neighbourhood Museum (Berlin Platform, 2002). This

platform was formed to stimulate the contribution and collaboration of migrants in Berliner museums. This marked the start of the museum's twenty-year experience with different participation projects.

In Table 1 I present some of these projects, the ones that came up in interviews and were interpreted by the interviewee as participatory, and projects that I encountered through observation during the fieldwork. This functions as a brief introduction and provides the basic information needed to understand the upcoming analysis and discussion of practices. The list begins with projects which took place during my fieldwork and ends with those projects about whom curators shared experiences in interviews. I include reference to the type of material that was generated in regard to the specific project, and pseudonyms used, if at all, throughout the thesis.

Table 1. List of MEK projects

2019	*Perlenhochzeit exhibition*
	Planned exhibition, a project in collaboration with the HTW – University of Applied Sciences in Berlin. The team at the MEK consisted of Carla, the curator and Jenna, a curatorial assistant. The goal of the exhibit was to create an exhibition centred around two different communities in Germany and to explore how these were related. Carla collaborated with a teacher of a course in a Museum Studies Master's programme as an external curator. The exhibition would be created in collaboration with two groups of students, over the course of 2019 and 2020. Each class would have two term-long courses devoted to the project. I came to the MEK during the second term, the end of the project for the first group of students. Over the course of the term, students were divided into groups to do different preparation work for the exhibition, as part of their course work: object research, create educational material, interview community members and project management. The term before, they had done several assignments, including making participatory stations and doing video interviews. At the time I joined, it was unclear how to involve members of these different communities directly and how the outcomes of the course's assignments would be used in the exhibition. The exhibition project was proposed by the MEK in advance of my stay, as a potential case study and a project which I could join as a participant observer. I joined meetings with Carla, Jenna and the class. During the term I was there, it was announced that the funding application for external finances was not approved, and subsequently the project halted and changed theme, but the class had to finish their assignments. In the end, the original exhibition plan was not fulfilled and the exhibition never took place. The class project continued with the next group of Master's students, but because of the pandemic, they worked online and more independently from the museum. Material: fieldnotes from museum meetings and courses, conversations and interviews with assistant curator and curator, conversations with students and one student interview, application documents.

2019	*Revisiting Collections workshop (part of Perlenhochzeit)*

This workshop was organised by a small group of Master's students who took part in the Perlenhochzeit exhibition project, together with the curatorial assistant and the curator. The students were facilitators for the three-hour workshop with six participants. The participants looked at and touched objects from the museum, shared thoughts and questions about these objects, in writing. Then, they had a discussion with each other and Carla, the curator of the Perlenhochzeit exhibition. The method was developed by the UK Collections Trust (Collections Trust and MLA council, 2009). The students created a schedule for the workshop based on that toolkit.

Material: fieldnotes from the workshop and other meetings, interviews assistant curator and student, documentation of discussions and written questions and answers.

2000–2019	*European Cultural Days*

The MEK has organised European Cultural Days since 2000, celebrating and representing a region, city, country, or an ethnic community of Europe with an exhibition and an extensive public programme, usually covering the whole month of August. Typically, they collaborate with embassies or other official representational bodies in Germany, artists from the region working in Berlin, and associations of citizens from the region in Berlin and with institutions in the presented part of Europe.

Material: interviews with three curators, internal and public documentation.

2019	*ComiXconnection*

Traveling exhibition organised by a curator at the MEK, in collaboration with comic artists around central and eastern Europe, and several local co-curators. In 2019, the final exhibition of the project arrived at the MEK, after five years. The project brought together more than 80 people in a network, through their participation in the exhibition.

Material: fieldnotes, interview with curator.

2019	*Fast Fashion. Slow Fashion.*

Exhibition about the fashion industry. The exhibition came from Hamburg and had been adjusted to the MEK through the integration of profiles of five people who work in 'slow fashion'. The MEK's curator interviewed these five people and presented their story, and the exhibition involved audience participation through several panels where visitors could leave behind advice to other visitors and vote on various statements.

Material: fieldnotes, interview with curator.

2017	*1000 Tücher Gegen das Vergessen*

Exhibit in the MEK of a memorial created by female refugees and victims of the Bosnian wars in collaboration with an artist. The women embroidered handkerchiefs with names of their lost (male) family members, and these handkerchiefs were combined in a memorial. The curator at the MEK was

	involved throughout many stages of the project, which ran from 2002–2021. The exhibition in the MEK took place in 2017. Material: interview with curator and public documentation.
2015	*Intervention project (Erfüllbare Träume? Italienerinnen in Berlin)*
	A group of Italian female artists based in the city organised an intervention in the permanent exhibition, both presenting their own work and reflecting on their experience as immigrants in Berlin. They initiated this themselves. Material: interview with curator, online documentation and catalogue.
2016	*daHEIM : Glances into Fugitive Lives*
	Exhibition project for which the MEK hosted refugees and artist collective Kunstasyl – who worked directly in the exhibition space for several months to create an exhibition about their experiences of flight. Material: interview with director, public documentation, catalogue.
2012	*Comicleben*
	Exhibition about the past and present of comic books. The curator took a similar approach to that of the curator of *Fast Fashion* and created profiles of specific artists, based on interviews with them. Material: interview with curator and public documentation.
2011	*Bring ein Ding*
	Audience participation project in connection with a travelling exhibition that was also presented in the MEK. Audience members were invited to bring '*ein ding'* (a thing) to be photographed with, in the exhibition. Material: interview with curator, public documentation.

Fisksätra Museum

A Thursday, January 2020. Amelie and I are in the museum, preparing the Därför! exhibition to be opened on Saturday. We cut wood, hang up photographs, install television screens, write texts. While Amelie is busy stabilising the display tables, a woman passes by. She looks through the window. Amelie gestures to her to use the old entry door to the apartment from inside the building, rather than the museum's entrance – the museum is closed. They start talking. The woman explains that she is on her way to a job interview at the church. Throughout the conversation it becomes clear that she has had a few different jobs and currently also works for the municipality. Amelie is immediately excited when she hears this and starts talking about the museum, explaining that they work with and for the neighbourhood here. At a certain point the woman asks 'oh you are an integration project?' Later, Amelie turns

to me and says 'I don't like it when they call this an integration project'. When I ask her what she calls it then, she says 'an art project'. [15]

An art project, museum, community cultural centre, or integration project: Fisksätra Museum looks like many things at once. The museum is housed in a former apartment, in the middle of the Fisksätra neighbourhood, Southwest of Stockholm, located in Nacka municipality. The museum opens onto a square between two high-rise buildings, with a church and shopping centre on the other sides. Looking from the square, as seen in Figure 2, one of the apartments with windows and an entry towards the square looks different: a title above the door signals its function, a wooden structure marks a small terrace. Through the windows to the square, people passing by, like the woman in the vignette, can see whatever is happening in the former kitchen – the front room of the museum. The kitchen functions as entry hall, exhibition space, office and simply as a kitchen for the museum. During my fieldwork, I behaved like Amelie, Cristina, Joanna and other freelance staff: without a set desk, moving around the museum to sit wherever possible and required for the different tasks.

History and Exhibitions

Fisksätra Museum started without a building in 2011. Amelie Tham, the founder and one of two co-directors, refers to this time as it being a pop-up museum. The museum is one of a few non-profit organisations in Fisksätra that are focused on serving the local population. The idea for a museum originated from Amelie and further developed in conversation with a local librarian, Barbro Bolonassos, whose support and network were instrumental. After years of ideation, and writing applications, the museum was founded as an *ideell förening* (association) in 2011, and started first by organising art projects in local schools and the Fisksätra Library. In 2014, with financial support through the then newly founded 'Kulturbryggan' funding of the Ministry of Culture and an agreement with Stena, the housing agency owning the high-rise flats in Fisksätra, the museum was established in the apartment building, largely keeping the original floor plan.

The museum's history is very much connected to its location, a neighbourhood with a large first or second-generation immigrant population. A report written by the museum in 2015 stresses the diversity of the population by highlighting that the inhabitants of Fisksätra account for 126 different nationalities (Tham and Madsen, 2015). Political and media attention on Fisksätra has been mostly focused on their inclusion on the national police's list of vulnerable areas in Sweden, based on crime rates and socio-economic background of the population (Polismyndigheten, 2021). The local seat of the

[15] FM Fieldnotes 23 January 2020

political party Liberalerna presents statistics on its website: in the high-rise buildings constructed in the 1970s, where about 6,400 people live, 80% have an immigrant background (Nacka Liberalerna, 2022). The political tension that comes with being pointed out as a vulnerable area plays out clearly in Fisksätra. The museum staff complain about the lack of resources from the municipality to improve schools, infrastructure and organisations in the neighbourhood. At the same time, political parties like the right-wing Sverige Demokraterna use Fisksätra in their campaigns as an image of what they are working against.

The museum presents one exhibition at a time. The exhibitions tend to fill all of the spaces in the museum at once. At the beginning of the fieldwork, the museum presented the exhibition '*MAT – Kvinnor i Fisksätra om mat, minne och plats*' (FOOD – Women in Fiskätra about food, memory and place, MAT), which had been created in collaboration with their women's network. Prompted to think of and work with memories, of home and their food cultures, the women contributed with writings, recipes, and stories, presented through text and pictures in the exhibition. An installation in the biggest exhibit room mimicked and referred to Judy Chicago's 'The Dinner Party.' A video installation showed a co-created art performance from two years previous, where food was presented and enjoyed with others from the neighbourhood. A second exhibition, '*Därför!'* (Therefore!), was opened in January 2020 and stayed up till 2021. This exhibit celebrated their 10-year anniversary and provided an overview of their past projects. A variety of media from their digital archive as well as physical material saved from previous projects were exhibited together and filled up all the rooms of the museum. Two artists also presented their work in exhibitions in the museum for one month each in 2021, to mark the end of their period as artist-in-residence.

Public Programmes

Although exhibitions are often considered the main programming of a museum, the main programmes for Fisksätra Museum lie with other formats, referred to as various 'projects'. Outside of the more regular vernissage events through which most of the exhibitions get some attention, the exhibitions appear to subsequently blend into the walls and become background to the events, workshops and meetings held between the two doors of the museum. During my fieldwork, the museum hosted *verkstad* (workshops), after-school activities with the neighbouring *Kulturskola* Darra, a publicly funded organisation which organises after-school activities. Another ongoing activity were the several creative language café series, where people speak Swedish while doing an artistic activity. Other less frequent events include a carnival and film festival at the end of summer, and various one-off artistic projects and events led by local, national and international artists. The projects that will

be included in the analysis for this study will be introduced in more detail at the end of this chapter.

The collection

Mostly focused on the neighbourhood, Fisksätra Museum regards the life stories of its neighbours as the main 'object' to be collected (Fisksätra Museum, n.d.). It collects these stories through interviews and art workshops, so the form and material of their collected objects vary but include audio and video recordings, written materials, and art made from different materials. Thematically, the stories vary but often deal with the persons' experience of migration and their non-Swedish heritage. As such, the museum regards itself as collecting local and global heritage simultaneously. The collection strategy is largely connected to funding streams as it operates through 'projects' rather than as an ongoing activity. Through its different projects, the museum is creating a collection which is stored, depending on the format and size, in digital files or in one of the small storage rooms in the museum space that serve a double function as a depot.

Organisation and use of participation

As a non-profit association, Fisksätra Museum is structured with a board and freelance staff who are responsible for the day-to-day work and activities of the museum. Amelie Tham and Cristina Schippa are the co-directors, doing most of this work, both working around 20 to 30% per week over the course of the pandemic. Other freelancers join in for specific projects as facilitators or project leaders. This means that the museum is not open every day. During the fieldwork, opening hours were set mostly based on Cristina's schedule with her other freelance-based work and the project calendar.

The museum presents the following mission statement in its 2015 report:

> Fisksätra Museum's self-formulated mission is to investigate how a museum can be a cultural-political laboratory in the broadest sense. We want to push the boundaries of what a museum can be in a society characterised by migration. Anchored in many forms of collaboration with residents of Fisksätra, groups, networks and individuals of the local community, we are simultaneously developing the museum as a platform for cultural heritage and different art forms. (Tham and Madsen, 2015, p. 47)[16]

The website further explains their approach to participation:

> We see our visitors, of all ages, also as participants. Our visitors in the community help us to 'make/do' the museum, when they participate in

[16] Translated from Swedish, original in Appendix D

> projects, suggest new initiatives, new possible projects. The museum as a whole works artistically, in different art forms. And we are continuously working with the inhabitants' global cultural heritage. We collect, exhibit, stage and bring to life different heritages. Life stories, and other stories, images, patterns, music, cookery and other traditions. And in working with community art/participatory processes, we also focus on issues that are seen as important among residents: experiences of migration, unemployment, inequality and racism, the lack of development of local schools, local community needs, and as local residents, feeling that the municipality does not listen to the community's residents. ('Om Fisksätra Museum', n.d.)[17]

In these descriptions of its work, Fisksätra Museum explains that it works with art processes, but largely defines its use of participation through the promises connected to such methods. Several elements discussed in the literature review can be found echoed here. As a 'cultural-political laboratory' the museum defines itself directly in relation to its surroundings, as an actor in society. This is reiterated at the end of the second quote, where it connects working with participatory processes to (political) issues that are important to residents. Simultaneously, the internal working of a museum is questioned or addressed in these statements. Participation is the way through which the museum is 'made', and it wants to 'push the boundaries of what a museum can be'. Finally, its focus on local issues also frames the museum as a space for visitors – or participants, because 'we see our visitors, of all ages, as participants' – to discuss political and democratic topics.

As discussed in the previous section, the museum's different projects form its core programming. All these projects would be described as participatory by the staff: they are workshops, language cafés, public events in which local inhabitants are invited to take active part. Some of their exhibitions, such as the *Därför!* exhibition, were developed and made without participants, but functioned as a presentation of past projects and work. For most projects discussed in this thesis, either or both Amelie and Cristina were involved, as well as a few other freelance staff, most frequently Jennifer, Joanna and Stella, all of whom have worked with the museum for several years but at the time of the fieldwork were mostly employed by or working with other organisations. Two local organisations regularly collaborate with the museum, and will come up in the descriptions: Darra Dans och Musik (Darra) and Fisksätra Library. Darra is a registered *kulturskola*, a publicly funded organisation that organises after-school activities. Young people up to 19 years of age from Nacka municipality can take dance and music lessons for free. They organise some art-making workshops together with Fisksätra Museum, usually led by Cristina, in the museum's space. The library is a long-term partner, with whom the museum has collaborated in the organisation and funding applications for

[17] Translated from Swedish, original in Appendix D

different projects. One of them will be discussed in detail in this thesis, the *Sommarjobb* project of summer 2021.

Overview of projects discussed

Since the founding of the association, the museum has been holding participatory projects in schools, the library, and, since the establishment of the physical museum, in their own premises. The earliest projects focused on teaching artistic skills, storytelling and philosophical talks, and taking part in artistic processes such as animation and poetry writing. Table 2 presents the projects that came up in interviews and observation during the fieldwork at Fisksätra Museum, and that are analysed in this thesis. Like the list of projects for the MEK, this functions as a brief introduction and provides the basic information needed to understand the upcoming analysis and discussion of practices. It is not a complete list of all the work of Fisksätra Museum. The list is in reverse chronological order, and specifies whether I observed the project and included it in my fieldnotes, or whether its discussion in this thesis is based on interviews or public documentation. The projects that will be discussed in more detail in this study are described more extensively in this list than others. At the end of the list, I include a description of two projects that were planned but not realised during my fieldwork.

Table 2. List of Fisksätra Museum projects

2021	*Sommarjobb project*
	A three-week-long workshop series during which eight teenagers aged 15–18 from Fisksätra participated in learning about professions in film and learning how to make a film themselves. The films were then shown at a screening at the end of the summer. The workshop series was facilitated by Joanna and Cristina, and four other guests hosted workshops. I was present for the whole workshop series and the film screening, in 2021. The project was organised as part of the municipality's *Sommarjobb* (summer job) programme, where organisations are subsidised by the municipality to pay teenagers for a three-week internship or job, through which they are introduced to a profession. The *Sommarjobb* project in Fisksätra was integrated into a larger project about film and democracy, with the main organiser being Fisksätra Library. This overarching project included the organisation of a film festival at the end of the summer, and a committee of local young people was involved in establishing the film festival's programme. Material: Fieldnotes, interviews with staff and conversations with participants, evaluation videos of participants, material from workshops and applications.

2018–ongoing	*Creative language cafés*

Since 2018, Fisksätra Museum has organised language cafés with a focus on creative art-making for people who are learning to speak Swedish. It is usually a one or two-hour informal meeting, with somewhere between two and ten participants. It is on a drop-in basis and thus different people join each meeting. I took part in several of these workshops/cafés, in 2021.
Material: fieldnotes and interviews, applications.

2020–2022	*Skapande Verkstad/Kulturskola*

Cristina, Amelie and other freelancers have organised a variety of creative and art after-school workshops. The museum hosts art workshops for children in Fisksätra one afternoon a week, sometimes together with Darra, their neighbouring organisation.

Material: fieldnotes, interviews, applications and public documentation.

2021	*Artist-in-residence: Konst Mot Corona and Ljuv Nektar*

In 2021, part of the museum was used as a studio for a local artist, who had lost his studio. It was part of an artist-in-residence programme. He created an exhibition, opened at the beginning of autumn 2021, after which another local artist had a month-long exhibition.

Material: Fieldnotes and interviews.

2020	*Därför!*

Exhibit that was created in celebration of the 10-year anniversary of Fisksätra Museum, showing pictures and material created in the previous 10 years. I helped build the exhibition and was present for the opening weekend. The exhibition stayed up (partially) throughout my fieldwork period, up until summer 2021.

Material: Fieldnotes and interviews.

2017–2018	*MAT – Kvinnor i Fisksätra om mat, minne och plats (MAT)*

MAT was organised within the multi-part Kakofoni project (below) and consisted of a language café series with a group of women, mostly revolving around food. It culminated in an exhibition of different recipes from their home countries, written up by them, including creative writing about food. This project was organised with and for the Fisksätra Talented Women, a network of women formed in 2016 with the museum's help. This group had previously worked with obstacles in everyday life, such as unemployment. The network was originally formed to help them earn money by selling food. At the time of the fieldwork, the group was still active on WhatsApp, several of these women were regular visitors and participated in other projects, such as the language cafés.

Material: Fieldnotes and interviews, public documentation.

2017–2019	*Kakofoni*
	Kakofoni was a project with several elements about power and powerlessness, organised by artists and the museum staff in collaboration with different groups of residents. It comprised public events and exhibitions, including school workshops and a choreographed performance organised by different artists with a group of local women of which some later participated in the *MAT* project. Material: interviews, public documentation.
2015–2018	*Sonder*
	Sonder was a longer-term project that involved the museum going into local schools and having longer art workshop series with the same classes over three years. They did workshops through which students could experience making and reading stories in different art forms. The project was framed in response to a national literacy problem. Material: interviews, public documentation.
2022–ongoing	*Future projects: Körverk and the 'Covid project'*
	Two projects were planned during my fieldwork, but not (yet) realised. The museum had the plan to create a choral work with a choir consisting of people from the neighbourhood (*Körverk)*, together with a famous choir director. Another project, eventually realised (partly) in 2022, was referred to as the 'Covid project' and would be about how Fisksätra residents experienced the pandemic. Eventually, two artists produced artworks based on interviews with local residents, and these were exhibited in 2022, in an exhibition called: *Livet i Fisksätra under Pandemin* (Life in Fisksätra during the Pandemic). Material: interviews and fieldnotes.

Conclusion

This chapter introduced the basic outlines of the two contexts in which the practices discussed in the rest of this study take place. Organisationally, the museums are very different, but their goals in relation to using participatory processes overlap. Both largely frame participation in relation to the different promises of participation as described in the literature review, especially in the different ideas of democratisation. The Fisksätra Museum, is a museum focused on the local residents of their direct surroundings, combining art processes with cultural heritage. Their approach to participation is motivated by them being interested in exploring 'what a museum is' and working with issues that are deemed important by the local inhabitants of Fisksätra. The MEK presents itself as a museum that promotes public dialogue, use

participatory processes in order to incorporate views and experiences of people whose heritage they exhibit and 'take a stance' as a museum.

In the next chapters, I will present how they organise, plan and realise different participatory projects. Throughout those descriptions, I will further paint the picture of the two respective museums, who works there and how they work. Starting with Chapter 6, about creating possibilities for participation, the museums' approaches to participation will be described and analysed in process and in practice.

6 Creating opportunities for participation

Cristina likes to sit in the kitchen of the museum overlooking Fisksätra's square. She writes applications, edits videos or sends emails, hunched over her computer – her charger connected to an extension cord propped up on books placed on a chair next to the kitchen sink. She sometimes looks up to let me know she just needs to 'do this thing real quick' or to comment about her working style, only for me and her to hear. There is no participant in sight. Still, Cristina's work makes participation in the museum possible: she sits in the kitchen so that everyone who walks across the square and glances in the direction of the museum sees something is going on, that the museum is open, that you could walk in. By making herself and the museum visible – while doing other tasks – Cristina makes it possible for anyone to join in.

This chapter describes how the staff at Fisksätra Museum and the Museum Europäischer Kulturen (MEK) make it possible for participation in the museum to take place. I focus on the moments not spent with participants or not explicitly planning a project: the majority of their working hours. In order to organise participatory projects in their respective museums, staff have to ensure there is funding available and there are social contacts established. By 'zooming in' on how they create these financial and social resources (Nicolini, 2009), I describe what happens in the museum offices, buildings and their direct environments before participants join and even before a concrete project plan exists: the practices of creating opportunities for participation in the museum.

The practices described in this chapter come up as 'mundane everyday activities' in museum work, as Jennie Morgan (2018) described them. They are imperative for the museum to function and importantly create the context in which participatory projects can develop. Staff in both museums referred to the work I describe here when talking about different projects in interviews. While working on applications, the practitioners shaped their ideas into projects and made strategic decisions about budgets and the framing of a project. Even if funding requests were declined, the processes could shape or influence the next potential project. At the same time, when staff worked on administrative tasks during opening hours in the museum, like Cristina in the opening vignette, they created the possibility for people to walk in, have a chat with museum staff, or ask a question. Ultimately, this was work that facilitated building relationships with visitors who might turn into participants.

Both museums have to have these financial and social resources in place to make participation possible. While doing the work of creating this possibility, the staff interacted with different materials, socio-political contexts, and people in the two organisations, and therefore the way the practices unfolded looks different in both museums. The first half of this chapter focuses on the practices of applying for external funding as seen at Fisksätra Museum. This is a more common practice for them than the MEK, and therefore the material drawn on for this chapter mostly comes from my fieldwork there. This first section includes descriptions of seeking out and securing external funding, and how staff interact with external structures through forms and calls for applications in order to write applications that could potentially be successful. I include a brief description of what this looks like for the MEK. The second group of practices discussed in this chapter include the work through which social opportunities for participation are created. These revolve around strategic interactions with different people, both in order to establish new contacts as well as to remain in touch with their existing networks.

Financial resources: 'applications, applications, applications'

Answering what would be necessary to realise their ideal participatory project, one of the MEK's curators exclaimed 'to have more: more space, more money, more personnel.'[18] To secure resources in order to reach their respective participatory goals, the two museums had different routes to take. The participatory practices the MEK staff engaged in are often connected to an exhibition or event series. In general, funding for their exhibition projects comes from their overarching organisation Staatlicher Museen Berlin (SMB), part of Stiftung Preußischer Kulturbesitz (SPK). The SPK is a German cultural heritage foundation which is funded by the German national government, as well as the federal states. The revenue the MEK generates from ticket fees goes to the SMB, and funding for the museums' operations is divided up annually by the SMB, based on their funding received through the SPK. Like the other museums that fall under the SMB, they have to apply for funding for each of their exhibition projects with the overarching organisation. The curators explained that the SMB requires detailed budgets as part of the application process, often a long time in advance.[19] Sometimes, when the funding from the SMB did not fully cover a planned project, curators sought out external funding for specific exhibitions or a participatory project, as was the case with the *Perlenhochzeit* exhibition.[20]

[18] MEK Interview C2
[19] MEK Interview C1; MEK Interview C3; MEK MEK Cultural Days budget planning 2022
[20] MEK Application Perlenhochzeit 2019

Fisksätra Museum is dependent on external, mostly public funding and does not generate revenue from entry fees: the museum is free to visit. The two artistic directors, Cristina and Amelie, are freelancers responsible for the non-profit organisation's operations. In order to maintain a budget that supports the organisation, their work, and the museum's projects, Cristina and Amelie have to apply for funds. Project-funding typically supports their programmes and some administrative costs, ranging from grants covering a few months to three years. Often, they require funding from several different funding streams at local and national government level for one project. Operational costs, such as rent for the building and payment for the two of them, are funded partly through overhead costs for projects as well as funding called *verksamhetsstöd* (operational support) from Nacka municipality. During my fieldwork with Fisksätra Museum, they also applied for and received governmental support to deal with the effects of the pandemic.

In order to organise participatory projects, both the museums need money and to maintain a financially healthy organisation. In doing so, staff need to navigate various processes of financing. These processes, and how the staff interacted with them, influence how participation in the museum can eventually take shape. As will be shown, following Fisksätra Museum's efforts in securing external funding, sometimes museum staff 'simply' interacted with the external structures which organise these processes. But their practices also included attempts to manipulate these processes and outcomes to better fit their participatory goals. I first describe how Fisksätra Museum applied for external funding by navigating various systems. Then, the strategies the staff developed to manipulate these processes and outcomes are discussed: how they increased their chances of obtaining funding and how they pivoted when they face unfavourable processes or outcomes.

Navigating systems: applying for external funding

To finance the activities of Fisksätra Museum, Cristina and Amelie wrote applications to national public funding organisations such as *Konstnärsnämnden* (the Swedish Arts Grants Committee), *Riksantikvarieämbetet* (the Swedish National Heritage Board), and *Kulturrådet* (the Swedish Arts Council), as well as to Nacka municipality. Between 2019 and 2021, they handed in over ten different applications, of which six were awarded. Applying for funding can be understood to consist of two activities. Cristina and Amelie had to stay up to date about possible funds to apply for and plan out the process of applying, requiring management of these different opportunities and responsibilities. Then, they had to write the application which entails reading the application form, writing suitable answers and making decisions about their museum calendar.

Managing applications

In order to apply for external funding, Cristina and Amelie needed to manage the application process. They first had to stay up to date about the deadlines of funding organisations, and then planned out the writing process. To stay up to date about funding opportunities they drew on their network, as well as their experience. They knew which organisations to keep in mind and around which time to check whether a new call for applications had been published. There were a few funding organisations that have calls annually or biannually so they had an understanding of when the next opportunity would arise, such as Nacka municipality's recurring grant for operational aid (Nacka Kommun, 2022). They also applied several times to Kulturrådet's fund for crisis support, Kulturbryggan, and Riksantikvarieämbetet, and kept an eye on the calendars and newsletters of these organisations. They further benefitted from their professional networks. They exchanged funding opportunities with their closest partners, Darra Musik och Dans and Fisksätra Library, as well as working together on applications with them. At rare occasions, special funding opportunities arose through their network, such as when they were invited to meet with Nacka's culture board or when a representative of a foundation walked in as a visitor and informs them about their funding opportunities.[21]

Second, once the staff knew about an opportunity, they planned and managed the writing process. Here, they needed to account for the time it takes to write the application, as well as the process time for decision-making by the respective funding organisation. The time between sending in an application and receiving the answer could be up to eight or nine months. Two project applications that Cristina and Amelie wrote in March 2020 came back in December 2020 and January 2021 respectively.[22] These particular two applications, one for a series of events in collaboration with a Stockholm artist-run organisation and one for a photography project, were both rejected. While managing applications and planning out the writing process, it was thus important to account for possible rejections, which was what motivates their writing of several applications at the same time.[23] In conversation with Amelie, Cristina reflected on the importance of planning out this type of work in advance and accounting for the time spent on writing. Amelie agreed, framing the uncertainty as inherent to applying for external funding: 'it's just the bad structure of this type of work.'[24]

While creating opportunities for participation through the management of external funding applications, they were largely dependent on external organisations' timelines. One dimension of the application processes specifically complicated the management of this work: clustering of deadlines.

[21] FM Fieldnotes 22 January 2021; 27 May 2021
[22] FM Fieldnotes 25 March 2020; 17 December 2020; 22 January 2021
[23] FM Fieldnotes 25 March 2020, 18 February 2021; FM Interview Amelie
[24] FM Fieldnotes 27 May 2021

Often, the funding organisations worked with call-specific deadlines, rather than ongoing applications. This resulted in clusters of deadlines for applications throughout the year. At Fisksätra Museum, Cristina and Amelie usually prepared their written applications at the end of September, beginning of October, as well as at the start of the calendar year. The effect of this was somewhat paradoxical: the work was on one hand always ongoing – they were always either waiting to hear about results or writing applications – and it could come in periods of extra intensity because of the clusters of deadlines.[25] These intense periods were not directly visible in the museum's programme calendar. For example, during the pandemic, while the museum was hardly open and no projects were going on, hard work continued in the background: 'we were a bit exhausted after all the applications,' Amelie told me, before continuing to reflect on the number of projects they have had to postpone because of the pandemic period: 'it might feel a bit slow, but it is a bit of a special case.'[26]

Cristina and Amelie accepted the uncertainty and dependency the process of applying brings as 'just the bad structure of this type of work'. They answered this uncertainty with flexibility: working more intensely at certain periods, putting the work away when there was something more important, and taking up any last-minute chance for funding when it presents itself.[27] This uncertainty also translated itself into a flexible museum calendar with periods of more funding and thus more projects, as well as periods where 'it might feel a bit slow'. In turn, this fluctuating museum calendar had an effect on how much the freelancers could work. In periods with many projects, Cristina could work 'quite a lot' for the museum, but in the period that she just started to work at the museum 'we didn't have so many people,' or projects, for that matter.[28] The pandemic further increased this already existing uncertainty because now projects had to be cancelled or delayed:

> [A]ctually from this January (2021) I started working a bit less. Because the museum, we knew, well, didn't have as much funding, so we started trying to work in different ways and to be able to continue this project that we started. And, yeah, find financing from other parts. Yeah, and then actually Covid came so it was a bit problematic in that sense.[29]

During the pandemic, only Cristina came to the museum and Amelie mostly worked from home.[30] This led to a further crystallisation of a previously established division of labour between the two of them, with Amelie mostly

[25] FM Fieldnotes 17 March 2021; 7 December 2020
[26] FM Fieldnotes 17 March 2021
[27] FM Fieldnotes 17 March 2021; 21 June 2021; FM Interview Cristina
[28] FM Interview Cristina
[29] Ibid.
[30] Ibid.

taking the lead in application writing.[31] During the time I was mostly in contact over the phone with Amelie, she would frequently mention that she was working on an application or waiting to hear back from a funder. Still, Cristina wrote and sought out applications too.[32] There were moments that she planned to do so while she was in the museum, but this work was usually the first task that she decided to set aside when something more important came up, for example when someone visited the museum.[33] In periods of clusters of deadlines, and when distracted by different tasks in the museum, this could lead Cristina to do this work from home.[34]

In short, Cristina and Amelie managed applications by staying up to date about possible calls through official communication channels and contact with organisational partners in their network. Once a call was known and open, they had to plan out when they would have time for a new project, keeping in mind potential rejections: by allowing for flexibility in the museum's calendar and in their own working hours. Finally, the application writing had to be integrated with their other working tasks of keeping the museum open.

Writing applications

Once a call had been identified, the staff actually had to write the applications. The writing process went, more or less, as follows. Cristina or Amelie brought up the opportunity in one of their weekly meetings in-person or on the phone, or they discussed it over email, usually two or three weeks in advance. According to Amelie, over the years, it had been mostly her who would bring up concrete suggestions for project applications.[35] The projects were based on ideas she has been thinking about for a long time and developed in collaboration with colleagues: 'I carry around things, questions, and then sometimes I feel "now we could do it".'[36] Amelie would develop this idea further in writing, by free-writing and based on questions posed by the funding organisation in the application form. Before settling on the final phrasing of the answers, Amelie and Cristina sent drafts back and forward to each other. When preparing an application together with other organisations, they would have meetings to discuss the application or write it together.[37]

The application writing starts out with an idea for a project, but the call for application and the forms organisations have to fill in can influence how the project is described on paper. Most of the time, Fisksätra Museum submitted its applications through a web-based system. These applications tended to have three elements: free-text fields to answer specific questions, fields in

[31] FM Interview Amelie
[32] FM Fieldnotes 17 March 2021; FM Interview Cristina
[33] FM Fieldnotes 21 June 2021; FM Interview Cristina
[34] FM Interview Cristina
[35] FM Interview Amelie
[36] Ibid.
[37] FM Interview Cristina; FM Fieldnotes 17 March 2021

which to register general information about the organisation and the submitted budget. These forms provided the main framework through which the museum had to explain its ideas, and could thus steer the writing. Looking at three of Fisksätra Museum's applications, there were slight differences between the forms for *projektbidrag* (project support) and *verksamhetsbidrag* (operational support).[38] Nacka municipality's form for operational support included fields to describe the organisation, to describe past activities and how they reflect stability and continuity, who had access to their activities and how, and which professional practitioners were connected to the organisation.[39] For a project application with RAÄ, the form included fields asking for a description of the organisation as well, in addition to asking for a description of the purpose, the implementation of the project, a schedule and the expected results.[40] The special funding offered by Kulturrådet during the pandemic, included both project and operational support.[41]

It is worth taking a closer look at this latter form, for 'financial contributions for particular need in the cultural sector in response to the spread of the Covid-19 virus.'[42] The form included five separate written fields of entries, with two fields to present the applicant. By describing their general work, the organisation was supposed to prove 'they meet the requirements for the grant.' They were also asked to describe their activities from the previous year, specifically in relation to the Covid restrictions. The next two fields provided space to specify their need for operational and project support. The operational support field asked about the amount and how they plan to use the funding. The project support field asked for the start and end date of the project, and then allowed for 2000 characters to describe 'how the project supports the recovery of cultural life and the adaptations to the new conditions' and how the applicant planned to organise 'safe' cultural activities. For both the operational and project support requests they had to specify the expenses, the amount of support they seek, and what additional financial support they expect. At the end of the form the organisation had 1000 characters to add 'further information' they found relevant.

How do you describe a project that is still being developed, and how do you deal with this strict division of fields and the different requirements coming from each funding organisation? Amelie explained that they prefer to keep their answers to applications as open as possible.[43] They do so in the application to RAÄ by keeping the time plans rough and account for a slow start during which more specific planning would take place.[44] Or by giving

[38] FM Verksamhetsstöd Nacka Kommun, 2019; FM RAÄ, 2019; FM Kulturrådet, 2021
[39] FM Verksamhetsstöd Nacka Kommun, 2019
[40] FM RAÄ, 2019
[41] FM Kulturrådet, 2021
[42] Ibid.
[43] FM presentation Amelie at NCK conference 2022
[44] FM RAÄ, 2019

indications of the amount of workshops that would be hosted without stating exact numbers or specifying the content of each workshop, in an application for a language café.[45] Both Amelie and Cristina found that implementing such flexibility contributed to the success of their most recent multi-year project, *Kakofoni*.[46] Amelie phrased it as being 'necessary' for all their projects.[47] But including and allowing for such flexibility and reflectivity in their work was a balancing act, as it could be 'a bit difficult while writing applications,' as Amelie reflected.[48] Furthermore, it became clear to them that some funding organisations wished to see more detailed planning at the time of applying. The museum wrote an application in collaboration with an artist in Stockholm, and Amelie explained that they had planned to develop the programme over the course of the project in collaboration with participants, as they wrote in other applications too.[49] The multi-year project application was rejected. The funder argued that it was not planned out enough.[50]

As a practice, application writing seems thus to be framed by external timelines, application forms, which questions are asked and the type of funding organisation. The staff had to be up to date about when they can apply and anticipate how detailed they had to be in their answers, largely building on experience about which organisation required which level of detail in their application. In response to these processes and structures, Fisksätra Museum developed a few strategies to increase their chances of a positive outcome, as described next.

Strategising to increase your chances

Part of securing funding for participatory projects is to develop and apply strategies to increase your chances. This has been a steep learning curve, Amelie would attest.[51] When the Fisksätra Museum existed only as an idea in Amelie's head and a concept on paper, she wrote 'applications, applications, applications, applications during ten years, with not very much success actually.'[52] Finally successful for the first time in 2011, writing 'applications, applications, applications, applications' has continued in the way as just described. Over the years, the staff at the Fisksätra Museum has developed two distinct strategies to increase a chance of positive feedback. Firstly, they carefully choose a funding organisation and frame their project to suit a

[45] FM Inkluderingsprojekter Nacka Kommun, 2019
[46] FM Interview Cristina; FM Fieldnotes 25 January 2020
[47] FM presentation Amelie at NCK conference 2022
[48] FM Fieldnotes 7 December 2020
[49] Ibid.; FM Inkluderingsprojekter Nacka Kommun, 2019
[50] FM Fieldnotes 7 December 2020
[51] FM Interview Amelie
[52] Ibid.

specific call. Second, they consider their connections and how to utilise these to increase funding opportunities.

Framing applications to specific funders

Deciding which funding opportunity to pursue and which project to apply with was an important part of Fisksätra Museum's strategy to increase its chances of acquiring sufficient funding. Fisksätra Museum's first positive result came in 2011, from the newly founded state fund Kulturbryggan (Komittén Kulturbryggan, 2012). One goal of the Kulturbryggan committee was to fund *nyskapande* (innovative) cultural projects and to support newly starting initiatives (Ibid., p.9). It was the right match for the museum-to-be, and supported the initial collecting of recorded life-stories and the museum's first exhibition. Since then, Amelie, Cristina and other freelance staff developed an understanding of the general success rates and specific interests of certain funding types and organisations. This has resulted in them frequently applying to the same organisations with new project ideas. Simultaneously, when they think of a new type of project, it might offer the opportunity to seek funding from a previously unused channel. To fund the 2021 artists-in-residence, for example, they applied for exhibition funding from Kulturrådet, rather than funding specifically for artist residencies.[53] Not having previously applied for this exact funding type, Cristina decided to do so now because they judged their chances to be fairly high. They based this on their perspective of Kulturrådet as being especially committed to providing a fair salary for artists and believing that not a lot of people take the time to apply for this particular funding.[54] Indeed, several months later, funding for two exhibitions by local artists connected to the artist-in-residence programme was approved, and both artists exhibited their work in the autumn of 2021.[55]

In addition to carefully choosing a funder for the specific project idea, staff framed their project and museum to fit the specific call. They did so by considering the value of their project from the perspective of the funding organisation and deliberating about their words in the respective application forms.[56] It was important in this process to consider how the funding organisations communicated their values and funding interests in their call for applications and questions. Nacka municipality, for example, asked explicitly how the funded activities would benefit the residents of Nacka.[57] In response, the museum summed up the ways in which locals can interact with the museum, quantifying visitors to an exhibition, and stressing their publicly accessible and free programming inside and outside the museum building.[58]

[53] FM Fieldnotes 6 May 2021; 27 May 2021
[54] FM Fieldnotes 18 February 2021
[55] FM Fieldnotes 27 May 2021; 4 September 2021
[56] FM Fieldnotes 18 February 2021
[57] FM Verksamhetsstöd Nacka Kommun, 2019
[58] Ibid.

On the same form, the museum presents a narrative about how 'the projects and the museum have grown up continuously' since 2009, in response to the question posed to prove 'stability and continuity'.[59] The presentation of their history to Nacka municipality stands in stark contrast to the way they present their work in an application to Kulturrådet for extra support because of the pandemic. Here, the funder asks what the organisation was able to do in 2020. In addition to sharing some of the projects that partially continued, the staff also stress that 'from March, [their] resources to keep the museum open, develop and plan from a short and long-term perspective dramatically shrank.'[60] In the case of the application to Nacka municipality, the museum stressed the continuation of their work over the previous decade, to showcase the strength of the organisation in order to be awarded operational support. To Kulturrådet, however, the museum rather stressed the lack of continuity, in order to convince the funder. The context of the museum's need at that particular moment and the specific call's focus guided the practice of writing applications.

This is important to keep in mind, because as most of their applications were written to public institutions, such temporary funding opportunities can also be guided by political interest. This could be seen in Nacka municipality's inclusion project support, offered between 2017 and 2019. Fisksätra Museum received funding through this call in 2017, 2018 and 2019.[61] In the accompanying guidelines to this funding, the municipality described that they offer grants to projects which reach out to a target group of 'newly arrived, unaccompanied minors, and Nacka residents with limited knowledge of Swedish who are distanced from the labour market' (Nacka Kommun, 2017).[62] Funded projects should give this group 'a sense of inclusion, strength and improved self-esteem,' and could include activities through which they meet 'established citizens' to expand their network and career chances (Ibid.). In 2022, the municipality no longer offered this specific project support. Instead, they offered funding for organisations that work towards the articulated goal of a 'drug-free Nacka for young people' (Plomin, 2021). This shift in funding opportunities suggests there has been a shift in focus from stimulating integration versus fighting drug-related crime and societal problems in areas like Fisksätra.

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[59] FM Verksamhetsstöd Nacka Kommun, 2019. Translated from Swedish, original: 'Sedan dess har projekten och museet vuxit kontinuerligt.'

[60] FM Kulturrådet, 2021. Translated from Swedish, original: 'Men parallellt redan från mars minskade våra resurser för att hålla museet öppet, driva och planera både i kortare perspektiv och långsiktig framförhållning och utveckling dramatiskt.'

[61] FM Inkluderingsprojekter Nacka Kommun, 2019

[62] Translated from Swedish, original: '[målgruppen är] nyanlända, ensamkommande barn och Nackabor med bristande språkkunskaper i svenska och som står utanför arbetsmarknaden […] aktiviteter ska känna sig inkluderade, stärkta och få starkare självkänsla [och ge] möjligheten till möte med etablerade medborgare stärks och möjliggör ett utökat nätverk, vilket i sin tur kan öka chanserna till jobb-och bostadskarriär.'

The museum sought and received support for three series of language cafés for residents of Fisksätra through Nacka's inclusion funding.[63] In their 2019 application, they described this series of meetings using similar phrasing and direct wording from the guidelines: participants are described as 'women who so far have not entered the Swedish labour market,' and the goals of the project included 'improving their Swedish speaking skills' and 'making new contacts within the target group as well as with women who are more established in Swedish society and the labour market'.[64] Although their application truthfully described what they planned to do and did previously, they framed the project using words presented by the municipality in their guidelines. That these were phrasings used specifically for this application became apparent when reading the annual report for the same year that the language café series was held, and the museum's webpage describing this specific series of language cafés (Fisksätra Museum, n.d.). In both these texts they first stressed that the project included 'artistic processes,' something that was not mentioned in the application. Furthermore, the main topic of the grant, inclusion, was only used in the annual report. There, they explicitly described being interested in 'empowerment' as part of inclusion, only to continue using empowerment rather than inclusion for the rest of the text.[65]

Another element of applications that Fisksätra Museum strategically framed were the budgets. Cristina and Amelie found that funders usually award less money than applied for and that they prefer to fund project-related rather than overhead costs. When the opportunity arose to apply for special support from Kulturrådet through the previously mentioned pandemic-related grants, Cristina and Amelie carefully considered how to divide up the budget for the requested amount of support.[66] Applying for this temporary funding type was the first time Fisksätra Museum had had the chance to ask Kulturrådet for support for ongoing expenses such as rent and utilities, expenses that were usually covered through a municipal fund. As described earlier, the application included two sections: *verksamhetsbidrag* (operational support) and *projektbidrag* (project support). Cristina explained that they decided to include overhead costs connected to the project in the *verksamhetsbidrag* budget, anticipating the possibility of the project not being awarded enough money.[67] In total they applied for SEK 480,000, including SEK 190,000 for the project and SEK 290,000 for overheads.[68] They were

[63] FM Fieldnotes 6 May 2021
[64] FM Inkluderingsprojekter Nacka Kommun, 2019, p.2. Translated from Swedish, original: 'Uppdraget är ett tillfälle för kvinnor som ännu inte kommit in på den svenska arbetsmarknaden att: 1. förbättra sina språkkunskaper i svenska, 2. öva sig i att hålla i en presentation inför publik och 3. knyta nya kontakter både med andra i målgruppen och med kvinnor som är mer etablerade i det svenska samhället och arbetsmarknaden.'
[65] FM Verskamhetsplan, 2020; FM Verksamhetsberättelse, 2020
[66] FM Fieldnotes 27 May 2021
[67] Ibid.
[68] FM Kulturrådet, 2021

awarded just shy of SEK 370,000, including half of the project funding and more than 75% of the overheads.[69] As such, the staff strategically used this opportunity by taking advantage of the chance to apply for overhead expenses and wisely phrased overhead costs for the project as *verksamhetsbidrag*, instead of including them in the project-specific budget.

Following these examples, we can see how staff at Fisksätra Museum strategically increased their chances of being awarded funding through the way that they frame their applications. They considered which fund might be most suitable for a specific project or the museum's operations. They knew the values and interests of these funders and used words in their application that are similar to the ones used in the call. Finally, they strategically divided their budget in their application. Doing so, they attempted to navigate financial processes rife with uncertainties and dependent on political opinion.

Collaborating

Fisksätra Museum also increased its chance of being awarded funding by strategically collaborating in the process of applying for funding. In Cristina's words, collaborating 'is a bit of a strategy that the museum has taken to […] overcome the problems that we had […] probably mainly because [there are] less, how do you say, less people working actively in the museum.'[70] The two neighbouring organisations Darra and the library, introduced in Chapter 5, were particularly important collaborators. Darra and the museum collaborated for the Fisksätra Carnival in 2018 and 2019 and a series of *skapande verkstad,* creative workshops for children. The museum and the library collaborated on an application for a film and democracy project that took place over the course of summer 2021, and included the *Sommarjobb* project as one of three elements.[71] When they collaborated with their partners on applications, they strategically considered who should be the formal applicant. All three applied for funding for non-profit organisations, potentially responding to the same call from funding organisations. To increase all their chances, they sometimes considered who had not received money for that specific year from the granting fund, and agree that this organisation should apply. This happened for example in April 2021, when Nacka municipality announced that it had extra funds available because of the upcoming anniversary of the municipality (Nacka Kommun, 2021). At that time, Fisksätra Museum was still waiting to receive an answer to an outstanding application with the municipality. So, they asked Darra to be the official applicant, for shared funding for them, the library and the religious centre. Cristina offered to help with writing the application.[72]

[69] FM Fieldnotes 27 May 2021
[70] FM Interview Cristina
[71] FM Fieldnotes 17 March 2021
[72] FM Fieldnotes 6 May 2021

These collaborations came out of a need partially created by the funding cycle: less funding meant that fewer people work in the museum, and it then became more challenging to do projects, but also to find the time to apply for funding. Collaborating on applications with other organisations, then, was one way to strategise and deal with this limiting factor. At the same time, they staff knew that they were to some extent fishing in the same funding pool as other organisations, with overlaps in their target audience and goals. Collaborating on project applications is a way to spread their chances.

Pivoting

So far, two major downsides to the application processes have come to the fore: the process takes time and applications might be rejected. It could take up to nine months before Fisksätra Museum heard whether an application was accepted. The staff found ways to deal with these uncertainties by pivoting, or changing course: changing a project completely, starting a project without having funding secured, or adjusting a project plan and applying again. As Amelie said, having been disappointed by the rejection of a funding application in the middle of the Covid pandemic: 'over the years I've become good at not being knocked down by a "no".'[73]

For Fisksätra Museum, as for others, project proposals and ideas suggested by visitors or participants were highly valued. However, because of the time the application process could take, it could be hard to immediately or spontaneously act when an opportunity presented itself or someone came to the museum with a suggestion. Still, Cristina and Amelie decided to act quickly when a local artist lost his temporary studio during the pandemic. They offered him use of the museum as a studio, because they realised 'we're not using the museum as a space as much'.[74] When a second local artist knocked on their door with a similar request for assistance, an artist-in-residence was born.[75] Operational and organisational support for both artists started well before the first application was sent out to find financial support for them; when funding eventually was awarded, one of the artists had already been using the museum as a studio for three months.[76] Eventually, however, Cristina applied for and received funding for two exhibitions.[77] Both artists displayed their art in the museum in the autumn of 2021. In the case of the artist who used the museum as a studio space, he received support for months without the museum staff actually being funded themselves. In this case, the museum pivoted away from the standard order of finishing the application process before starting a project, because that would mean they could not support the local artist as they wanted: the need for a studio was immediate.

[73] FM Fieldnotes 7 December 2020
[74] FM Interview Cristina
[75] FM Fieldnotes 18 February 2021
[76] Ibid.
[77] FM Fieldnotes 6 May 2021

They saw what was needed, and that they could offer something without having finances secured: the museum space was empty after all. They changed the order of what usually happened, to act as they thought was appropriate in this case and to be of service to a local artist.

Most times, however, the museum had to wait for project funding to come through in order to start working on the project. When applications were declined, and they could be declined frequently, Cristina and Amelie were skilled at 'not being knocked down by a "no"' and would decide to keep the idea and change it slightly, adjusting a proposal to apply later to another funder. This meant that some projects were developed over the course of several years, which allowed them to raise more money. In 2019, the museum applied for funding to start a choir project with local participants.[78] After meeting with a choir conductor, a year later, Amelie realised they needed more money in order to start.[79] At that point, they had been in contact with the funding organisation Riksantikvarieämbetet and were allowed to freeze the funds because of the pandemic. This gave them more time to develop the project and apply for more money in 2021. Finally, after having been awarded a little more funding in May 2021, they started thinking about planning the project in more detail.[80] The project continued to be delayed, but preparatory work had begun at the time of writing.

After the application: the case of the MEK

It is important to consider not only the practice of writing and managing applications, but also what happens with the written applications after submission. Such documents can function as 'mediators' of practice (Nicolini, 2012, p. 232); an example coming from the MEK can give an idea of how application material can tie together the initial application writing to the further development of a project.

As briefly mentioned at the start of this chapter, the MEK's funding for exhibition and participation projects largely comes from internal funding systems within the SMB, as well as through support from the association of the 'Friends of the MEK'. Occasionally, curators applied for external funding for projects. Compared to Fisksätra Museum, their applications are submitted further in advance and with more detailed budgets at item level.[81] One of the curators described how one-and-a-half years before the realisation of her annually reoccurring project, she had to make detailed decisions about: 'how much [funding for] fees one needs, how much for travel costs, how much

[78] FM RAÄ, 2019
[79] FM Fieldnotes 20 November 2020
[80] FM Fieldnotes 27 May 2021; FM Interview Amelie
[81] MEK Cultural Days budget planning 2022

funding for technicians and for organisational costs.'[82] Depending on the result of the application this could slightly change, but in her experience with this project, this has not caused major setbacks in the last few years.

With the detailed documents coming out of the application process in the MEK, applications could end up being documents used in the shaping of the project. This was the case for the *Perlenhochzeit* project, for which two applications to external funders had been send out, for the exhibition and the accompanying public programme.[83] The exhibition application ended up being rejected, but by that time, the material created in the process of applying had been used in several meetings with the students involved and within the MEK, guiding decision-making and communicating the curator's thinking to the students and others involved throughout the project.

The MEK's curator, Carla, applied for funding over the summer months in 2019, after she had worked with the class at HTW for one semester. She worked on it individually, receiving some input from Jenna, the assistant curator. The application text was used in three distinct moments. First, when summer ended and the class met for the first time, Carla presented the proposal she had handed in, including a suggested title, a theoretical approach and different sections, or stations, of the exhibition.[84] The students responded with mixed feedback. Some of them voiced concerns regarding their work ahead. They had been under the impression that they were to develop the exhibit further in the coming semester. How much freedom would they have now that this proposal had been made? Other students found it helpful to have a proposed structure to build further on. In response to their doubts, Carla stressed that the proposal was a suggestion only, and that they would be involved in the exhibit.

A week later, indeed, the class and the professor, Carla, and Jenna met for a title-making workshop, where a new title was to be developed.[85] The external facilitator, however, received the proposal and structured his brainstorming session around three pairs of words from the grant application. These pairs of words formed the starting point for all the brainstorming exercises, and thus provided direction for the titles that came out of the workshop.

Similarly, the document was a guide for planning other meetings and workshops, including one for colleagues within the MEK. Jenna and I met to make a first proposal for this workshop.[86] Jenna framed the goal of the workshop as 'getting an idea for the structure of the exhibit' and 'finding a preliminary list of which objects could be exhibited in which stations.' She had furthermore prepared a list of key words from the grant application around

[82] MEK Interview C1. Translated from German, original: 'wie viel Honorar man brauchen wird, wie viel Reisekosten, wie viel Geld für Techniker, für organisatorische Dinge'
[83] MEK Begeleitprogramm Perlenhochzeit 2019; MEK Application Perlenhochzeit 2019
[84] MEK Fieldnotes 8 October 2019
[85] MEK Fieldnotes 14 October 2019
[86] MEK Fieldnotes 11 October 2019

which to structure the workshop, and eventually proposed sending questions in advance and asking the participants (her colleagues) to answer these by bringing in an object or picking out an object from the museum catalogue. In my notes I described how we systematically went through the different proposed sections of the exhibition as described in the proposal, suggesting questions that might ultimately help us find objects for that particular section.

In the two moments following the presentation of the proposal to the students, the material was used to guide workshops created to collaborate with others – students and colleagues – to design the exhibition, even though Carla presented the proposal as something they would work on together. Once it was created, the material became a useful way of communicating ideas, but simultaneously ended up guiding project elements, before the funding was approved. Furthermore, like the staff at Fisksätra Museum, Carla had explained to me that she particularly focused on the theoretical background for the exhibition in the application, because the funders wanted it to be 'theoretically sound'.[87] On the one hand, these are unsurprising strategies to increase chances for funding. On the other, the funders' wishes and aims can have direct effects on how a project ends up being developed.

Social resources

The projects at both museums summed up in the previous chapter all involved people external to the museum. Sometimes they were participants in a workshop, sometimes they co-organise an event with the museum. The projects might be understood to fall into different categories of methods, presented in the literature review, but all projects brought up by the museum practitioners, and categorised as participatory by them, required contact with people outside the institution. Participation is inherently social; it is about interaction between people and between people and the museum. It follows that, in order to do a participatory project, staff needed to know and be in touch with others. Staff at both the museums took this task seriously. In this section I describe how the practitioners at the MEK and Fisksätra Museum developed practices through which they created opportunities for participation by investing in and creating social resources. They initiated and maintained relationships with organisational partners, politicians, neighbours, (former) participants, individual artists, schools and teachers, artist groups, museum visitors, local, national and international cultural organisations. Some of them might become or have been participants, while others may be collaborative partners, or potential funders.

Throughout these descriptions, I paint a picture of the diverse networks of the respective museums. The museum practitioners' practices can be divided

[87] Fieldnotes 8 October 2019

into three approaches. Staff of both museums engaged in the first two approaches, and the locally-focused Fisksätra Museum has a third way of building and sustaining relationships. First, they both put an emphasis on being present in museum spaces and making museum work visible. Second, they took care of networks by continuing collaborations, seeking out and creating opportunities. Third, Fisksätra Museum's staff furthermore invested in their connection to Fisksätra through political engagement and keeping strong ties with locals.

Being present and making museum work visible

The first way in which relationships were sustained seems deceptively simple: being present in museum spaces and 'talking to the people'.[88] Practitioners in both museums explained how being present in the museum helped them to create more opportunities to meet visitors, which can stimulate the formation of relationships or might turn into serendipitous encounters. In the MEK, as in many other museums, the curator's job does not involve much direct contact with visitors. Still, two of the MEK's curators brought up the importance of creating moments to meet visitors as much as possible.[89] This was about making visitors aware of 'which people are involved in the museum work,' as well as the other way around: for the museum to know the visitor.[90] On one hand, one of the curators highlighted the role of the visitor as being different from a participant or 'community', in the ways that they engage with the museum. The participant would take part in a workshop; the visitor would see an exhibit and might use one of the interactive stations in an exhibit. Simultaneously, the curator described building a relationship with visitors as falling within the same 'approach' as participatory projects, where in both cases 'people should identify […] with the museum.'[91] In particular, she referred to identifying with and getting to know the people who work at the museum, by communicating with museum staff at events. This was not a one-off, but a long-term commitment on the museum's part: 'it takes a long, long time. It doesn't just work from one year to the next. I think now people are realising who we are, and what we do. And it, well it took twenty years. Imagine!'[92] Her colleague reflected on how infrequently she actually had the chance to meet visitors in her exhibitions, however valuable it may be.[93] Because there were only a few opportunities for curators at the MEK to meet visitors, building relevant relationships with their visitors through direct communication took long-term commitment.

[88] MEK Interview C2
[89] MEK Interview C2; MEK Interview C4a
[90] MEK Interview C2
[91] Ibid.
[92] Ibid.
[93] MEK Interview C4a

The powerful role of simply 'being there' became apparent during my time at Fisksätra Museum. Compared to the MEK, the staff in Sweden had more frequent contact with visitors. This can be explained by the diverse set of tasks shared between few staff and because they used the museum's exhibit spaces as their office: Cristina, Amelie and others involved with the museum took on the task of facilitators and hosts for events, as well as acted as curator and administrator. They mostly did their tasks during the opening hours of the museum, and in the museum space. That this was a crucial strategy to support their participatory work is best explained by Cristina herself:

> It is also being you know, being [..] on the spot. Well like, being in the place, where people can come in and wonder "oh what do you do" and then you could, you know, […] it spreads from there. So that's quite very, very important […] just to be there. Not only to be there when, when you have a workshop or something, but also just to be there as an open space. 'Cause, yeah that's the only way to kind of have people come and say "oh I have this idea, I would like to do this and this". Yeah, and this is the same with the artists in one way, that they come and they say "oh I have this problem" or "I would like to do this".[94]

This presence is important because, as was introduced in Chapter 5, all sorts of people walked into Fisksätra Museum during opening hours: sisters who quickly wanted to check out the new exhibition, builders working in one of the flats who needed their food to be heated up, or curious neighbours who spontaneously decided to check out the funny-looking apartment on the square.[95] On evenings with outdoor activities such as the film festival, visitors would come in simply to use the bathroom or grab some food.[96]

The types of spontaneous moments that Cristina referred to above were the most valuable for Cristina and Amelie. They both tended to prioritise meeting with spontaneous visitors over their other work.[97] This happened for example when Cristina and I were present in the museum to prepare for a workshop series starting the week after. While both of us were cleaning, a woman I had not seen before stopped by. She greeted me enthusiastically and asked: 'What is this? I've never been here!' I called Cristina and she started a conversation with the woman, explaining past projects of Fisksätra museum. Some pictures of the *Därför!* exhibition were still hanging in the back room, and Cristina used these to showcase the museum's work. The pictures mostly showed kids doing artistic projects. The woman appeared to be interested and asked, jokingly but curious about the answer, if the museum also did 'things with older women?' Cristina confirmed that they did, and the woman left her email address so that she could receive the newsletter to stay up to date about

[94] FM Interview Cristina
[95] FM Fieldnotes 10 June 2021; 3 September 2021; 21 October 2021
[96] FM Fieldnotes 3 September 2021
[97] FM Interview Cristina; FM Fieldnotes 10 June 2021; 23 January 2020

upcoming projects she might want to join. 'Being present' in this case, was about attending to visitors not just as audience to the museum, but rather as potential participants. Amelie reiterated this perspective. She mentioned that visitor's might become a participant in an instant, referring to the moments when visitors to public events such as their 2019 carnival see a performance by people in fish costumes and subsequently ask to try on the costume and participate themselves.[98]

A special strategy within this approach to be present, gestured to by the MEK curators and explicated by Fisksätra Museum's staff, was to make themselves visible as workers in the museum. The two curators at the MEK quoted earlier expressed this by referring to wanting visitors to know 'which people are involved in the museum work'[99] and having an interest in seeking out '*Kontakt*' (contact) in the form of a '*wirklichen Austausch'* (true exchange) about the content of exhibitions, with audiences.[100] One of them occasionally did this in their active involvement as facilitator in participatory projects.[101] Outside of these participatory frameworks, in their day-to-day job in the museum they indeed aimed to be present at events and gave occasional guided tours.[102] Fisksätra Museum's approach to making their work visible became clear to me quite quickly and was later explained to me on several occasions. In several of my fieldnotes I described the moment I arrive, walking towards the museum and how I could see Cristina through the window, sitting at her laptop or walking around talking on the phone, or notice how people enter when they see us having lunch in the kitchen.[103] Amelie and Cristina revealed that this is a purposeful strategy when I ask to visit on a 'regular day' in May 2021. They said that they usually worked in the kitchen: 'so that people could see us and come in.'[104] Amelie also explained this when sharing the work of Fisksätra Museum with Nordic cultural heritage professionals: 'We often sit and plan in the kitchen with the window looking out over the square. We do this so that those who want to talk can see that we are there.'[105] This strategy was also applied in the opposite way: in order to make sure people know that the museum was closed, they held meetings in the back so they could not be seen from the square. During our interview, for example, Amelie suggested not sitting in the kitchen, so that we would not be disturbed by someone wanting to enter.

This visibility of course also supported ongoing communication with established contacts. The director of Darra, the organisation with which the

[98] FM Interview Amelie
[99] MEK Interview C2
[100] MEK Interview C4b
[101] MEK Interview C4b
[102] MEK Fieldnotes 18 November 2019
[103] FM Fieldnotes 27 May 2021; 10 June 2021; 15 June 2021; 21 October 2021
[104] FM Fieldnotes 27 May 2021
[105] FM Presentation Amelie at NCK conference, 2022

museum shares a front porch, frequently walked in for a quick chat, for an update or to confirm a next meeting, and former participants would stop by when they saw the museum was open. Still, the strategy of making oneself and one's work visible by being in the museum is mostly framed by the museum staff as important for new relationships to emerge.

Taking care of networks

To foster their ongoing relationships, both museums purposefully take care of their networks through repeated collaboration, providing practical support, creating and acting on opportunities. In my interviews with the MEK's curators, the same partner organisations came up in relation to different projects: the group of artists involved in the *intervention* project later participated in the *European Cultural Days*, and for the anniversary version of that event several other previous collaborating organisations also joined again, while through an ongoing collaboration, members of a welfare organisation joined several projects.[106] One of the curators explained it as self-evident to stay in contact with these organisations.[107] These relationships were maintained by collaborating more than once, over the course of years. As she stated: 'they are friendships' and 'we knew many people, well, because of twenty years of cooperation'.[108] As she phrased it, participation is not only about the project at hand, but also about increasing chances for future collaborations:

> [T]he more we worked in a participatory way, the more people knew about it. And, more and more people or associations were asking us if we could cooperate, [because] they wanted to do something in our exhibitions or in our museum.[109]

Most of the curators at the MEK I interviewed described some version of 'staying in contact' as part of their job.[110] One of them described herself as a *'netzwerk pfleger'* (network caretaker) when it came to staying in touch with people involved in her various collaborative exhibits.[111]

Fisksätra Museum similarly frequently collaborates with the same partners, participants and artists. As mentioned previously, the museum is especially tightly connected to the two other organisations located on the square: Darra and the library. They have collaborated on several participatory projects and public events. The library has been an important partner since the founding of

[106] MEK Interview C1; Interview C2
[107] MEK Interview C2
[108] Ibid.
[109] MEK Interview C1
[110] MEK Interview C2; Interview C3; Interview C4; Interview C1
[111] MEK Interview C4a

the museum.[112] As the organisations were physically close, maintaining relationships with them took on an informal form as employees at both Darra and the library would spontaneously stop by. Because all the organisations worked with local residents, they exchanged experiences, and stayed up to date about events in the neighbourhood through frequent contact with each other.[113] But maintenance of this network of local organisations also happened through reliance on each other for practical support.[114] Fisksätra Museum advertised its events in the library, using posters and flyers printed at the library and including sign-up sheets held at the library for events hosted in the museum.[115] Similarly, Darra's events are advertised in the museum, and the museum has been using Darra's WIFI connection for years.[116] At times, the library could be considered an extension of the museum. During the pandemic, for example, museum workshops were held in the library's studio space instead, as this was more spacious.[117] During the *Sommarjobb* project, participants also walked in and out of the library as a second working space.

In addition to keeping in touch through organised collaborations, informal contact or sending emails, both museums were able to take care of their networks by creating and acting on opportunities. The '*netzwerk pfleger' in* the MEK said the following: '[w]ell, I am a networker, you can kind of think of it as a fabric. And a network has to be serviced again and again: new information has to be given, new impulses have to be given, hm? That's very intensive.'[118] She described this as being an '*impulsgeber*' or catalyst of her professional networks and those that she created through her collaborative exhibitions.[119] She described emailing former collaborators to point out new initiatives relevant to them, or giving suggestions regarding their work. Similarly, Fisksätra Museum gave 'impulses' to their networks: when they created a job for a former participant; when a woman reached out through the website in Spring 2021 with an idea for a project, Cristina and Amelie ended up implementing her idea in a project application sent in later; when Stena, the housing corporation that owns the apartment blocks and square in Fisksätra, reached out to the museum about available funds to have a public celebration, Cristina made sure to let all their contacts with small businesses know, so they could ask for money; when the same organisation offered to

[112] FM Interview Amelie
[113] FM Fieldnotes 27 May 2021; 15 June 2021; Fieldnotes 16 June 2021; Fieldnotes 18 June 2021; Fieldnotes 22 June 2021
[114] FM Fieldnotes 10 June 2021; 16 June 2021
[115] FM Fieldnotes 16 June 2021
[116] FM Fieldnotes 10 June 2021; 16 June 2021
[117] FM Fieldnotes 7 December 2020
[118] MEK Interview C4b. Translated from German, original: 'Also ich bin ein Netzwerker, ja man kann sich das irgendwie als Textil vorstellen. Und ein Netzwerk muss man einfach auch immer wieder neu bedienen, neu informieren, nochmal neu anschubsen, hm? Das ist sehr intensiv.'
[119] MEK Interview C4b

sponsor snacks during the film festival on the square, Cristina decided to buy food from five local women, rather than get an expensive popcorn machine; when local artists reached out because they were looking for a studio, the museum helped them find a space and ended up creating an artist-in-residence programme.[120] Both museums did not like to give 'no' as an answer and tried to create alternatives. When a group of artists wanted to exhibit in the MEK, the relevant curator helped them to redevelop their ideas to fit within the permanent exhibit instead, as happened with the *intervention project.* When some children knocked on Fisksätra Museum's door to ask for a job as a school assignment, Cristina sent them to Darra, hoping they could accommodate them instead.

Caretaking of networks also happened by using these relationships and acting on opportunities themselves. Whenever necessary, Cristina and Amelie put their personal relationships to use for the museum: Amelie dug up her old contacts from when she was a journalist to send out press releases for the opening of an exhibition; Cristina called in a friend to paint the kitchen cabinets in preparation for an exhibition opening, or to moderate a public interview with the artist-in-residence.[121] Further, Amelie is experienced in seeking out networking opportunities that might benefit the museum. She often figured out, remembered and considered people's relevant connections and tended to mention the accomplishments of the individuals she referred to.[122] These connections could benefit the museum directly, such as when Amelie was able to create an extra opportunity to apply for money from the municipality, through her contacts with local politicians.[123] But often, the benefit to the museum really lied in the connection itself: a visit from the Minister for Culture and a connection with a representative of a big private organisation gave a 'window to the outside,' and a potential collaboration with a 'world-famous theatre group' could bring some 'prestige' to the neighbourhood.[124]

Being a neighbour

The third approach to creating social resources is particular to Fisksätra Museum. Many of their relationships were maintained through neighbourly contact. This consisted of their just described informal contact with local organisations, as well as their involvement with and concern for the neighbourhood. This neighbourly element revealed itself clearly on the day that Cristina and I were preparing the museum space for the *Sommarjobb*

[120] FM Fieldnotes 6 May 2021 Artist meeting; 27 May 202; 27 August 2021; 31 August 2021; 4 September 2021
[121] FM Fieldnotes 23 January 2020; 27 August 2021
[122] FM Fieldnotes 22 January 2021; 20 November 2020
[123] FM Fieldnotes 17 February 2021
[124] FM Fieldnotes 22 January 2021; 3 September 2021

project.[125] Several materials shifted or were shared between the organisations on the square, that day: boxes of leftover small games and clothes went to the church; the museum's broom was stored at Darra; and, we had lunch on the co-owned picnic tables on the porch that the museum and Darra share. Just a few days later, church staff came by to ask if the museum could use some of the tables they no longer needed. Cristina picked the tables up and the museum used them for the rest of the summer.[126]

Just as they related to other organisations as neighbours, most of their (former) participants were neighbours of the museum. All the participants in the *Sommarjobb* project were local teens.[127] Their Fisksätra Talented Women network, founded in 2016 and currently still existing as a WhatsApp group, includes women from Fisksätra. Some of the members of the network stopped by for language workshops or film evenings, in 2021.[128] One neighbour who sometimes joined the museum's language workshops has a small business selling food, and Cristina often ordered lunch from her. During her frequent visits, her family life was discussed, and when her daughter-in-law joined, Cristina recognised her as the parent of a child she had met at the museum.[129] Former participants might come back in different roles. When one of Darra's students helped out with a few workshops at the museum, it was Amelie who recognised her as one of the children who joined workshops in the museum years ago.[130] Another teen who previously took art workshops at the museum, later joined the language workshops her mother was helping to host.[131] Like any neighbour might, Cristina ran into a former participant who shared her worries about her son underperforming in school.[132] At another occasion, when we sat in the kitchen and a child's scream reached the museum, Cristina hopped up to check as soon as she hears '*ingen är hemma*' (no one is home). Only after making sure the child was not alone, did she return to the museum.[133]

Finally, the museum attempted to leverage its position as an organisation receiving (sometimes) public funding, in the 'vulnerable area' of Fisksätra. Cristina and Amelie often shared with me their concerns about developments in the neighbourhood, or more specifically, the lack thereof and the problems arising because of this.[134] As presented in Chapter 5, this was stated in their mission as an important context for their participatory work in the first place. As such, the museum has organised politically motivated projects to seek

[125] FM Fieldnotes 10 June 2021
[126] FM Fieldnotes 15 June 2021; 3 September 2021
[127] FM Fieldnotes 14 June 2021
[128] FM Fieldnotes 27 August 2021; 3 September 2021; 4 September 2021; 21 October 2021
[129] FM Fieldnotes 10 June 2021
[130] FM Fieldnotes 27 May 2021
[131] FM Fieldnotes 4 September 2021
[132] FM Fieldnotes 18 June 2021
[133] FM Fieldnotes 10 June 2021
[134] FM Fieldnotes 27 May 2021; 20 November 2020; 7 December 2020; FM Interview Amelie

attention for public issues such as the negotiations over the new location of a swimming pool, organised a national conference about migration, schools, and urban development, and produced a subsequent publication about the everyday life, power structures and current issues in Fisksätra (Tham and Madsen, 2015).[135] Furthermore, themes such as the commons and democracy ran through some of their project applications and a collaboration with artist collective Cyklopen. In addition to organising politically-motivated projects, Amelie frequently voiced her concerns about the unequal level of investment by the municipality of Nacka and the politics of the housing agency Stena. She would bring up these concerns first as they directly affected the museum: the high surplus of Nacka municipality was one reason why Amelie was frustrated with rejections for their applications; Stena's occasional gestures towards moving the museum to another, less visible location, frustrated her too.[136] Simultaneously, Amelie connected the museum's struggle with these two organisations to the experience of their neighbours. She did so both by arguing that the museum was an asset to the neighbourhood, in her discussions with Stena,[137] and by being involved in the struggle to keep public spaces available in the neighbourhood during the Covid pandemic.[138] To reduce the spread of the virus, Stena announced the limiting of access to the community spaces in the high-rise buildings during the pandemic. But when the local artist who used one of these spaces as an art studio was not able to use it anymore, the museum offered him use of one of the rooms in their building instead.[139] In short, their local focus meant that Fisksätra Museum advocated for their stakeholders as neighbours, organised politically-motivated projects, and personally knew their participants as neighbours.

Conclusion

This chapter analysed how museum practitioners created opportunities for participation in their museum. Social contacts and financial resources are necessary for them to further organise participatory projects. Money is necessary to pay the museum practitioners for their time, and to contribute towards operational costs and project-specific expenses. Relationships lie at the heart of future collaborations and visitors might become future participants. Through this 'zoomed-in' look at the practices through which

[135] They organised a 'dry' swimming pool action titled 'Torrsim/Torgsim' see https://www.fisksatramuseum.se/torrsim-torgsim; the URB-Z conference took place on 2-7 October 2014, see https://ueforum.se/reportage/14-5rep3fisksatramuseum.php and https://www.fisksatramuseum.se/urbz-konferens
[136] FM Fieldnotes 22 January 2020; 27 May 2021; FM Interview Amelie
[137] FM Fieldnotes 27 May 2021
[138] FM Fieldnotes 6 May 2021
[139] FM Fieldnotes 17 March 2021; 6 May 2021 artist meeting

opportunities for participation are created, there are a few specifics about these practices that can be highlighted.

First, Fisksätra Museum was followed throughout its practices of applying for external funding. Seeking out opportunities for applications and the writing of proposals were tasks that had to be managed and integrated into the working life of the staff. They used their personal and professional networks to keep track of opportunities. The writing of applications usually happened in clusters throughout the year, but because the process from applying to hearing the result could take a long time, the work on applications tended to be ongoing. Meaning, the staff were often either anticipating results, writing or looking for opportunities. It was highlighted how both the managing and writing process was marked by uncertainty caused by the dependency on external organisations, their calendars and processes. As a result, Cristina and Amelie had flexible working schedules. I described two purposeful strategies for dealing with this uncertainty in the practice of writing applications: the museum staff carefully framed their applications to specific funders; secondly, they strategically collaborated with partners to spread the chances of being awarded funding. A third result of this uncertainty, not necessarily a strategy, was described as 'pivoting', when the museum either delayed or started a project earlier, regardless of funding having been approved.

In outlining funding practices, I furthermore described how an application document was used in the MEK, giving an idea of how these practices related to finances can merge further into projects, and material created in the process of application can come to act as 'mediator' of practice (Nicolini, 2012, p. 232). In the described case, the application was used not only to apply for money or planning projects internally, but in processes of collaboration with participants. Here, the specifics of it being a participatory project, rather than an exhibition project designed by one or two curators, became apparent. Although presented as 'up for discussion' to participating students, the material was simultaneously used to explain and communicate ideas about the exhibit to collaborators, and the described themes and stations were used to frame project elements designed to find objects for display – a practice that may be common in the process of designing exhibitions, but in this case created some tension between the curator and the students. It mattered that only she wrote the application and some of the students expressed uncertainty about how they could still contribute, now this was down on paper.

Second, creating social resources involved 'being on the spot' and trying to create opportunities for meaningful exchange with visitors, being an '*impulsgeber'* in order to maintain networks, and being a neighbour. At both Fisksätra Museum and the MEK, staff emphasised the importance of meeting and talking with visitors, as potential participants. Some MEK curators explained that this was difficult to incorporate into their everyday work. For Fisksätra Museum it was possible to make their everyday work – including administrative tasks – useful for this purpose. Cristina and Amelie described

that doing their tasks visibly, in front of the windows looking out over Fisksätra's square, was a strategy to facilitate informal and spontaneous contact with passers-by or visitors. For both the museums, direct contact with visitors, outside of specific projects, was important and an ongoing and long-term investment. Similarly, their existing networks were being maintained through a variety of repetitive practices. Both museums repeatedly worked with the same organisations or participants. Staff furthermore remained in contact with their networks from past projects simply through individual effort. This included what one of the curators at the MEK described as '*impuls geben':* keeping in touch through creating and pointing out opportunities for people in your network. This was also visible at Fisksätra Museum, where staff found ways to continue to support former participants and share opportunities with their collaborators. I also noted how they themselves used these networks for the museum's benefit. Finally, the neighbourly approach to their direct surroundings was an important way Fisksätra Museum created and maintained social resources. It lies at the core to their participation in the first place, as seen in the previous chapter. This approach was seen in both organised projects that are focused on issues important to the direct neighbours, but also by the staff expressing and acting on personal responsibility towards the neighbourhood. In this way, they not only built relationships with direct neighbours and potential participants, but were also able to understand their participants' interests, and act on issues that connect the organisation and its neighbours.

Looking at these two sections together, this chapter initiates a description of practices that influence how participation is done beyond a specific project boundary. Three elements to these practices will be stressed in discussion chapter 10: experience and continuation, the networked museum, and the role of the individual staff member.

First, for both practices through which financial and social resources were created and maintained, practitioners built on their previous experiences. Through repeatedly applying for external funding from the same organisations, Fisksätra Museum has developed a certain sensitivity to how they can best implement flexibility in their applications, and strategically consider which organisations to write to with which project ideas. Experience and repetition were also stressed in the descriptions of both museums' practices of network maintenance and contact with visitors. Although finding time to meet visitors was not necessarily incorporated in the MEK's curators daily work, attempting this on an ongoing basis was expressed as contributing to relationship-building with visitors over the long-term, ultimately benefiting their participatory endeavours. Furthermore, both museums worked repeatedly with the same group of participants or collaborating partners. Such continuation and repetition were crucial to the practice of creating possibilities for participation and can be understood to be a type of 'maintenance work'

(Henke, 2019), through which practitioners maintain an environment in the museum within which they can start building participatory projects.

This relates to a second overarching element of these practices to take to the discussion: understanding the museum as networked in multiple directions. The practices that build and maintain the relationships that are important for participation relate the museum to individuals and collaborators with whom they are directly involved. At the same time, the investigation of the financial practices pointed to how the museum's work is connected to external organisations' processes such as application cycles as well as their application systems. Their practices are enmeshed with these external systems and processes. Importantly, these systems and processes can reflect certain politics or values, which in turn can influence the development of participation in the museum. This was seen at the MEK when Carla's proposal, written for a specific fund that placed importance on the theoretical grounding of a project, was used to make practical decisions later in the project's process involving participants. Furthermore, Nacka municipality's interest in inclusion projects, and then in anti-drug projects, is a good example of how the dependency on public institutions for funding includes an element of uncertainty caused by politics, in the case of Fisksätra Museum.

Finally, a third discussion point is the place of the individual staff member in relation to the institution. In many of the descriptions in this chapter, it was the individual practitioner who decided to personally maintain a network, to act on a concern towards their neighbour, to remember to check a newsletter from a foundation, or to maintain good relations with their collaborative partners. The individual's position was furthermore present when considering the strategy described as 'being on the spot', in order to maintain relationships with visitors and passers-by. This gestures to a certain embodiment that underlies this practice, and will be taken up in the discussion on the maintenance work of participation in Chapter 10.

In this chapter, resources were created or maintained through which participation becomes a possibility. The content of this chapter also marked the beginning of outlines for participatory projects, as timelines and budgets were created in response to calls for applications and visitors, collaborators and former or potential participants stopped by. In the next chapter, project boundaries become clearer, or rather, become established. There, practices of participation in the museum will be investigated in relation to how participatory projects are planned. Through the practices of planning described in the next chapter, these early outlines become plans of action.

7 Planning a participatory project

To move from the possibility of participation in the museum, to inviting people to participate, requires planning. Planning out a project with different people external to the museum, however, comes with its own difficulties. Talking to a group of seventy Nordic museum professionals about Fisksätra Museum, Amelie reflected on some difficulties that might come up throughout designing and carrying out participatory projects. She summed up how different 'risks' affect their projects:

> We sometimes need to have several different strategies to find participants, […] committed participants may leave the project when various problems arise in their daily lives, […] many participatory projects often take longer than planned in the application.[140]

Listening to Amelie, it seems hard to imagine how you might plan with so much uncertainty. Other practitioners in this study also mentioned the complicated nature of planning for participation, with uncertainty about people joining, people leaving, or projects being delayed. Many elements of projects could not really be anticipated, as I learned during fieldwork, when practitioners adjusted projects along the way to better attune to participants' needs, interests or schedules.[141]

This observation is interesting to consider in light of a paradox present in the reviewed literature. As shared in Chapter 2, some authors introduced participation on a variety of scales, with the 'highest' or most admirable level of public participation referring to work which allows participants to have an equal share in decision-making, respectively called empowerment (Robinson, 2020), co-creation (Simon, 2010), maximalist (Carpentier, 2011b) or citizen power (Arnstein, 1969). Shared decision-making is stressed as the means to fulfil the requirements of these categories: from that perspective, planning a project should also involve participants. One of the main limitations to this is that participatory practices born out of a wish to democratise museums are still designed to take place within, and thus tend to prioritise, institutional settings (Høholt, 2017; Morse, 2021). Simply because the museum has to mould a project – even when an idea might find its origin in a stakeholder's proposal – to fit into the museum's schedule and capabilities, such a project

[140] Amelie, presentation at NCK conference, 16 February 2022
[141] Interview Cristina; Interview C1; Interview C2

might never truly allow for shared ownership. Making plans for projects without participants' decision-making would thus seem counter-intuitive to supporting a participatory process.

The observation in practice and the paradox in the literature, might seem to render the question 'can you plan for participation?' as rhetorical. This chapter, however, is built on descriptions of museum staff planning participatory projects. The purpose of this chapter is to discuss and analyse the practices involved in planning a diverse range of participatory projects in the two museums.

The previous chapter gave an insight into ongoing practices of creating opportunities for participation in a museum. The practices of planning entail moving from those general conditions to outline participatory projects: when will the project take place, how will it be organised, what do participants need and what can the museum offer? To analyse 'planning' in this regard, I applied an ethnomethodological view, following Suchman (2006). Her approach to planning is based on the idea that 'every course of action depends in essential ways on its material and social circumstances,' much like the practice theory perspective taken in this study (Suchman, 2006, p. 70). Taking Suchman's interpretation of planning as a starting point means that the main analytical focus should not be on an exact plan. Plans function as resources for further action rather than truly determining action (ibid. p. 72). Therefore, it is rather necessary to study the practices of planning. It is not so much about what is being planned, but how people 'use their circumstances to achieve intelligent action' (ibid. p.70). So instead of following exactly when a project is planned to take place, this chapter describes which 'material and social circumstances' professionals take into account when planning a project.

The chapter focuses on how practitioners came to make or have made decisions about projects and what circumstances they consider. The analysis raised two sets of circumstances as recurring, which will be described in separate sections. The first section centres on how practitioners planned projects in negotiation with the museum's organisational structures, in order to make projects feasible and functional. Staff planned by considering their museum's calendar, how the work on projects would be or could be integrated into their personal work schedules. The second section analyses how the staff built on their interpretations and understandings of participatory goals to negotiate conditions for projects. Why should the project be participatory? What might participants need? What can the museum offer? In the third section, I stress that these two different circumstances indeed come together in negotiation. Together, as will be discussed in the chapter's conclusion, these elements of planning furthermore suggest that there is not a distinct moment or phase of planning, but that planning happens continuously.

Negotiating museum structures

In the previous chapter, it was described how the form and relative rigidity of structures such as funding mechanisms, hierarchies and (un)official networks contributed to creating possibilities for participation. Following Nicolini's (2012) and Giddens (1984) in their practice theoretical approach, structures are understood to be made up of and to structure, practices. As such, while projects were designed, museums' structures became similarly crucial in the negotiation of project parameters: the what, how, when, and where of participatory projects. Two of these structures especially came to the fore through analysis as 'circumstances' for planning (Suchman, 2006). First, the previously planned for activities, exhibitions and projects at the museum, or what I call the museum schedule and the procedures embedded therein. Second, the staff considers their own capability for organising a participatory project in reference to their individual work schedules. Together, this section describes how these two elements play a role in planning participatory projects.

Museum schedules and their rigidity

While planning projects, practitioners had to adhere to the museum's schedule and follow and anticipate the procedures of scheduling. This looked different for both museums.

The schedule of Fisksätra Museum depended on external funding cycles, as explained in the previous chapter. They were unable to start a new project at the last minute, because there could be a nine-month period between application submission and approval, resulting in a short notice before the planned start of a project. Applications, mostly for projects, included suggested starting and end dates, which had been based on the indications from funding agencies. When absolutely necessary, some flexibility in these dates was possible: they were able to defer their planned projects in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, for example.

In the MEK, it was similarly difficult to start a participatory project within a short time span, but for different reasons. Because of the division of labour into separate departments, and the greater amount of people involved within the MEK and across the SMB, decisions about any projects, had to be made in a specific order and deadlines had to be strictly followed, more so than at Fisksätra Museum. That made that the organisational calendar in the MEK was an important guide in planning new projects, as it signified previously made agreements between staff spread over different institutions. The result was that their 'exhibition planning runs for at least two years,' as one of the

curators explained.[142] Staff at both museums had to work with and within their organisational calendar and the relative rigidity of these calendars and embedded procedures for decision-making when they planned projects.

At Fisksätra Museum creating a schedule for a participatory project was a seemingly straightforward task. Location and timing were almost non-decisions, because both Cristina and Amelie knew very well what was going on and when at the museum. Projects were scheduled to take place on the museum premises, on the square or in a partner organisation's building. Once funding had been awarded, scheduling in meetings for an upcoming project could be done rather fast. Because it was mostly just the two of them, using a museum with just three small rooms, they did not have a booking system for their spaces or others who might require the premises. Scheduling for projects thus happened in conversation, changes could be made on the fly and without consequences for the organisation. Furthermore, rarely did different projects take place at the same time. This also meant that they were able to leave schedules for participatory projects quite open at Fisksätra Museum; they were able to change exact project starting dates and schedule day-to-day workshop agendas in detail only shortly in advance of project starts or exhibition openings, to best accommodate the schedule of participants, artists, or staff.[143] This was something both Cristina and Amelie expressed as their preference when working with participants.[144] Because of their more flexible organisational structures resulting from the small size of Fisksätra Museum, they could include more flexibility in their project plans.

This seemed to be more complicated in the MEK. One of the MEK's curators sketched out that for them, each project had a specific timeframe within which it must be finalised, known well in advance because they had to 'apply for the budgets and the rooms have to be free and prepared.'[145] This affected not only the way the curators worked on the project, but also the way collaboration with participants happened, as she explained. Meetings with participants in the project she referred to were scheduled around internal deadlines for design and exhibition building.[146] Like other museums, the MEK's curatorial and conservation departments operate separately, as do their depot practitioners. Furthermore, as their educational, exhibition design and communication staff officially work for the SMB, there was less flexibility in tailoring activities, and the staff at the MEK sometimes had to compete with other museums within the SMB, for the time of the non-MEK staff members.

[142] MEK Interview C1. Translated from German, original: 'unsere Ausstellungsplanung läuft ja mindestens über zwei Jahre.'
[143] FM Fieldnotes 10 June 2021; Fieldnotes 6 May 2021 artist meeting
[144] FM Interview Cristina; Amelie, presentation at NCK conference, 16 February 2022
[145] MEK Interview C1, Translated from German, original: 'Das heißt, wir müssen auch die Budgets beantragen und die Räume müssen frei sein und hergerichtet werden.'
[146] MEK Interview C1; Interview C2

Planning a participatory project, like any of their projects, thus involved communicating with and accounting for this division.

In practice, this need to adhere to strict deadlines within the organisation had an effect on how projects could develop in the MEK. For the *Perlenhochzeit* exhibition, the curator invited an external professional to a title-making workshop with the aim of coming up with a title for the exhibition together with the students. The curator had planned the workshop at a moment in the semester that worked for the workshop leader, the students and herself.[147] She planned for it to take place in late October, but at the start of the month, the communications department started asking about the title of the exhibit in order to create banners and press releases for the programme over the coming year, when the exhibition was scheduled to be opened.[148] The workshop was held on the proposed date, but with some added pressure to come up with a title in time. When the outcome of the workshop was not concrete enough, the communications department's deadline remained looming.[149] As a result, the curator decided to further brainstorm with colleagues the week after and choose a title herself from the suggestions coming out of that meeting. Here, negotiating the project to work within the museum's organisational structure meant that the decision-making about the title was moved away from a shared responsibility between participants to becomes mostly a curator's decision.

When looking at the two museums' calendars and division of labour, however, these specific calendars, departmentalisation and the size of the organisation were not the only factors taken into account by the practitioners. The relative rigidity or flexibility that the museum allows for was also a recurring consideration. Since a participatory project had to be implemented within a timeline affected by application cycles, and the division of labour amongst departments, the better the staff were able to anticipate these structures, the more straightforward planning could be. When a curator involved with the MEK's *European Cultural Days* talked about planning, she appeared confident about what to expect during that process. She had repeatedly organised the project, and much of the project structure was in place in advance. The SPK requires detailed budgets in advance and the basic outline of the *European Cultural Days* collaboration remained the same each year. On the other hand, the rigidity of a museum organisation can go against a project's collaboration. This was the case with the *Perlenhochzeit* project, as the interaction with the students was initially planned according to integration with the organisational structure, even though tightly. However, the curator knew that the deadlines with the communication department afforded no wiggle room. When it did not go as planned and there was no

[147] MEK Fieldnotes 14 October 2019
[148] MEK Fieldnotes 1 October 2019
[149] MEK Fieldnotes 14 October 2019

decision made about a title by the students in time for the deadline, the planning of the exhibition required a quick decision to be made, regardless of who made it.

As explained, at Fisksätra Museum the calendar was less rigid, but therefore more uncertain. At once, incorporating a participatory project into the museum's schedule could be a question of simply checking one's personal calendar.[150] Simultaneously, however, the application cycles turned the flexible freelance structure of the museum into a rather uncertain organisational structure in which to implement a participatory project. In their case, designing a project in negotiation with organisational structures meant largely following the ever-changing application cycles, which caused uncertain situations with projects being delayed, or the freelance staff all of a sudden having less work to do. This will be further discussed in the next section.

Work schedules

Part of planning a participatory project in negotiation with agreements in the museum also involved the staff having to plan for the work that had to be done for each project. Staff considered in advance their respective roles and tasks in relation to a (new) participatory project. While discussing their work in the museum, MEK staff stressed how work on a participatory project remained one of multiple other tasks and responsibilities they had. Some curators were responsible for the maintenance, research and development of one or more collections,[151] worked on several exhibitions and projects individually or in a team,[152] and in addition took on practical tasks in the museum organisation.[153] These included taking on an important role in the change of catalogue system software, having an administrative role, writing or editing Facebook posts, or leading the internship programme. Depending on where in the timeline of the project they were, tasks for the participatory project took up more time in their day-to-day work.[154] But even in the months leading up to the launch of a project the 'normal everyday work continues,' which this curator described as continuing her work with the collection, writing applications for funding, occasional guided tours, meetings with colleagues for their respective projects, and administrative tasks.[155] Importantly, one of the curators referred to the underlying feeling that there was hardly enough time for a lot of their

[150] FM Fieldnotes 27 May 2021
[151] MEK Interviews C1, C6, C3
[152] MEK Interviews C1, C2, C3, C4, C6
[153] MEK Interviews C6, C5, C3, C2
[154] MEK Interview C1; Interview C3
[155] MEK Interview C1. Translated from German, original: 'Da ist kaum Zeit für andere Projekte, uhm, also nur die normale alltägliche Arbeit läuft natürlich trotzdem. Und Anfragen werden beantwortet und man macht noch mal etwas im Depot oder in der Sammlung, egal.'

crucial work. Especially, she argued, work with the collection suffered under the limited time for multiple tasks.[156] In the MEK, when planning a participatory project, the staff considered the work ahead in relation to these other continuing duties, which they sometimes already felt received too little attention. A project had to fit both the museum and the practitioners' schedules.

At Fisksätra Museum, the staff also had to combine project work with other tasks. Amelie and Cristina typically took on various roles in virtually all their projects, including applying, planning, producing, facilitating, and editing or exhibition making of final products. Their particular involvement in each project depended on previous experience, educational background and availability. One of them usually took the lead in a project. In the particular context of the pandemic, Cristina mostly worked directly as a facilitator of workshops, meetings and events. At that time, Amelie mostly took on tasks she could do remotely, such as communication and application writing. Sometimes, depending on the size of the project and available funding, Cristina and Amelie were able or needed to assign some of the project budget to hire other freelancers as part of the organisational team.

To understand how project planning intertwined with personal schedules and organisational structures, it is worth taking a closer look at a meeting at Fisksätra Museum.[157] In this meeting, Cristina and Amelie discussed tasks for coming projects alongside all the other necessary work for the museum at that particular time, and project boundaries disappeared as they attempted to plan out the different projects for autumn 2021. The meeting took place right after they had heard that they had been awarded funding through three applications. When they just sat down, Amelie asked Cristina: 'how much can we work?' As freelancers, both she and Cristina needed to know how many paid hours the newly approved funds would allow for. The budgets that they handed in as part of the three applications were based on their previous estimations of hours to be spent working on these projects. Now, based on the actual funding awarded, which was less than they wanted, a new calculation needed to be made. Depending on their own availability and the projects' needs, these hours would be divided amongst both Cristina and Amelie, plus potential other freelancers such as artists or project assistants. An important underlying consideration in asking 'how much can we work', was that both Cristina and Amelie had to reduce their paid working hours for the museum during 2020 and part of 2021. In practice this meant that both of them worked many unpaid hours; Amelie did not sent invoices for her working hours for more than half a year and Cristina started working one instead of two days on paper but not in reality.[158] The fact that she was actually just being paid for one day but

[156] MEK fieldnotes 11 November 2019
[157] FM Fieldnotes 27 May 2021
[158] FM Fieldnotes 22 January 2021; FM Interview Cristina

continued to work more became clear when she declared during this meeting that 'it would be nice to be paid for the amount of work I actually do'. The question of whether the work was for a project, to keep the museum open, or to apply for more funding was irrelevant at this point: ideally, they would be paid for all this work with the money that had been awarded.

One question that came up in relation to being paid for the hours spent working was, what counts as project work?[159] The needs of the organisation were considered in relation to the available funding: how many hours could the museum be open with the amount of working hours that could be paid for? How many hours would Cristina and Amelie spend on writing applications? These were tasks that could not be considered to be part of any specific project, but were crucial for creating opportunities for participation, as described in the previous chapter. In the end, keeping the museum open at least once a week, making sure all projects were delivered and considering how much time they were each able to work for the museum led them to make their own estimations of working hours per week. Amelie planned for twenty percent and Cristina thirty. Both of them knew and expected that these would be fluctuating hours, just like in other periods.[160]

Planning for a participatory project in negotiation with work schedules in the MEK and Fisksätra Museum involved considering both personal time management within their position and how to fit the tasks of a (new) project into their ongoing work. In Fisksätra Museum's meeting, there was an ongoing discussion about all the work, all at once. In the particular context of that museum, a new project can really affect the staff's working life: how many hours a week they will be working or not. Furthermore, the project planning overlapped with negotiating the opening hours of the museum or how to navigate other non-project related work. The question of whether the work was for a project did not matter much. Work is work.

Negotiating interpretations of participation

In addition to making a project *work* in the respective museum's calendar and individuals' work schedules, the staff planned for projects in negotiation with different understandings and interpretations of participation and underlying participatory goals. This section follows two questions to highlight how interpretations of participation became circumstances – in the sense of Suchman (2006) – that were taken into account when planning projects in the two museums. First, the particularities of why participatory methods are considered for projects in general in the MEK is discussed, and how practitioners derived motivation for participation from their professional and

[159] FM Fieldnotes 27 May 2021
[160] FM Cristina Interview

their museum's profile. Second, practitioners considered what participants need in order to participate in the museum. Here, the staff considered practical concerns for projects in light of what they understood, assumed, or knew, about participants' interests.

Why participation?

In the MEK, choosing to add a participatory element to an exhibition project in the first place required negotiations between personal perspectives on work for participatory projects, one's professional self and the role of participation for the museum. In their reflections, it became apparent that the MEK curators viewed the work on projects that involve participation as different from and more time-consuming than other exhibit work. They contrasted the tasks for participatory projects with their other tasks for non-participatory exhibitions. Although all of them saw benefits of participatory projects and enjoyed parts of that job, some also concluded that 'participatory work is very hard […] it's exhausting,'[161] calling the work 'time-consuming'[162] or 'sometimes really stressful.'[163] The tasks they referred to as particularly time-consuming were translating between the different people working on projects and exhibitions, and one of them expressed feeling stressed about being a 'caretaker of people's reflections on their own experiences.'[164] This perspective of participatory work as being challenging could affect whether and how a curator decides to include participatory methods. For example, the curator involved in the *Perlenhochzeit* exhibition, reflected on how including external stakeholders in the process of making an exhibit would require a change in her working process. She explained that she usually tried to leave things open in the planning of exhibits until the end, until something becomes clear to her, personally. With such an internal process, she found it difficult to decide when people should be involved and in what way.[165]

This means that including a participatory element in a project at the MEK was usually clearly motivated:

> We have many paintings of a German painter […] and I am an expert in these paintings. Because I really worked a lot on these pictures and when I show them, why should I work participatorily? Why? There is no use. So, well some expertise we still have. […] But if we really work, [with] the topics […] about the everyday life of people now, in these days, we have to do this in a participatory manner, of course.[166]

[161] MEK Interview C2
[162] MEK Interview C6
[163] MEK Interview C3. Translated from German, original: 'es ist manchmal auch anstrengend.'
[164] MEK Interview C3. Translated from German, original: 'man wird so einem Reflektion Pfleger der Erfahrung die Leute gemacht haben.'
[165] MEK Fieldnotes 11 November 2019
[166] MEK Interview C2

The curator's motivation was closely related to the MEK's mission statement about the purpose of participatory methods in relation to the museum's focus on 'everyday objects and cultural forms', placing 'great value on incorporating the unique perspectives and insights of the people we work with' (Museum Europäischer Kulturen, 2020). Motivation for participation in the MEK, thus comes from the specific topic of an exhibition or project. The MEK curator quoted above argued that when it regards living people, they should be involved when it regards their representation. She and other curators at the MEK legitimised their involvement in participatory projects and with 'so-called communities' through their experience with participant observation, ethnography and previous participatory work.[167] All but one of the interviewed curators have a degree in ethnography or ethnology.[168] More than once, the curators bring up participation in relation to the ethnographic method of participant observation, and many have conducted several years of ethnographic fieldwork for research projects. One of them reflected on the importance of fieldwork for her exhibits: 'only *then* can I meet colleagues face-to-face, with the people I interview, when I am on site. I need the contact with the region. Without having been directly in the region, I cannot imagine an exhibition.'[169] As if in conversation, her colleague underlined the 'very anthropological approach' they have to participatory work at the museum.[170] This strong ethnographic presence amongst the curators in the museum was also acknowledged by the staff member who does not have a similar degree.[171]

Planning a participatory project thus required the practitioners to feel that adding a participatory element to their projects, would be relevant or meaningful for the particular topic and for the museum as a whole. At the MEK, the curators' perspectives on particular tasks of participation further stressed this importance: participation has to be worthwhile, because it can be difficult work. At the same time, the meaning of participation is taken from the ethnographic profile of the museum. As the museum is about people's everyday cultures, these people should be involved. Furthermore, as anthropologists, ethnographers and ethnologists, this is something the curators strove for from their professional identity: they 'of course' have to work in a participatory manner when it regards 'the everyday life of people now'.[172]

[167] MEK Interview C2
[168] MEK Interviews C1, C2, C3, C4, C6
[169] MEK Interview C4a. Translated from German, original: 'Ich kann mich nur dann auf Augenhöhe auch mit den Kollegen, mit den Leuten, die ich befrage, treffen, wenn ich vor Ort bin. Ich brauche den Kontakt zu der Region, ich kann das ohne, unmittelbar in der Region gewesen zu sein, kann ich mir keine Ausstellung vorstellen.'
[170] MEK Interview C2
[171] MEK Interview C5
[172] MEK Interview C2

What would participants need?

Another way in which project plans would be negotiated with interpretations of what participation might do or mean, was seen in Fisksätra Museum. The museum staff considered what participants would need to participate and why they might want to participate. At once this was about setting up a project so that it was possible for people to participate in the first place. Simultaneously, practitioners considered how a project would become worth of participants' time, based on knowledge and assumptions about participants.

One approach to planning as negotiation with interpretations of participation coming from participants, can be seen in how Fisksätra Museum started to implement monetary compensation within a project. This revolved the establishment of the Fisksätra Talented Women group in 2016.[173] The group had been formed after a Fisksätra resident contacted the museum. An informal network started to 'work with important questions' about 'political aspects of everyday life.'[174] After a few weeks of museum-led discussions, the women expressed wanting to cook and sell their food. Amelie explained that it caused a '180-degree swap' as the staff interpreted this as a 'deeply felt' need. Amelie interpreted their suggestion as an expression of frustration of having been denied job opportunities previously.[175] As a result, the museum supported the network to organise food bazaars, where the women sold home-cooked food. After realising that what participants wanted out of their contact with the museum was a job, rather than 'participation', the museum staff planned for opportunities for the women to be paid for their time. Acting on that need expressed by participants, made them plan for further participatory projects with the same group, planning participation in effort to counterbalance inequality.

Participants' needs and perspectives were also taken into consideration when setting schedules for projects. In spring 2021 Cristina was in conversation with several women whom she had been put in touch with by a municipal organisation. Her contact person had suggested that the women were interested in doing something with crafts at the museum. Cristina recounted meeting a few of the women in the museum and asking them 'what are you interested in? […] Do you want to come with kids?'[176] She explained wanting to find out whether they were parents or not in order to figure out their needs: 'is it to kind of get away from the kids for an hour or two, or do you need a place where you can come with the kids?'[177] Knowing the answers to these questions could help establish a meeting time that was most appropriate for someone with a family and whether there was a need to

[173] FM Interview Amelie
[174] Ibid.
[175] FM Interview Amelie
[176] FM Interview Cristina
[177] Ibid.

organise child-friendly activities. The eventual project that came out of these topics was a series of *language cafés*. The museum hired a former participant as project assistant, and the project's schedule was further adjusted to fit in with this assistant's schedule. By scheduling for a specific group of people, practitioners also tried to take the (assumed) participants' circumstances in consideration.

By asking what participants needed, the practitioners turned the lens on the participant and their conditions for and wishes from a participatory project, rather than (only) taking into account the museum's circumstances when planning a project. The staff interpreted participation through needs expressed by participants, and based project design – compensation and schedule - on this understanding.

What can the museum offer?

In the end, planning involves negotiating both sets of circumstances described in the previous two sections. A question leading in that negotiation, is: what does the museum have to offer? If it was a job that participants wished for from a participatory project, the museum had to consider whether and how they could offer payment within a project. Similarly, if the schedule of a project had to fit specific participants, the schedule similarly had to fit the particularities of the museum. In this section, I further home in on what negotiating means in this regard of planning, by discussing how payment and schedules were made practically possible.

First, administrative barriers complicated the implementation of starting to pay participants at Fisksätra Museum, where women from the Fisksätra Talented Women group expressed a desire to be paid. After they organised a few Food Bazaars, the museum wanted to figure out how the women could be compensated while taking part in the *Kakofoni* project. The staff had to consider how they could make this happen. Or, what the museum had to offer. As Amelie explained it, they decided to pay them 'one way or another,' but, the museum had no 'permission from the fund' to pay people for their participation.[178] Furthermore, the Swedish income taxation caused staff to carefully consider how to ensure their compensation remained below taxable income. Boersma (2022) discussed how similar concerns drove and restricted decision-making about payment in, amongst others, the *daHeim* project.

In the end, the staff in Fisksätra Museum found two ways to pay the women. The participants could cook and share, instead of sell, food as part of a performance led by an artist, in the *Kakofoni* project.[179] Their expenses and compensation could then be paid as part of the previously approved costs for

[178] FM Interview Amelie
[179] FM Presentation Amelie at NCK conference, 2022

a performance. Some of the women were also paid as guest speakers as part of their participation in a language café, meaning they had to lead a meeting and give a presentation. The payment was small sums, however, right at the limit of what someone could earn without having to pay tax on this income. In the end, it was the organisation's perspective and ability, rather than the participants' needs, that guided the practice.

Second, in the *Revisiting Collections* workshop in the MEK, where student facilitators planned for an evening meeting in the museum's premises, negotiation of participants' needs and the museum's resources required their original plan to be further negotiated. Planning the workshop for participants who worked during the day, the student facilitators wanted to organise the meeting after five pm. Usually, as a pre-established method, *Revisiting Collection* workshops would take place in exhibition spaces or depots (Collections Trust and MLA council, 2009). Meeting in exhibition rooms after opening hours is costly, however, and the MEK's depot that is easiest to access does not have much room for group visits. So, in trying to accommodate the needs of participants, the museum's offer affected the location of the workshop. Furthermore, meeting after working hours meant that the practitioners also had to meet after their regular working day, which meant that staff needed to arrange childcare. In the end, the curatorial assistant tasked with arranging a space in the museum for the workshop settled on a large meeting space in the MEK's office building. To make the project accessible to participants, the original plan had to be adjusted to make it feasible for the museum. What the museum could offer came out of a negotiation of these different circumstances. An accessible, but less 'special' experience for participants, as they were not able to meet in a museum space outside of opening hours, or the depot, but in a designated workshop space.

Going back to Suchman's approach to planning as a practice of using 'material and social circumstances' to plan action, the instances analysed in this particular section focused on how the museum practitioners considered both the organisational reality to make decisions about schedules and reward in participatory projects, in addition to their understanding of participants' wishes. Planning as negotiation, requires practitioners to ask 'what can the museum offer', in relation to 'what is the purpose of participation' in consideration of different perspectives: from the participant, worker and museum organisation. In the case of the *Kakofoni* project, the structure of the project, being externally funded with requirements coming from funders, influenced what the museum could offer as a meaningful project. The facilitators planned the schedule for the MEK's *Revisiting Collections* workshop by taking into consideration participants' needs, but had to adjust the location in order to make that work, because the museum could not offer the workshop as suggested within that schedule.

Conclusion

This chapter approached planning with an ethnomethodological practice theory lens. Following Suchman (2006), the analysis focused on how 'circumstances' were negotiated to plan a participatory project. This lens afforded an investigation of how museum's organisational structures, assumptions or knowledge about participants, mission statements, personal motivations, and professional selves, all were taken (differently) into account when planning for participatory projects. The chapter specifically focused on two sets of circumstances.

The first section focused on museum structures, in which the staff negotiated planning for projects in relation to the museum's calendar and their own working schedules. Staff at both museums dealt with the specifics of how agreements are or can be made within the organisation, based on their calendar and division of labour. In addition to knowing how these structures might affect prospective projects, the staff at both museums anticipated the relative flexibility or rigidity of agreements in advance of or during a project. Then, it was highlighted that planning a project also involved planning this work within individual work schedules. The personal perspectives of practitioners came to the fore in the MEK, looking at how the staff had various tasks at the same time and felt that there was insufficient time to fulfil their duties. Similarly, at Fisksätra Museum, the work on projects was planned out in close relation to the other tasks at the museum.

The second section was guided by two questions that summarise how practitioners negotiate with interpretations of participation. It was highlighted that in the MEK, curators build on the museum's mission as well as their perspectives on the type of work and their professional profile, in their considerations of why they plan a participatory project in the first place. Another perspective for planning was drawn out by staff in Fisksätra Museum, by asking and considering what participants' specific wishes or needs are for projects. Then, I stressed that planning indeed is about *negotiating* circumstances, and thus the two sets outlined in this chapter are intertwined with each other. In planning, practical possibilities were fore fronted as staff considered what the museum has to offer when it comes to different understandings of participation and the museum's resources.

Taken together, two points should be brought up about planning participatory projects that will be elaborated on in Chapter 10 as part of the discussion. First, in these negotiations, two underlying pulls come to the fore: meaning and function. There are the structures and capabilities of museums and staff, that necessarily guide their planning of projects. Previously, practical considerations have mostly been taken up as limiting factors in studies about museum participation (e.g. Lynch and Alberti, 2010; Morse, 2021). However, in some of these negotiations towards plans for projects, making participation practically possible also was a way for Fisksätra

Museum to consider how a participatory project could become useful for participants (Lynch, 2021). In deriving meaning of participation from the usefulness of a project to respective participants, the museum's structures become not only just a limitation, but also a potential catalysator of project meaning. Second, planning does not just occur as a distinct phase or moment in advance of a project. Throughout this chapter, the descriptions included planning as it happened during meetings in advance of projects, but also as something that came up over the course of a project. Fisksätra Museum's staff discussed the division of labour and project plans for 2021 in advance, but they also responded to participants' wishes mid-project, when they arranged for women's participation to be financed. At the MEK, the curator of the *European Cultural Days* built on her experience from previous projects in the planning of the next iteration. In sum, the analysis of planning in this chapter paint a picture of a practice that involved continuous consideration of social and material circumstances, in planning both functional and meaningful projects that are simultaneously approached as a service to be organised as part of the museum organisation and as a museum project built around the interaction of participants and the museum.

8 ‘Doing’ Participation I: Explaining, Organising and Reflecting

The practices described in this thesis thus far, have been happening behind computers in museum offices (or in the museum kitchen), during staff meetings or maybe during specific events. For a study about participation, participants have been noticeably missing in this text. They have been imagined, planned for, talked about and considered – but they have hardly been directly involved in the practices so far. The practices were all done in preparation for interaction with participants. Staff have applied for money, forged and sustained relationships, chosen to organise a participatory project and then started shaping a project by negotiating within museum’s structures and interpretations of participation. After this planning, applying and networking, at a certain point participants entered the museum: this is when, according to previous literature and for participants, the participatory project starts.

So let eight teenagers, looking somewhat nervous, enter. We are at Fisksätra Museum during an extraordinarily warm June in 2021. Summer break has started. One by one they walk in, saying ‘hej’ to me and the two facilitators: Cristina and Joanna. Once all eight are sitting around the tables that we had put there a few days before, Joanna starts off: *‘Hej! Welcome. For the next three weeks, we’ll be working in groups to make films.’*[180]

This and the next chapter are about what everyone does, once participants participate. It is the moment when a project, after having been planned for, is ‘done’. I propose five practices of ‘doing’ participation within the boundaries of the project. Explaining, organising and reflecting will be discussed in this chapter. The practices of making and sharing will then be presented in Chapter 9. Empirical data from ethnographic fieldwork done during Fisksätra Museum’s 2021 *Sommarjobb* project is used to initially investigate these practices up close. This was a three-week series of workshops, organised collaboratively by the museum and Fisksätra Library. In the first two sections, the analysis of practices as they developed in this project is elaborated upon using data from interviews and fieldnotes touching upon other projects from the MEK. The third, about reflecting, is presented as an in-depth discussion of Cristina and Joanna’s conversations.

[180] FM Fieldnotes 14 June 2021

The chapter starts with the ways in which project plans are put into practice. First, a lot of explaining happens. Cristina and Joanna explained the goals of the project and how the equipment works, outlined the project's schedule and expectations, and introduced important topics to participants. As part of this section, I discuss how the MEK's staff explained, or did not explain, certain expectations, suggesting that what for professionals is 'business as usual' in the museum might require explicit transparency towards participants to avert conflict. Second, staff involved as facilitators have to organise practical elements of projects. Cristina and Joanna made sure forms were filled out, guest speakers knew what to do and all the material was ready for use. At the same time, organisation involved project management, including tasks that were more focused on the project's context rather than the daily exercises. Looking at the MEK, most curators referred to their role as particularly organisational as well. I present two situations from practice in which facilitators used the project's context to decide whether or not to change a project while it was ongoing. The third practice deals with reflecting. In this section, I discuss how Joanna and Cristina reflected on how they relate to participants and the learning processes in the project, in order to deal with complicated power relationships and conflicting goals. Finally, I discuss how these three practices relate to each other and draw out their connection to the planning practices discussed in the previous chapter.

Explaining

Let us return to Joanna, one of the two facilitators of the *Sommarjobb* project working for the library, when she stood in front of the group of participants at Fisksätra Museum.

> *It is the first day of the film project in Fisksätra. Joanna starts: 'For the next three weeks, we'll be working in groups to make films.' She has handed out the printed schedule and talks through it in general terms, giving an outline of the project: the group is expected to be at the museum from nine till four every day, it is important to arrive on time in the morning and after lunch. There will be guests who will talk about their job and they will do workshops. She explains what she means by 'workshops' because, she says, it is 'one of those words.' Adding that: 'it might feel a bit like school in the beginning, because to make a film you have to learn a lot of new things. […] In the second and third weeks there will be more freedom to work on your own projects. Then, we will help you with some timeframes, so you aren't working with too much stress at the end or struggling to finish.' Joanna hands out a printed schedule and reads out the main goal written at the top: 'Att göra film i grupp på temat Demoktrati.'*[181]

[181] FM Fieldnotes 14 June 2021. Author's translation: 'To make a film in a group on the theme of democracy'

At the beginning and throughout the three weeks of the film project, the practitioners had a lot to explain. There were practical elements that needed to be broken down: schedules, starting times, days off, forms to fill out. Joanna, who organised the workshop series together with Cristina, was also clear about expectations: the *Sommarjobb* project was a job for the participants and they were expected to come on time, every day. Participants were expected to work together in a group on the theme democracy, working towards the goal of making a film. She also settled their expectations about what a job can look like by explaining that 'it might feel a bit like school in the beginning'. In the first days of the project, the purpose of most exercises was clearly explained.[182] Similarly, the four different guests carefully explained what they would do in their respective presentations.[183] Like the phrase 'workshop,' the facilitators explained different terms that they used, such as to pitch and to *ta bild* (take a picture).[184] Similarly, the participants explained jargon the facilitators were less familiar with, such as 'to be a Karen' or *beknarväskan* (slang for a type of bag, referring to drug dealers).[185] Mostly, the practices of explanation in this project had to do with the democracy theme, the method of filmmaking, and expectations of behaviour and the collaboration. These will be discussed in the first section. After this analysis based on Fisksätra Museum's project, the lens is turned towards the MEK. In that section, one element that also comes up in the *Sommarjobb* project's context is elaborated upon: explaining expectations of behaviour.

Democracy, filmmaking and expectations

Like 'workshop', 'democracy' turned out to be 'one of those words' that required explanation. Joanna, Cristina and several guests explained democracy to the participants through presentations, exercises, examples on film and from real life. One of the invited professionals, a librarian, introduced the term democracy as part of her workshop.[186] She gave a short presentation and invited the participants to share their opinions through a few exercises. On the same day, a second guest concretised the topic further by showing examples of films dealing with democracy.[187] Other short films shown throughout the first two weeks were also introduced as having democracy-related themes, such as racism, stereotypes, or homelessness in Sweden.[188]

[182] FM Fieldnotes 14 June 2021; 15 June 2021
[183] FM Fieldnotes 15 June 2021; 17 June 2021; 21 June 2021
[184] FM Fieldnotes 17 June 2021
[185] FM Fieldnotes 14 June 2021; 21 June 2021
[186] FM Fieldnotes 15 June 2021
[187] FM Fieldnotes 15 June 2021. She showed examples of the films created in response to the project Röst. All videos are available on SVT: https://www.svtplay.se/rost
[188] FM Fieldnotes 14 June 2021; 15 June 2021; 18 June 2021; 21 June 2021

And then, all of a sudden, during the course of the project there was a real-life example of current affairs and democracy in action. In late June 2021, Sweden's government went through a political crisis which ultimately caused Prime Minister Stefan Löfven to resign (Riksdagsförvaltningen, 2021). The facilitators discussed these contemporary events as a way to further explain what democracy means over the following weeks.

These different encounters with the theme of democracy resulted in two diverging explanations, however. In the librarian's workshop and through the ongoing focus on the political crisis, democracy was explained as a political system. In the short films we watched, democracy was shown as an element of one's personal experience in society: being an activist, being discriminated against, or interviewing one's neighbours about voting. The discrepancy seemed to cause continued confusion amongst the participants, which came up when some of them requested a 'list of topics' once they were asked to brainstorm ideas for their films.[189] This request was difficult for Cristina and Joanna, they reflected later, because for them making a film about democracy is about participants telling their own story 'in their own voice.'[190] As they saw it, if they were to provide a list of examples, it would become less of their own story. One of the guest facilitators interpreted the theme similarly to Cristina and Joanna. She asked what the group had to make a film about and when the group answered 'democracy', she said something along the lines of: 'so that's done. You get a camera and use your voice, that's democracy.'[191] But as simple as she and the facilitators made it sound, it remained difficult for the participants to see how 'anything they say' can be democracy. It showed in their first pitches for their films. Once they were divided into two groups who would each make a film, both groups' suggestion was to make a short documentary about people's understanding and experiences of the current political crisis.[192]

The second topic that required considerable explanation was filmmaking, both as a process of applying different storytelling techniques and in terms of how to use film equipment. Cristina and Joanna scheduled exercises and presentations in the first week to introduce and explain basic filmmaking techniques.[193] They carefully considered the inclusion of different styles of film, dramaturgy and storytelling, script writing, pitching, storyboard making and dialogue filming.[194] For all these topics, the facilitators designed small exercises and held short presentations. By way of these exercises, the participants started filming from day one and became acquainted with

[189] FM Fieldnotes 22 June 2021; 23 June 2021
[190] FM Fieldnotes 18 June 2021
[191] FM Fieldnotes 22 June 2021
[192] FM Fieldnotes 23 June 2021
[193] FM Fieldnotes 10 June 2021; FM Planning document Sommarjobb project 2021
[194] FM Fieldnotes 15 June 2021; 16 June 2021; 17 June 2021; 18 June 2021; 21 June 2021; 22 June 2021

different materials. They first started filming with iPads and used iMovie software on the tablets. Later they used the editing software on Macs and employed Zoom recorders, external microphones and film cameras. The first day that the participants used real cameras with external microphones resulted in chaos, as I described in my fieldnotes:

> *The group want to start working with the technology right away: one takes the camera and the tripod, saying 'I know how it works'. Another one grabs the microphone ('I will do the sound'), in the meantime Cristina tries to explain to them how all the things work. The kid who has the camera starts filming her immediately. Participants are excited about the stuff, but impatient for explanations. They start walking outside, Cristina walks with them and continues to explain there. Once she is back, she has to laugh about it a bit and says 'it is so hard to explain these things, when they really don't want to hear it, and they just want to start'.*[195]

Throughout the three weeks, explaining how to use the equipment and how to edit was an exercise in patience for the participants and required frequent reflection from the facilitators. I witnessed more moments like the one above: where participants were ready to try out the equipment as soon as they got it in their hands, or they lost interest when Cristina explained iMovie on a Mac by live-editing one of the participant's films using the projector.[196]

A third element to be explained was the framework of interaction and collaboration, or the expectations of behaviour from the museum. These included practical moments as portrayed in the opening vignette, where one of the facilitators introduced the exercise, day, or assignment. Also the 'working conditions' made explicit by Joanna in the first meeting, required explaining. As discussed in Chapter 5, the Sommarjobb project was part of the national programme of the same name, through which municipalities sponsor organisations to have teenagers do a short traineeship. They had applied to the programme, without knowing that they would be working in the museum. This meant that the participants at Fisksätra Museum were technically, temporarily employees of the municipality. These working conditions had to be brought up a few times and were further explained through several forms provided by the municipality that the facilitators used to keep track of the working hours of each participant.[197] Sometimes, expectations were not explained and rules remained unspoken until they were broken. For example, when some participants grabbed cushions from the room that was used as an artist's studio at the time of the project. This room opened onto the space being used for the workshop, but was blocked by an improvised barrier in the form of a moving cart, and never used for the project meetings. Because there was no door, however, participants could see what was inside and easily enter. To get extra

[195] FM Fieldnotes 21 June 2021
[196] FM Fieldnotes 16 June 2021; 17 June 2021; 21 June 2021
[197] FM Fieldnotes 14 June 2021

comfortable seats while watching some of the short films, they grabbed some of the cushions. When Cristina told them to put the cushions back, she explained that those were the artist's and not the museum's, and so not for the participants to use. Explaining, whether it regarded expected behaviour, specific terms or equipment and skills, was at times addressed only when a problem or question arose. This happened with the example of what the participants were and were not allowed to use, or the ongoing conversation about democracy. However, the facilitators purposefully explained how to use materials and the expectations coming from the municipality's framework.

Expectations at the MEK

Explaining expectations in practice, as Cristina and Joanna did both purposefully and ad-hoc in the *Sommarjobb* project, is complicated and a lack of explanation sometimes brings up situations of conflict. Examples from the MEK can further illustrate this. First, I describe a situation where participants were welcomed into the museum where certain behavioural expectations remained implicit. Then, I focus on situations described by the curators in our interviews.

As part of the *Perlenhochzeit* project, participating students were divided into small groups for different assignments as part of their course, which contributed to the exhibition development. Four students were part of a research group, and were tasked with investigating a set of objects suggested by the curator. They visited the MEK to study these objects, stored in the depot on the top floor of the museum's offices. I was present for their visit. The visit gives an insight into how various expectations can remain implicit for participants, and might seem clear to only one party, resulting in uncomfortable situations and misunderstandings. The meeting took place on a Friday morning and the curatorial team of the *Perlenhochzeit* exhibition could not come in that day. Instead, the students had an appointment with Sarah, a staff member who was not involved in the exhibition and who would guide them into the depot. As someone who had previously met the students, I was asked to be present as well.

> *I meet with Sarah just before ten, to join her and the students into the depot. It passes ten, and the students are not there yet. Sarah begins to get impatient and tells me she has another meeting planned, right after. When only two of the students arrive, ten minutes late, she sounds slightly irritated. One of the students, apparently unaffected by Sarah's tone, continues to ask if she had received their earlier request to borrow a backdrop for photography of the objects. Sarah answers that she did receive their email but they will not be able to borrow it – of course not – because their request came with too little notice and the museum's photographer needs it. It falls quiet, and still standing in the hallway next to Sarah's office, we wait a bit longer. After a while, Sarah suggests that the students install themselves in the office kitchen. At a certain*

point, Sarah picks the two students up from the kitchen and we head to the depot on the third floor. The final two students arrive at the moment we leave the depot, about half past ten. We walk together to the meeting room at the end of the hallway, where the students will investigate the material. Once there, Sarah hands out gloves, suggests they work box by box so they do not lose track of which item is in which box and states that they cannot eat and drink in the room. By now she has really lost her patience, so she responds with slight irritation when one of the students ask if she has some white paper to use as a backdrop instead: "yes, behind you," she says, pointing to a flipchart. The students thank her but Sarah leaves quickly to get to her next meeting. After about two hours of carefully handling the objects, taking pictures and getting excited about their research, the students leave.[198]

The following Monday, I met with the curator of the exhibition, Carla.

> *Carla received an email making it clear that Sarah had been very unhappy about the visit by the students and how they behaved. Carla should have been present for this meeting. Asking for my perspective, I try to nuance the students' behaviour as a more relaxed approach. Carla responds by saying: "you cannot be relaxed at an institution, only perhaps the top people." I interpret it as a joke and laugh, but Carla continues: "No, really. This is not how you interact with an institution."*[199]

This situation sketches a miscommunication about underlying expectations. Once the students had retrieved the objects, Sarah explained to the students how to handle them correctly. Other rules, however, were only assumed and not explicated: you arrive on time for a meeting with museum staff; you ask in time for any further requests; and, 'normal museum business' goes first. Punctuality is appreciated in the museum, but the students did not realise this or at least did not take it into account. For Sarah, this was one of many meetings she had to do that day, for the students it was their full morning activity, which could explain them being a bit later. The students also did not know that the request for a photography backdrop was not appropriate in Sarah's view: Sarah saw it as an object used in important everyday museum work, for the students it would be a useful attribute to fulfil their assignment. The fact that the students remained rather relaxed was frustrating for Sarah and deemed inappropriate by Carla as well. There were implicit rules and assumptions coming from the fact that the meeting took place in an organisation with specific (institutional) structures which can be rigid and more explicit to people working for the organisation. It looked like, for this particular meeting in the exhibit building project, the students were guests of the institution, rather than participants in a participatory meeting. The museum

[198] MEK Fieldnotes 15 November 2019
[199] MEK Fieldnotes 18 November 2019

practitioners expected the students to know that 'this is not how you interact with an institution.'[200]

Explaining all of this would have been difficult, however, because it would have involved making explicit internal organisational structures that the staff were used to: the museum's normal order of business. The staff at the MEK showcased an awareness of the decision-making hierarchy in their interviews. They explained how sometimes people higher up in the organisational ladder within their own museum, but also within SMB or SPK, can make final decisions about projects, exhibitions, and titles.[201] In meetings with participants, however, the involved staff only referred to these structures after being asked, or in reflection with me. During the title-making workshop for the *Perlenhochzeit* exhibition, the workshop facilitator asked Carla to explain the standard order of business when it comes to making a title.[202] A bit startled by the request, she explained the process and prepared the students for the fact that although they, or a curator, might come up with a great title, it would not be immediately confirmed and decided. The communications team and others higher up in the institution would have a final say. Here, the order of decision-making in the organisation, normal museum business for the curators, was explained to the students upon request. This mostly tended to remain implied for the participants, however, not least when it came to the possibility of project cancellation. When the *Perlenhochzeit* exhibition's funding application was turned down, the curatorial assistant reflected that students might have to get used to this: 'that is just often the reality, that you prepare so much, research so much, do the conceptual writing and work and then have to cancel everything after all.'[203] She did not make this sobering observation in front of the students, but only in a private interview with me.

Other MEK curators, in their interviews with me, shared further examples of conflict caused by a lack of transparency about what is standard practice for them in the museum. Two curators shared anecdotes about working with a group who had a hard time following deadlines established by the museum:

> [A]n exhibit is not just designed and built on its own. I mean, you have to be ready at a specific agreed upon time. There are many craftsmen, exhibition designers, painters, carpenters involved. Electricians, lighting, and so on. Meaning everything needs to be coordinated.[204]

[200] Ibid.
[201] MEK Interviews C1; C2; C5
[202] MEK Fieldnotes 14 October 2019
[203] Translated from German, original: 'Da ist eben die Realität eben oft so, dass man viel vorbereitet, viel recherchiert, viel auch konzeptionell schreibt oder arbeitet. Und dann muss man aber doch alles canceln.'
[204] MEK Interview C1. Translated from German, original: '[…] das sich die Ausstellung sich ja auch nicht alleine gestaltet und aufbaut. Das heißt, uhm, sie muss zu einem bestimmten Termin fertig sein. Da sind viele Handwerker, Ausstellungsgestalter, Maler, Tischler..., daran beteiligt. Elektriker, Ausleuchtung (ja) und so weiter(…) das heißt das alles muss koordiniert werden'

Her colleague was more explicit, saying that the same group was 'not interested in deadlines:'

> It really was a problem that they did not, well, send the texts. And in the evening before the opening, they were still doing their texts. And the scenographer had a problem. The graphic designer had a problem. They were not used to it, how to do museum work and exhibition work.[205]

Understanding the order of tasks, based on a complete picture of who in the institution will be involved, and when, is something the seasoned curators know, but the participant might not. The same curator reflecting on the group who did not send their texts brought up *daHEIM*. Refugees worked with an artist to create an exhibition in the museum and the staff member recalled:

> They were not allowed to go into the museum, or to walk in the museum barefoot. They had to put on shoes but they really had problems with their feet, […] their feet hurt. So, they took off their shoes. And it was a real problem.[206]

When recalling these events, the curators understood and had sympathy for the participants' perspectives. At the same time, they expressed surprise that things that were standard within the museum, like wearing shoes, not consuming food or drinks in exhibition rooms, or following deadlines because others' work is dependent on it, had to be explained and caused conflict.

Importantly, participants might actually be aware of unnamed pressures and structures within the museum. Not making this explicit in the *Perlenhochzeit* project contributed to students' feelings of not being taken seriously.[207] One of the students explained that they noticed a hierarchy within the project, the museum and the SMB, sensing there was pressure on Jenna and Carla, the curatorial team. The student wondered if this contributed to some of the complications in the project, and suggested that a lack of communication from the MEK's side caused students to feel unhappy about much of the collaboration. The student brought up instances where their input was sidelined without any explanation. It left them with a feeling that 'there was a hierarchy [and] there was a difference in how ideas were valued,' but this was never explicitly discussed.[208]

When listening to the curators in the MEK, they agreed that problems arising out of miscommunication should be solved by providing clearer communication about existing rules, regulations and deadlines to the participants, but also contextualisation of the behaviour of the participants to their colleagues. In short: explaining. At the same time, taking the *Perlenhochzeit* participant's statement in account, 'explaining' might not be

[205] MEK Interview C2
[206] MEK Interview C2
[207] MEK Interview C7; MEK Fieldnotes 1 February 2020
[208] Ibid.

enough in situations of conflict and uneasiness. For participants, the sense of not being taken seriously and of a hierarchy of what is considered a valuable contribution will hardly be resolved by explaining expectations deriving from the institutional context. Taken together, what appeared to be most challenging in the situations outlined in this section is understanding and deciding *what* should be explained, and that explaining alone might not be sufficient to overcome difficulties.

Organising

The second practice embedded in 'doing participation' is organising. When explaining is about explicating the framework of the participatory project, organising is about creating and maintaining that framework. In the *Sommarjobb* project, organising activities included facilitative tasks such as preparing the daily activities, arranging the technology and material for use, and taking care of group dynamics. In addition, there were administrative and managerial responsibilities: keeping track of the formal requirements set by the municipality and implementing the project work into ongoing work schedules and the overarching summer project. These will be described in more detail in the first section. Then, the place of organising in MEK's participatory projects is discussed.

Facilitating exercises and managing a project

Organising the *Sommarjobb* project while it was ongoing included activities that were necessary both to facilitate the daily exercises, and to manage the project as a whole. To organise the daily meetings, Cristina and Joanna arrived before the participants to prepare by organising the day and the physical space. They would set up the room for a presentation, clean up some things from the day before, sort out food for breakfast or breaktime, talk through the order of the exercises for the day, and check the iPads or other equipment that would be used that day. Sometimes they were 'not feeling well-prepared for the day,' or a cancellation by a guest left them with an empty schedule.[209] Then, the moment before the participants entered would be used to quickly devise the exercises of the day. These could be quite stressful moments, but Joanna would get into a fixing mode and would be the one who concluded a short discussion with Cristina by saying something like: 'we will just do it like this and I will tell them right now'. These organisational tasks continued throughout the day. During breaks Joanna and Cristina would print materials for an exercise, get film equipment ready for use, discuss what to do when the participants go through the exercises faster than planned, or discuss the exact

[209] FM Fieldnotes 18 June 202; 21 June 2021

parameters of the exercise after the break. Of course, there was also a need to wash dishes and clean up during and at the end of each day, to keep the space organised.

One element that required much organisation within these daily exercises was the technology and material used. Cristina and Joanna had to arrange all the material and keep it working. Both of them brought in iPads from other organisations they work for.[210] In my fieldnotes I further noted a few moments throughout the first week when Cristina came into the museum with blue Ikea bags full of microphones, booms, and MacBooks from her other job.[211] As the most experienced filmmaker, she was responsible for the technological side of the workshops and took care of the film equipment. Not only did she explain how to use the devices but, as discussed in the previous section, when at the end of the exercise the participants showed their videos to the group, Cristina would be in charge of the transmission of the file to the computer with projector. She would set up her own and guests' computers for presentations and took care of all the cables, different laptops and external speakers. As always, this involved a lot of quick thinking and ad hoc problem-solving with WIFI issues, cables or adapters missing, or poor projector connection, while the group of participants waited impatiently.[212] Where in the first week these stressful moments regarded connections between computers, iPads and projectors, this stress subsided into solving problems regarding cameras and microphones during the weeks when the participants worked more independently.

As facilitators, Cristina and Joanna also concerned themselves with group dynamics and development. This concern was organisational in nature because dividing the group was necessary for the structure of the workshop series. They decided in advance that the participants would work in smaller groups to create a film, to decrease their own workload compared to the previous year when they ended up having to edit eight individual films.[213] The idea of group division immediately caused some nervousness amongst the teenagers. They were concerned about whom they would want to or have to work with.[214] Throughout the first week Cristina and Joanna reflected with each other on what combination of participants would work well together.[215] They tried out different combinations of participants for the smaller exercises and considered whether they supported each other's work style and whether everyone would contribute equally.[216] Further, they engaged in reflective

[210] FM Fieldnotes 10 June 2021
[211] FM Fieldnotes 16 June 2021; 17 June 2021
[212] FM Fieldnotes 14 June 2021; 15 June 2021; 21 June 2021
[213] FM Fieldnotes 10 June 2021
[214] FM Fieldnotes 14 June 2021
[215] FM Fieldnotes 14 June 2021, 16 June 2021, 17 June 2021, 18 June 2021
[216] FM Fieldnotes 14 June 2021, 16 June 2021

practice about the group's dynamics by discussing how the group was forming, and their motivation as a whole.[217]

In addition to these daily organising activities in order to make the exercises work and facilitate the learning practice of the students, Cristina and Joanna had to manage the project as a whole. One element here was the relationship with the municipality. As part of a national programme, Fisksätra's *Sommarjobb* project came with formal requirements. This led Cristina and Joanna's organisational work to include keeping track of these formalities such as introducing the forms they would use, answering participants' questions about payment and sick leave, and getting in touch with the municipality directly to find out the answers.[218] Furthermore, they had to organise getting the participants' consent for sharing videos on one of the funders' websites. Because some of them were under age, it meant Cristina and Joanna needed to organise getting hold of the signatures of parents.

In addition, the project management required organisational work in relation to the larger context of the project. This context included their other jobs, the museum's ongoing tasks and projects, and the overarching 2021 summer project. As mentioned at the start of this chapter, Joanna worked on behalf of the library on the *Sommarjobb* project and had to combine facilitating these workshops with ongoing tasks and meetings at the library. Similarly, during moments when participants were going out to film, and there was no task at hand, Cristina would do other work at her computer. In one particular instance, when Cristina and I were sitting behind our computers in the kitchen, she suddenly put her hands up and excitingly exclaimed: 'Yaaaaaaay!'[219] As it turned out, a funding application for another project had just been approved by email and Cristina immediately started discussing possible uses for this money. This type of administrative work was not the only non-project task that was ongoing. What was described in Chapter 6 as creating social resources for participation also continued during this period. Several people visited the museum during these three weeks: former participants-turned-acquaintances, the artist who used the museum as a studio, guests from the participants, or passers-by interested in the museum and its programmes.[220] Furthermore, Amelie, who stayed at home during these three weeks because of the ongoing pandemic, continued her work on applications. She also kept an eye on communication with the outside world and called sometimes to ask for pictures to post on the museum's Instagram page.

The larger context also included the related projects of the *Sommarjobb* project, as well as the potential repetition of the project the year after. As introduced in Chapter 5, an overarching summer project brought together the

[217] FM Fieldnotes 17 June 2021
[218] FM Fieldnotes 14 June 2021; 15 June 2021; 16 June 2021
[219] FM Fieldnotes 22 June 2021
[220] FM Fieldnotes 18 June 2021; 14 June 2021; 16 June 2021; 21 June 2021

Sommarjobb workshops, a film festival and an organising committee of teenagers. Cristina did some organisational work for this summer programme throughout the three weeks, such as making posters for the film festival and communicating with the project lead in the library and Amelie at home.[221] Moreover, as they were anticipating a possible repetition of the *Sommarjobb* project the following year, Joanna and Cristina updated their online planning document with the films they share, to keep track of what they did this year, so they could use this as a base for the next iteration.[222] Whenever they discussed things that were a bit difficult with the current group or schedule, one of them would bring up that this is a learning point for next year.

Organising in the MEK

The detailed account of the organisational practices at Fisksätra Museum make it unsurprising to see that the MEK's curators also tended to refer to their role in participation as mostly organisational. The MEK's curators talked about how their projects are 'coordinated' by museum staff, [223] or that the museum should 'also have the organisational strings in their hands'.[224] The museum is in charge of the 'project management'[225] of this work and sometimes 'organisational problem[s]'[226] occur. Another curator talked about how exhibition plans go through a 'funnel' in the participatory process, where things get narrower and organised over time.[227] Generally, the curators thus saw their role as organisational. What does that look like during the interaction with participants, as this chapter addresses?

During the *Revisiting Collections* workshop, I witnessed what organising looked like during an MEK project.[228] Like the facilitators in Fisksätra, the student facilitators met in advance to set up the room, prepare some food and briefly discussed the way the workshop would go. They finalised the texts shared in the workshop, printed consent forms, and prepared the materials. During the workshop they organised things by clearly and strictly facilitating the structure and timing of each exercise. When a participant was done early, and asked what to do next, they were told to wait until everyone was ready for the next exercise. The facilitators also used the breaks, while participants were drinking coffee and eating snacks, to briefly clean up and prepare the materials for the next part of the exercise. Because it was a tight schedule and a one-time meeting, there was less time to reflect on processes and quickly change

[221] FM Fieldnotes 16 June 2021
[222] FM Fieldnotes 16 June 2021; 30 June 2021
[223] MEK Interview C1
[224] MEK Interview C1
[225] MEK Interview C3
[226] MEK Interview C2
[227] MEK Interview C4a
[228] MEK Fieldnotes 25 November 2019

certain things based on their reflections. Jenna, the curatorial assistant, was present for the workshop on behalf of the museum, but did not take a facilitating role. Halfway through the workshop, however, she brought up a different way of ending the workshop, based on her experience of the established method. The lead facilitator did not take the time to consider this and chose to continue as they planned for this particular workshop, prioritising the continuation of the schedule.

Another example from practice comes from one of the MEK curators reflecting on the *Bring ein Ding* project she organised a few years earlier. An important organisational task of hers was responding to and changing part of the scheduled interaction. In *Bring ein Ding,* visitors to an exhibition were invited to bring objects from their home. They would be photographed with these objects and share stories about the particular meaning. The museum did not exhibit the objects, but the curator remembers how participants would stay and read each other's stories. One group of participants, however, challenged and ultimately changed the way the activity was organised. These were women with a refugee history who were – according to the curator – hesitant to participate because they were unsure about which objects to bring, from which 'home'. Furthermore, some of them had a hard time expressing themselves in German writing. And so, the curator found a way to accommodate the participants who would perhaps be left out, by brainstorming objects they could consider instead: 'is there something here in your second home that reminds you of your first home? Is there something positive?'[229] A second solution was that, while others wrote down their stories, these participants talked about the objects, so that someone else could write them down.

For the *Bring ein Ding* curator, organising in an ongoing project included arranging for the planned interaction to be more suitable and inclusive, in response to a problem that arose. The example from the *Revisiting Collections* workshop gestures to how in one-time meetings reconsidering decisions about schedules is time-sensitive. Furthermore, different museum staff or facilitators might have different ideas about what would be correct practice, in a specific project.

Reflecting

The third practice that could be observed during the *Sommarjobb* project can be called reflecting. Over the course of the three weeks, Cristina and Joanna had reflective discussions. These specifically focused on their relationship

[229] Translated from German, original: 'gibt es dann etwas hier in eurer zweiten Heimat, was euch an eure erste Heimat erinnert? […] Gibt es was Positives?'

with participants and on the learning process of participants. In doing so, they navigated power relations and unclear goals in the project.

Being responsible for organising the *Sommarjobb* workshops as part of the municipality's programme meant that, on top of being facilitators, Joanna and Cristina were also supervising the participating students doing a paid job. This particularity marks a clear difference between Joanna and Cristina and the participants. Between the two of them, the facilitators reflected on this relationship in order to navigate it. They noticed some of the participants sharing how their hopes for the project were to *tjäna pengar* (earn money).[230] This explicit interest of the students was something that Joanna found complicated, as she told Cristina and me: 'they are not here because they have this passion for film or something, and *really* want to make a film, they are here to make money.'[231] With the participants approaching this as a job, Cristina and Joanna were approached as supervisors or bosses.

The facilitators recognised that this dimension of the project came with more explicit power for them, and they reflected on this in order to navigate it. Quite early in the project some of the participants started arriving late, sometimes half an hour after the scheduled start of the workshop. This became an issue, because as part of the *Sommarjobb* programme, the participants should become acquainted with work-specific rules and agreements, but Cristina was hesitant to tell them to arrive on time. In conversation, Cristina told me she thought she should say something about it, but she did not, because she found it hard to address these 'rules.'[232] Only towards the very end of the project did she bring it up with the participants, explaining that 'it is a workplace and you cannot just stay away.' [233]

On the other hand, Joanna saw their role as supervisor, in addition to being complicated, as a way to make explicit certain other differences that she found harder to talk about. In a moment of reflection, she explained that being supervisor-supervisee, even though it introduced a complicated relationship with the teenagers, was clearer than the unnamed differences in social status and background between the practitioners and participants.[234] These differences were also apparent to Cristina and Joanna, but harder to address explicitly. Still, they both reflected on their position as white women in a project with first and second-generation immigrant teenagers, and were concerned about the participants' interpretation of certain films and discussions about race.[235] As well as discussing or reflecting on how to respond in certain situations, they retrospectively tried to provide more context to participants, when they found this would be appropriate. This happened for

[230] FM Fieldnotes 15 June 2021; 22 June 2021
[231] FM Fieldnotes 22 June 2021
[232] FM Fieldnotes 18 June 2021
[233] FM Fieldnotes 30 June 2021
[234] FM Fieldnotes 22 June 2021
[235] FM Fieldnotes 17 June 2021; 22 June 2021, 23 June 2021

example when a guest, in an attempt to critique the world of film, mentioned her white privilege in achieving some positions. The next day, Cristina entered the museum and immediately brought up the conversation. She wanted to come back to the discussion, because she was afraid the students just heard the critical guest say 'I got this position because I'm white' and would subsequently become demotivated, thinking they would not be able to work in film.[236] Throughout the project, both Cristina and Joanna reflected on their relationship to the participants, signified by difference since they were the participants' supervisors and identified as white, whereas most of the participants would not. Reflecting manifested as discussing together how they should respond in certain situations which allowed and required them to be sensitive to the power relations at play.

Another topic that Joanna and Cristina reflected on was the learning process of the participants. As touched upon earlier in this chapter, Cristina, Joanna and their guests explained through presentations, examples and exercises how to make films and use equipment, certain film and workshop jargon, as well as what democracy might mean when translated into film. In the case of this project, the participants were given a clear task: to make a film about democracy. In order to reach that goal, they needed to learn some things which would be taught as part of the series of exercises and workshops. At the same time, the filmmaking was approached as a participatory, empowering activity. Meaning, Cristina and Joanna wanted the participants to make a film they really wanted to make, a movie where they 'use their own voice'. The facilitators were at once interested in teaching the participants all that is necessary to create a film, and simultaneously wanted them to integrate their own ideas and voice into the film. Over the course of the project, it became clear that these goals sometimes opposed each other. Through reflecting, Cristina and Joanna attempt to make sense of these different goals.

Joanna and Cristina spent a lot of time teaching, or explaining, everything the participants needed to know to make a film, but both facilitators and participants expressed not being so excited about the school-like experience it created. Already at the initial meeting of the *Sommarjobb* project, presented at the start of this chapter, Joanna explained that 'it might feel a bit like school in the beginning, because to make a film you have to learn a lot of new things.'[237] In the vignette, however, I left out my own observations included in the original fieldnotes, that reveal how Joanna was almost apologetic about it: '[She says] "We will try to make it nice though." I notice that she stresses this quite a bit, that "it might seem like this, but it isn't," or "it is just because you have to learn things before you can do it."'[238] Her warning stuck with some of the teens. In response to a question about their hopes and expectations for the

[236] FM Fieldnotes 23 June 2021
[237] FM Fieldnotes 14 June 2021
[238] Ibid.

next weeks, at least one answered that they 'hope it will not be like school with homework.'[239] I also noted how someone on the second day indeed '[sighed] out "well this is just like school"' during an exercise.[240] When I talked with one of the participants a week later, she also referred to this school-like experience, as 'a bit a shame' because it is their summer now and 'they just stopped school.'[241]

Being aware of this sentiment, Cristina and Joanna became wary of over-explaining things and self-aware of how much time they spent explaining exercises or equipment.[242] They also reflected on how they could continue to attune to the participants' learning process without becoming overbearing. For example, during the period that the groups independently worked on their films, one came back after two hours only to say: 'we don't know what to do'.[243] Cristina said to me: 'it's hard to decide either to be around them too much, possibly stopping their processes, [with the effect] that they might come really late to ask for help.' She was hesitant to interrupt their own creative decision-making by frequently asking how things are going, but she concluded that they at least came to ask for help. Joanna was similarly motivated when she was hesitant to share a list of potential topics, earlier in the project, as explained before. Joanna initially did not want to provide it, because 'this feels like we are asking them to make a movie in a certain way, but I really don't want to. I want them to make a movie *they* want to make.'[244]

Here, Joanna expressed an underlying sentiment that was never fully resolved throughout the project. Part of their reflection on the participants' learning process was rooted in the facilitators' understanding of and sensitivity to their relationship to the participants. Cristina and Joanna were hesitant to explicate their hope, or goal, for films from the participant's perspective, *because* they would have to tell the participants to create such a film, as their teacher or supervisor. While reflecting on the participants' pitches, Cristina said to Joanna and me that 'it would be best if all of them tell their own story, from their own voice,' 'but,' she continued 'we can't push them to do so.'[245] As Joanna put it later: 'it's a bit tiring to just give someone a camera and, although [I] really care about 'giving people a voice', to actually do that, to say that.'[246]

Through these practices of reflecting, Cristina and Joanna attempted to deal with two difficult elements of this particular project, but did not necessarily solve them. They reflected on the differences between them and the

[239] FM Fieldnotes 15 June 2021
[240] Ibid.
[241] FM Fieldnotes 23 June 2021
[242] FM Fieldnotes 15 June 2021; 16 June 2021; 21 June 2021; 24 June 2021
[243] FM Fieldnotes 28 June 2021
[244] FM Fieldnotes 22 June 2021
[245] FM Fieldnotes 18 June 2021
[246] FM Fieldnotes 1 July 2021

participants, and how their power relation was established through the project's context. They considered their own behaviour and made decisions in light of these perspectives: Cristina hesitated to address the participants as their supervisor, but Joanna considered the relationship helpful as it created a clear role for them and a difference that was easier to deal with and discuss than the differences in class and background. Through reflective practice, Joanna and Cristina also navigated the different goals embedded in the project. While facilitating the participants' learning process, Cristina and Joanna also attempted to facilitate the participants' engagement in the full process of making a movie, supporting their decisions about a topic without inhibiting their decision-making power.

Conclusion

This chapter discussed the practices of professionals while 'doing participation'. The title firstly signalled a change of moment, compared to the previous two chapters. In this chapter, the project – or, the moment in which practitioners interact with participants as facilitators of workshops - started. Simultaneously, the practices discussed in this chapter are closely connected to those referred to earlier, as all practices together contribute to, or constitute, museum participation. Here, the practices of practitioners 'did' a project, specifically: explaining (or not) the material, thematic, underlying boundaries, organising exercises, people, rooms, breaks, and overarching or related work, and reflecting on this to adjust as necessary.

By explaining, the facilitators framed the participatory interaction in the museum for the participants. They explained what the goal of the project was and what was expected of the participating teenagers. This was particularly important in the *Sommarjobb* project because there were certain requirements that came with the municipality's funding. In order to make it possible for the participants to achieve the goal of making a film about democracy, Cristina and Joanna spent a lot of time explaining filming techniques and the material they would use, but also what democracy means. The practice of explaining expectations was elaborated upon with examples from the MEK. There, during students' visit to the museum's depot, underlying and implicit expectations about how they should behave were cause for conflict in this particular situation. Finally, I suggested that part of explaining is to understand *what* should be explained, based on further examples from the MEK. There, the practitioners refrained from explicating certain decision-making structures or rules because these were considered 'business as usual' in the museum. As was shown, these might be unknown to participants, however, potentially resulting into situations of conflict.

Second, while 'doing' participation, the staff had to organise practical elements of the projects. Looking at the *Sommarjobb* project, this was

presented as being about both facilitating exercises, as well as continuing project management. Every day, Cristina and Joanna had to prepare assignments and presentations, as well as the required material. They also approached group dynamics from an organisational perspective, as something that had to be managed. Organising was similarly directed at the project as a whole, while it was ongoing. Both Joanna and Cristina had other continuing tasks they had to attend to in the museum and library respectively, including for the larger summer project. They had to manage these tasks in combination with the organisation of the *Sommarjobb* workshops. The practices described in Chapter 6, through which opportunities for participation are created, continued while the project was ongoing: Cristina received positive feedback from a funding application, and as the museum was open, several visitors came in and took a look at what was happening. Examples from the MEK brought up instances of curators and facilitators arranging interaction between visitors and the museum, who had to decide whether or not to change something about their originally planned exercises. Here, we can see how the practices of planning, as discussed in the previous chapter, continue throughout ongoing participatory projects.

Reflecting was presented as the third practice. Joanna and Cristina were followed navigating two difficult particularities of the *Sommarjobb* project. First, they reflected on their relationship to the participants. They were put in the position of supervisor through the construction of the *Sommarjobb* programme. Amongst themselves, they considered how they should respond in certain situations, balancing not wanting to come across as too overbearing with clearly communicating the expectations attached to the municipality's funding. Joanna and Cristina also reflected on their different positionality to the teenagers. As two white women living in Stockholm, they tried to be aware of how the experience of the participants all coming from immigrant-rich Fisksätra was different from their own. They reflected on situations retrospectively, considering how participants interpreted them. Secondly, Joanna and Cristina reflected on the learning process of participants. Through these reflections they elucidated underlying conflicting goals embedded in the project, which they could not really resolve. The participants were instructed to independently make films about democracy, from start to finish, based on their own ideas. At the same time, the facilitators wanted the participants to use this opportunity to make a film about their own lives, from 'their own voice'. Cristina and Joanna were hesitant to explicitly instruct this, because they did not want to inhibit the participants' creative freedom. This particular complication will be further analysed in the next chapter. Practices of reflecting in the MEK were not discussed in this section. As the previous chapter suggests, however, the practitioners in the MEK take a reflective stance in planning participatory projects. They ask questions and discuss amongst themselves to find ways to create meaning for the museum and participants.

Two considerations about these practices will be further discussed in Chapter 10. Firstly, these practices touch upon an important discussion found in the literature about participation and transparency. One of the suggestions made by museum scholars as a way to overcome difficulties in participatory projects is working towards 'radical transparency' (Lynch, 2013; Marstine, 2011). Transparency from the museum's side is heralded as a means by which trust can be established between participants and institutions (Liew and Cheetham, 2016). The practice of explaining can be understood as a means by which the professionals could work towards making the museum more transparent to the participants. Cristina and Joanna tried to explain the expectations connected to the project. In the MEK, the lack of explanations about expectations or important rules contributed to moments of conflict. The close-up investigation of the practice of explaining and reflecting revealed nuanced complications embedded in achieving transparency.

Second, the practices described here are closely related to the work done in preparation for moments of interaction, as described in Chapters 6 and 7. For example, organising, as described in this chapter, included a continuation of planning. The two examples from the MEK described instances where while a project was ongoing, practitioners again made decisions, or changes, regarding planned exercises. In Chapter 7, planning was investigated by looking at how practitioners used 'social and material circumstances' to make decisions about future action (Suchman, 2006). Using that same phrasing to look at the current chapter, the practitioners treated the ongoing project as a set of new 'social and material circumstances' that potentially required different action to be taken: in the case of the *Revisiting Collections* workshop, the facilitator decided not to change course, in the case of *Bring ein Ding* an alternative was sought in order to include more people. Understood like that, what I described as organising includes a type of planning-in-process. In Chapter 10 the connections between practices will be further drawn out by suggesting that practitioners' practices, in and outside of projects, can be understood as maintenance work (Henke, 1999).

9 ‘Doing’ Participation II: Making and Sharing

Thus far, this thesis has attempted to shine a light on the practices of museum professionals. When reviewing earlier literature, however, it became apparent that participation tends to be described and defined, based on what participants do: people co-create an exhibition (Mygind et al., 2015) or performance (Barnes and McPherson, 2019), contribute material to a museum exhibition (Coghlan, 2018), or write object information through crowdsourcing (Bonacchi et al., 2019). Therefore, in order to gain a fuller picture of the practices of participation in museums, this chapter centres on what participants (are asked to) do. Taking the projects at both museums together, these practices can be best summarised as making and sharing.

A great variety of making and sharing practices occurred in the projects presented in Chapter 5. In the *Sommarjobb* project, participants made a film, which was shared with neighbours. For *1000 Tücher Gegen das Vergessen* at the MEK, participants embroidered handkerchiefs for a memorial artwork. For the *Perlenhochzeit* exhibition, students researched objects, organised workshops, and made video interviews as part of co-producing an exhibition. In the *Revisiting Collections* workshop, participants looked at, touched and discussed objects with each other and contributed texts for collection records. For *Bring ein Ding,* participants brought an object themselves, wrote or told a story about the object, and a photograph of them was shared in an exhibition. In Fisksätra, for the *MAT* exhibition, participants wrote down recipes and stories about their food cultures. As part of the *Kakofoni* project, participants prepared food and performed. In the *Skapande verkstad* series at Fisksätra Museum, children painted, drew, animated, sketched, or wrote. In the *Intervention* project as part of the main exhibition at the MEK, participants wrote a short piece to bring together their own artwork and objects from the museum. In the *European Cultural Days* at the MEK, participants co-organised or took part in events. In the *Comicleben* exhibition, participants talked about their work in interviews, which were used for portraits on display. They did so too for the *Fast Fashio*n exhibition. In the *in-exhibition audience engagement* in the MEK, participants would write tips for others, vote in an exhibition, or share their opinion. In the *language workshops* at Fisksätra Museum, the participants conversed in Swedish, while making art. In the *daHEIM* exhibition, refugees co-created an exhibition in the MEK.

These projects can all be understood to include making and sharing practices. This chapter investigates these practices as they occurred in the different projects, in order to better understand what is typically asked of participants, and what defines these practices. The first section analyses making as a practice that centres around expressive or creative work, which is structured by the museum, and can be interpreted both as a process and as the creation of an end-product. In the second section, sharing is discussed. I identify two meanings of how and what participants share: sharing of one's inner world, by talking about opinions, feelings or past experiences, and sharing a (co-created) product with an audience. The section further analyses how these two types of sharing are meshed, when participants' personal memories or stories are shared with an external audience. The chapter ends with a recap of these practices and how they relate to practitioners' work as analysed previously and discussions in the literature.

As in the previous chapter, Fisksätra Museum's *Sommarjobb* project is analysed first. Then, other projects at Fisksätra and the MEK are used to elaborate on the dimensions of the respective practices. As I refer to many different projects and discuss them collectively, I keep background information relatively condensed. The reader might find it beneficial to keep close to hand the overview of projects as presented in Table 1 and Table 2 in Chapter 5. Importantly, for all projects or exhibitions from the MEK that I include in this project, I interviewed the curators or other staff who were involved. Because I explicitly name the titles of the respective projects, and information about these projects is publicly available, I refrain from directly referring to the interviews in order to retain the privacy of the curators.

Making

When bringing together the diverging activities described on the first page of this chapter, three general characteristics can be identified. First, they regard creative or expressive activities. Participants write, draw, discuss, embroider, film, paint, animate, cook, create events or displays, tell their story, or perform. Second, the activities are circumscribed by materials, structures, space and other elements of the projects in which they occur, that have been planned, organised or explained. This circumscription also includes a thematic delineation. Third, the practices can simultaneously be explained as a process and as the creation of an end-product. The *Sommarjobb* project, for example, is both about the process of learning how to film and about creating a film. These three dimensions of making as part of participation will be discussed next.

Creative and expressive practice

Through the practice of making, participants express, create, or do both. Creative practice here refers to activities of creating or making something (Ingold, 2013), as well as using creativity in a process of collaboration (Hallam and Ingold, 2021; Jaramillo-Vazquez, 2019). In the *Sommarjobb* project*,* facilitators designed the three-week programme around creating a film, through which participants could express themselves. Participants created several small films, in order to learn different framing methods, to practice filming dialogue, or storytelling.[247] They did so individually, but mostly in groups of two or three. As part of this learning process, they also created short stories, storyboards, and pitches.[248] They *made* things. While creating the final film in groups of four, they worked creatively and created: they had to decide on a topic and create a story, write a script or interview questions, film, act, record sound, and make creative decisions in the editing process, including cuts and background music.

These activities were not only creative, but also involved participants expressing themselves. The teenagers expressed their opinions and observations in writing exercises and feedback sessions, through different means. The writing prompts used on day two, such as *jag minns* (I remember), *bara jag kan berätta om* (only I can talk about), and *jag minns inte* (I don't remember), encouraged the participants to share stories about what they had done or what had happened to them.[249] Similarly, the short film exercises the participants did before making their final films prompted them to film something from their point of view, or about topics they were particularly interested in. External and museum facilitators stressed the importance of self-expression through films, even though they found it challenging to find the right way of explaining this to participants, as described in the previous chapter.

Creating and expressing are also central to the other projects summed up, but might revolve around different materials, themes, or topics. Some of them regard different art-making activities: embroidery, drawing, painting, and storytelling or writing. In the MEK projects, embroidery and storytelling activities were explicitly expressive in nature. Embroidery was used as a way to express memories of loved ones in *1000 Tücher Gegen das Vergessen,* and for the *Bring ein Ding* project participants wrote or told stories about home. At Fisksätra Museum, engaging in artistic practices would be a way to learn Swedish for those participating in the *language cafés*, or a fun new activity to try in the case of children's workshops. Other activities were creative in nature

[247] FM Fieldnotes 15 June 2021; 17 June 2021
[248] FM Fieldnotes 14 June 2021; 16 June 2021; 18 June 2021
[249] FM Fieldnotes 15 June 2021

but would not necessarily be classified as art-making. In the *Bring ein Ding* project, participants were asked to choose and bring an object. This can be understood as a type of curatorial act. Similarly, students were creatively engaged when they learned how to curate an exhibition as part of the *Perlenhochzeit* project. I also understand the organisational collaborations for the Cultural Days in the MEK as such a creative act: participants created events together with the curator. Finally, Fisksätra Museum approached cooking and writing up recipes as a creative expression as well, which is understood as one of the benefits of cooking in general (Mosko and Delach, 2021).

A few of the summed-up projects centralise a practice that is first and foremost expressive, with creativity as a secondary focus, meaning that participants' expressions were used in creative outputs. Two exhibitions at the MEK that were based on interviews worked like that, *Fast Fashion* and *Comicleben*. Participants were interviewed, and expressed their views on their respective work or interests. The curators then created profiles of these respective interviewees and included these, prominently, in their exhibitions. Another such creative contribution through expression can be found in one of these examples, the *Fast Fashion* exhibition. There, visitors were also enticed to participate by expressing their opinions and advice through interactive installations in the exhibition space, thereby contributing to and leaving their mark on the exhibition. Similarly, in the *Revisiting Collections* workshop, participants expressed their views on certain objects to be contributed to the collection records. The practices in which the participants themselves engaged in did not revolve around art-making, but required creative thinking and employed creative prompting. They were furthermore contributory to the creative act of exhibition making, what Simon (2010) calls contribution.

The fact that participatory practice in museums includes creative and expressive activities can be understood as an extension of 'museographic work' according to Anwar Tlili, which is constituted by 'a unique form of creativity' (Tlili, 2016, p. 1116). Museums often engage people creatively as their focus on art, history or culture ties to practices of making: the creative practices of making artworks or making artefacts. It is thus unsurprising that creative practice is present as a mode of engagement in participatory projects.

No endless possibilities

The second characteristic of the making practices is that they are circumscribed. The previous two chapters discussed practices that contribute to this circumscription, through planning, organising, and explaining. Museum staff give directions on how the making will happen, and engage

different materials and contexts that act as boundaries for the practices of participants. In addition to material and time restrictions, the practices were bounded by the respective projects' themes. In the following, the most impactful boundaries to making practices are discussed.

In the *Sommarjobb* project, an important characterisation came from the division of the goal into smaller steps. The project was shaped as a series of smaller workshops with different exercises.[250] Learning how to make a film was broken up into smaller steps which guided the participants through a particular order of doing things and participants were divided into two groups that were each supposed to produce a film. A second delineating element was the equipment available for film production. Each group had access to a digital camera and external microphone with a boom. This required two people in the group to film and record sound, in the case of filming dialogues, and would leave the other person(s) to be in front of the camera. Similarly, using iMovie as accessible editing software meant participants could use it easily, while the standardised editing options simultaneously impacted what the end-product could look like. It was necessary to use these materials that were easy to learn or use because of a third boundary to the making practice: the timeframe and schedule of the workshops. The *Sommarjobb* project ran for three weeks of four or five days, each six to seven hours long. Within this schedule, the participants had to learn how to film and edit, write a script, learn about storylines and democracy, and make an actual film. It was a far from straightforward process for the participants, as they – as well as the facilitators – expressed feelings of stress about finishing by the end of the three weeks.[251] A fourth factor that impacted the outcomes was the situational context of the workshop, meaning the location, relative mobility of participants, resources available and staff's connections. The two groups mostly filmed their shots in the neighbourhood around the museum, although one group also filmed a scene in the local mall, a short train ride away, and the other filmed an interview in central Stockholm.[252] Interviewees were contacted with the help of Joanna.

Presented like this, the potentially daunting task of making a film actually ends up being delineated and the possibilities become less endless. Still, there were moments that participants wanted more instruction or restriction. Chapter 8 included descriptions of participants in the *Sommarjobb* project looking for further guidance in relation to the most explicit restrictive factor of this project: the theme. Not just any film was to be made; it had to be a film about democracy. The facilitators introduced 'democracy' as a concept with both political and personal implications, which caused some discussion and confusion amongst the participants about what they were supposed to do.

[250] FM Fieldnotes 10 June 2021; FM Planning document *Sommarjobb* project 2021
[251] FM Fieldnotes 24 June 2021; 30 June 2021; 1 July 2021; 2 July 2021
[252] FM Fieldnotes 24 June 2021; 30 June 2021

These discussions included an explicit plea from the participants for more specific guidelines about what their film could be about.[253] The staff were initially hesitant to provide a list of potential topics.[254] Eventually, Joanna initiated a short meeting in which she tried to explain how filming what participants cared about was actually an expression of democracy.[255] This resulted in a list of a few ideas that came from the participants themselves. Still, in their evaluation, participants expressed both a lack of guidance on the theme, as well as a wish for it to be more open.[256]

Similar boundaries to the *Sommarjobb* project can be found in the other making practices discussed in this chapter. These include circumscriptions set by material: those projects that included curatorial activities would have participants make or express in relation to a specific group of objects, available spaces and the museum's resources; and art-making was also developed alongside the available artistic materials. Similarly, in the projects where participants respond to objects or stories, practices can be guided by the questions posed. Again, however, thematic delineation can be especially understood as an important factor in almost all making practices.

Themes of projects both impacted what was made, as well as who made it. Participants in *1000 Tücher Gegen das Vergessen* lost family members and people close to them because of war. They embroidered the names of those people on handkerchiefs, and these handkerchiefs were combined into a memorial for these events and exhibited in the MEK, as well as other places. Their making practice was thematically determined; the act of embroidering names of lost family members, as well as contributing to a memorial, had to do with the topic of war. Two other MEK projects, *Bring ein Ding* and *Revisiting Collections*, similarly tied the personal stories of participants to a theme that was (supposed to be) explored in an exhibition. The theme of the *Perlenhochzeit* exhibition was reflected in the particular objects that were chosen for the participants to respond to in the *Revisiting Collections* workshop. The participants in *Bring ein Ding* brought objects and stories 'that [mean] a lot to them' and 'originate from a different culture' or 'associated with a culture that is different from the current environment of the object's owner' (Janus Pannonius Múzeum and Koordinierung Ostmittel- und Südosteuropa am Museum Europäischer Kulturen, 2008). This was in response to a photographic exhibition about 'factors that shape the personal identity of each individual'(ibid.).

From a different order, but similarly delineated by theme, was the participation in the *MAT* exhibition at Fisksätra Museum. A group of women met regularly to talk about food, and eventually cooked, wrote down, or

[253] FM Fieldnotes 22 June 2021, 23 June 2021
[254] FM Fieldnotes 22 June 2021
[255] FM Fieldnotes 17 June 2021
[256] FM Evaluation videos: participant 3 and 5

presented a recipe they were familiar with because of their identity. These were eventually included in an exhibition, which centred on food cultures and the diversity of participants' cultural backgrounds. Similarly, the identity of the women involved in the *intervention* project at the MEK was also central to the theme. Starting as an idea from the Italian women themselves to present their art in the museum, the intervention ended up being about their experiences of migration to Germany, in response to the permanent exhibition called Cultural Contacts, dealing with immigration in Europe (Museum Europäischer Kulturen, 2016c). Furthermore, the MEK's *European Cultural Days* revolve around presenting one specific country, region or community which functions as a theme for the events that are created in collaboration with people with ties to the location or group.

In addition, in several of the projects at both museums, the themes also inform who is invited or considered as a participant, and who might be motivated to join as participant. Thus, themes do not only tend to determine what is made, created or expressed, but also who does that. In the case of *Revisiting Collections*, participants were invited because of their personal relationship to the theme. For *Bring ein Ding,* some participants were invited but there was also an open invitation. By asking them to bring an object that '[originated] from a different culture' or was 'associated with a culture that is different from the current environment of the object's owner,' however, the action was explicitly geared to people who had a relationship to culture other than German, such as immigrants (Janus Pannonius Múzeum and Koordinierung Ostmittel- und Südosteuropa am Museum Europäischer Kulturen, 2008). A similar curation of participants was also present in the two exhibitions for which people were interviewed, *Fast Fashion* and *Comicleben*. Both curators explained to me that they looked for specific people to represent certain elements of the exhibition's theme. The curator of *Fast Fashion* specifically reached out to clothing producers or fashion designers, in order to be able to represent the perspective from that particular profession in the fashion industry. Furthermore, both museums focused on stories of migration and have hosted immigrant participants. The MEK's exhibition about stories from refugees, *daHEIM,* is another example of participants being invited because of their particular experience. Similarly, in the *language cafés* at Fisksätra Museum, participants learned Swedish. Some of these meetings would be thematic, like the 2020 series organised by artists which featured workshops around the 'sense of being 'here and elsewhere', both referring to experiences of the Covid lockdown and of immigration, which were finally collected in a book (Fiskis Collective, 2020). At once, themes can motivate participants to join. Simultaneously, themes can limit participation from other groups, as well as introduce a reliance of a museum on specific people to participate. This latter difficulty is further explicated in the discussion about productive inner-world sharing, later in this chapter.

One of the previously mentioned projects where the making practice is not connected or determined by a theme is the *Skapande verkstad*. Children were welcome to make art, using different materials, in the museum. Of course, these making practices were still shaped by different boundaries, most clearly by the materials available and provided by the museum, but there was not one explicit theme connected to all the workshops offered per series.

Making a good film or making a *good film*

The third characteristic of the making practice is that its relevance can be simultaneously derived from the process and the end-product that is created. This section firstly describes instances that come up when these views on the purpose of the making practice are cause for disagreement and how projects can be developed alongside one of these particular goals. Subsequently, I will highlight instances where the making process and end-product have been understood as being congruent and consisting of each other in the project.

In my fieldnotes, I described a moment in which Cristina and Joanna approach the *Sommarjobb* project's making practice from these two different perspectives:

> *It is two days before the end of the project. It has been an extraordinarily warm two-and-a-half weeks. The summer heat and the challenging task of editing film material meant that the group of teenagers were ready to leave 15 minutes before the scheduled end, after an energetic but chaotic afternoon. They have just left, leaving Cristina, Joanna and me slightly startled in the museum. Cristina sits behind her computer, still editing one of the groups' films. The goal is to showcase it the day after tomorrow. Something went wrong with the sound recording and Cristina feels it is partly her fault so she wants to help fix it. Joanna tells Cristina: 'don't do it, they will do it themselves'. At a certain point, Cristina puts her head down, and sighs: 'I just want it to be really good – last year we didn't have high expectations, and now I had super high expectations but I'm afraid it's not going to be so good.' Joanna responds: 'But now we can compare it, because last year it wasn't ideal with everyone making individual films and now we can see there are also difficulties with group work.'*[257]

Is making a film in the *Sommarjobb* project about creating a finished end-product or being part of a participatory, social, or learning process through which something is made? In the excerpt above, Cristina edits one film made by the teenagers so that it can be shown in two days. In doing so, she approaches the participatory setting in which this interaction takes place as one that centres on an end-product: a film that is finished and of a certain quality. She is 'afraid it is not going to be so good,' especially if she does not

[257] FM Fieldnotes 30 June 2021

step in.[258] Joanna brings in another point of view, arguing that the participants should edit the file themselves. She emphasises the learning and participatory process: rather than finishing a film, the project is about the process of learning *how* to make a film and being in charge of making decisions about the film. This is more important than the final product. If it turns out not to be great, that is fine for Joanna, as she explained later.[259]

Although they were working on the same project, Joanna and Cristina displayed different interpretations of the purpose of participation. This particular example shows a moment where such a discrepancy would lead to different action: Cristina wanted to edit films to finish them, Joanna wanted her to stop so that the participants could do it themselves. However, although they thought about two different ways of getting there, they were motivated by the same underlying goal: that the participants benefit from this experience by making something they were proud of.[260] As Cristina said at the start of the project, she hoped they would make something they would be '*nöjd'* (satisfied) with.[261]

For the participants in the *Sommarjobb* project, processes appeared most important.[262] All the participants who contributed to the evaluative conversations with the museum stressed (different) processes when asked 'what was the best or most fun?' All the participants included either 'filming' or 'interviewing' in their answer, thereby highlighting parts of the learning process and the chance to do or make something themselves. Three out of six also referred to meeting new people.[263] The same amount included something about trying 'new things'.[264] Only one of the six teenagers interviewed added that 'it was cool to see the result of what you had done,' thereby putting an emphasis on the end-product.[265] Importantly, their descriptions of the most difficult or boring part of the project referred to the learning and filming process as well: editing, listening to presentations or doing short assignments.[266] Furthermore, in response to questions about group work and dynamics, most participants expressed positive feedback. Working with others was '*roligt'* (fun),[267] 'cool',[268] or 'nice,'[269] because 'you could help each other'[270] and 'the people were nice.'[271] Two of the participants were, however,

[258] Ibid.
[259] FM Fieldnotes 1 July 2021
[260] FM Fieldnotes 15 June 2021; Fieldnotes 1 July 2021
[261] FM Fieldnotes 15 June 2021
[262] FM Evaluation videos
[263] FM Evaluation videos: Participants 1, 2, 3
[264] FM Evaluation videos: Participants 1, 2, 5
[265] FM Evaluation videos: Participant 6
[266] FM Evaluation videos: Participants 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
[267] FM Evaluation videos: Participant 2
[268] FM Evaluation videos: Participants 4 and 5
[269] FM Evaluation videos: Participant 1
[270] FM Evaluation videos: Participant 4
[271] FM Evaluation videos: Participant 1

ambivalent about the collaboration.[272] It suggests that the social and collaborative processes and the creative process of making a film were more important to the participants than having produced a film in itself. This is further stressed by the fact that only one of the participants invited guests to the showcase of their films, on the final day of the project. From the evaluation it also becomes clear that half of the participants felt limited because of the theme of the project, suggesting that they might have been more interested in the end-product if the topic had been different.[273]

So, in the *Sommarjobb* project, participants and facilitators differently prioritised the end-product and processes as part of making a film, resulting in different goals present alongside each other. At the same time, the moment described between Joanna and Cristina suggests that the practitioner's individual interpretation of what is important about making through participation can impact their work and role in a participatory project. Similarly, the participants' interpretation of the making practice, and whether they prioritised the different processes they were part of or the production of an end-product, could impact their focus and interest in the participatory project.

This tension between, or duality of the making practice as both process and end-product in participatory projects, as seen in the *Sommarjobb* project, could also be noticed in the MEK. In some projects, however, the MEK curators clearly prioritised making (and finishing) end-products. The curator of the *intervention* project explained how early on in their collaboration, the feasibility of the creation of an end-product was the main impetus for deciding on an intervention in the permanent exhibition at the MEK, as part of the *intervention* project. The curator explained that originally, the participating group proposed creating a full exhibition, but the curator steered the project to be an intervention in the main exhibition instead, because it would be more feasible at short notice. This end-product focus introduced a variety of deadlines for the participants and practitioners to follow strictly, with the goal of finishing the intervention in time. The deadlines were considered beneficial and put in place to safeguard the quality of the end-product. At the same time, they made the collaboration process more stressful and difficult, according to the curator. A participatory process through which decisions would be reached collaboratively did not seem to guide this decision, rather it was based on concern about finishing a final product. Similarly, as previously pointed out, the interviewees involved in the *Fast Fashion* and *Comicleben* exhibitions were explicitly chosen to make sure a variety of perspectives were included in the exhibition. The creation of the exhibition itself was completely in the hands of the curatorial staff and their colleagues. So, the making practice that the participants were involved in was put into the direct function of the end-

[272] FM Evaluation videos: Participants 3 and 6
[273] FM Evaluation videos: Participants 3, 4, 5

product, the final exhibition, and a collaborative making or participatory process was not the main goal. For the *European Cultural Days* too, museum staff sought out specific collaboration partners – which the curator described as participants – that fit the overall theme of the exhibition and series of events. The curator described her work as providing a framework for these collaborations that ensured that all the different events and programmes would be finished in time. Again, the goal was to deliver a specific end-product that had been collaboratively created, not to achieve a participatory process of collaborative making.

Still, looking closely at two other projects at the MEK, it appears that, like in the *Sommarjobb* project, here too the making practice can be approached as both a process and a product. In both the *Perlenhochzeit* exhibition and the *Revisiting Collections* workshop, the tension between process and product impacted the understanding of whether the project has achieved its goal. The *Perlenhochzeit* project aimed to develop an exhibition in collaboration with Master's students. The exhibition as originally planned by the MEK was never realised, but the participants still took part in a process of learning how to make an exhibition. Throughout this process, they made smaller products and contributions originally thought to be part of the exhibition: they completed research about objects, organised a workshop, made interviews and videos, and created an educational card game.[274] Their assignments were exhibited in a student exhibition on campus, but both the curatorial assistant and students expressed feeling disappointed that the exhibition was never realised as planned.[275] With this particular project, participants worked towards an exhibition in a process of making elements for it, but felt like the goal of the project was never really reached because the end-product was not realised as planned. Similarly, the *Revisiting Collections* workshop's making practice could be approached from a process or end-product focus, and whichever perspective is taken would change the understanding of whether the project's goal was reached. Participants were invited to answer questions and discuss objects provided by the museum, with each other as well as with the student facilitators and, finally, with the curator.[276] These discussions, as well as thinking about and writing up memories and stories about objects, can be understood to be the making practice and to be a social, creative process. The end goal was that this information and perspectives about the objects would be collected as written answers and recorded discussions and included in the museum's collections records, making the updated records a type of end-product for this project.[277] In the preparation of this workshop, the organisers and facilitators especially discussed and prepared the process of the workshop.

[274] MEK Fieldnotes 18 November 2019; 30 January 2020; 25 November 2019
[275] MEK Fieldnotes 30 January 2020; MEK Interview C7
[276] MEK Fieldnotes 25 November 2019
[277] MEK RC Workshop Excel; MEK RC Workshop Scans M15

They prepared how they would engage the participants during the workshop, how many and which questions they would ask the participants to answer, and how the schedule would look.[278] While the student facilitators discussed the processes of the workshop at length, there remained a lack of clarity about how the recorded material from this workshop would be integrated into the MEK's system and who would do that, up until after the workshop was finished.[279] This could have contributed to the fact that the created material was never added to the respective collection records of the objects discussed. So, the process in which participants were involved had been completed: the workshop was held and participants created material about the museum's objects. At the same time, their material was never integrated into the original output of the workshop: an updated collection record.

So far, the embedded duality of process and end-product within the making practice has been presented as a tension that can cause different views on whether or not a project was successful or where practitioners or participants preference one element over the other. In some projects, however, process and end-product appeared side-by-side and were considered to complement each other, evidenced in the importance given to the process in the final presentation or end-product. This was the case for the *1000 Tücher Gegen das Vergessen*, *daHEIM*, and *Bring ein Ding* projects and the *Fast Fashion* audience participation at the MEK, as well as in the *MAT* exhibition at Fisksätra Museum. Talking in retrospect, the curator who worked on the *1000 Tücher Gegen das Vergessen* project viewed the process and end-product as aligning. On the one hand, the participants were engaged in a process of remembering their family members who fell victim to war, through the action of embroidery; on the other, they contributed to an artwork of combined handkerchiefs which would be used as a memorial. She viewed the materialised memorial they ended up with as intertwined with the women's actions and thoughts:

> [I]t is something that is alive […] I think that is what it is all about. That is, these many, many thoughts that you can't see in this cloth. They are in there. That is, the process itself, the overcoming: "until I have finally taken my stitch, until I have finally embroidered my husband's name, until I have finally…" right?[280]

The curator continued to call it part of the developmental process of remembering, that the women shared and finished their handkerchief and

[278] MEK Fieldnotes 25 November 2019, MEK Interview C5; MEK Interview C7
[279] MEK Interview C7
[280] Translated from German, original: 'es ist etwas, was lebt […] Ich glaub darum geht's. Das heißt, diese vielen, vielen Gedanken die man in diesem Taschentuch gar nicht sehen kann. Die sind da genau so drin. Das heißt, der Prozess selbst, die Überwindung: "bis ich endlich den Stich mache hat, bis ich endlich den Namen meines Mannes gestickt hab, bis ich endlich…", he?'

decided 'I do not need this anymore'. Ending with something '*Vorzeigbares'* (presentable), however, was also important in fostering a sense of '*Stolz'* (pride). With this way of talking about the project, she completely enmeshed the making practice as process and as end-product. For her, the project was about the process of making a memorial, as well as being about the actual production of this memorial.

Furthermore, in the other three MEK projects, as well as the *MAT* exhibition in Fisksätra, the processes were presented in or as part of the end-product. In the exhibitions, participatory processes were highlighted to signal that something had been co-created. For the *daHEIM* exhibition, the museum's website, online version of the exhibition and catalogue all explicitly and prominently mention the participatory process through which the exhibition was developed (Museum Europäischer Kulturen, 2016a, 2016b; Tietmeyer et al., 2016). On the museum's webpage for the exhibition one can read the opening line: '[o]n 4 March 2016, people took over exhibition spaces at the museum, which they designed in a workshop-like process until the opening of the presentation on 21 July 2016' (Museum Europäischer Kulturen, 2016b).[281] Phrased like that, the process through which it was created is used to give meaning to the exhibition. The process of participation and the identity of the participants were also prominently featured in the *MAT* exhibition in Fisksätra. The poster featured the subtitle of the exhibition 'Women in Fisksätra about food, memory and place,' the exhibition's introduction panel included a picture of the group of participants, and the recipes and stories were all signed by the person who contributed them.[282] Slightly different were the cases of audience participation in exhibition spaces, but here the process was also part of the end-product. In *Bring ein Ding* and the *Fast Fashion* audience participation, the process through with participants were involved was literally on display inside an exhibition. As part of *Bring ein Ding*, a photographer took photos of people with their objects in the exhibition itself, and in *Fast Fashion* visitors would see others vote on statements or write in response to the displays. In both cases, material remnants were also kept in the exhibition spaces. Visitors could read each other's advice and see what they had voted for in *Fast Fashion*, and visitors would flip through the folders of photographs and stories left behind in *Bring ein Ding*. In this way, the characteristic of the making practice as embedded process and end-product came out as the processes were shared with audiences directly or through the material outcomes, which became completely integrated in the end-product as well.

[281] Translated from German, original: 'Am 4. März 2016 übernahmen Menschen Ausstellungsräume des Museums, die sie bis zur Eröffnung der Präsentation am 21. Juli 2016 in einem werkstattartigen Prozess gestalteten.'
[282] FM Photos and Poster MAT exhibition; FM Fieldnotes 31 May 2019

Finally, returning to the *Sommarjobb* project, when the process of making is central, material that comes out of the process might take on a different meaning and not be the 'end-product'. Participants of course also create material as part of learning processes, as was the case in exercises and group discussions in the *Sommarjobb* project. Together, led by Cristina and Joanna and the various guest facilitators, the group reviewed each other's short videos, looking at what could be improved and what looked good.[283] On the first day of the workshop, Joanna prepared the group for these sensitive moments by stating 'this is, one could say, a '*snälla plats*' (kind place).'[284] She explained to me that she meant to suggest that the whole project should be a 'safe space', as they would look at videos the others made, which also showed participants on film. She told the group that the videos would not leave the room, and that they should respect each other and not laugh at the stuff they make, because it is all part of the learning process. Indeed, for some participants the moment of feedback was cause for uncomfortable feelings and nervousness. This could be seen in the moments after the exercises when Cristina would ask them if they were ready to share their work with the group and some would respond by exclaiming 'no please, not at all!', or 'no, we are not done yet!' hoping to have more time to edit their videos.[285] Or when one participant asked for her film to be stopped while it was playing for everyone in the room, because something went wrong with the audio.[286] Overall, the feedback sessions were largely led by the facilitators, and the participants seemed to find it difficult to give comments to the other groups. Still, positive feedback was simply provided by a round of applause for every video shared. In this case, the making practice was embedded in a learning process, creating material that was used to further learn how to make a film.

To recapitulate, participants take part in practices of making. I pointed out how this is often highlighted as the main element of a participatory project. Investigating such practices in the participatory projects in the two museums central to this study brings up three characteristics of making in participation. Firstly, making engages participants in creative and expressive activities. Some of these are straightforward artistic practices, but participants also engage in curatorial activities, or provide expressive contributions to an exhibition, or event. Second, the making practices are circumscribed. Practitioners, material, situational and institutional contexts act as boundaries to how making will take place. Importantly, project themes guide what is made, how things are made, but also who is invited to make something through a participatory project. Finally, I discussed the duality of process and end-product encapsulated within the making practices – meaning, one can

[283] FM Fieldnotes 16 June 2021; 17 June 2021; 18 June 2021
[284] FM Fieldnotes 14 June 2021
[285] FM Fieldnotes 18 June 2021; 21 June 2021
[286] FM Fieldnotes 18 June 2021

both emphasise the process of making something and *what* is made, as the purpose of a participatory project. This comes out in multiple ways. First, project facilitators and participants might, individually, have different ideas of whether the process or the end-product of the making practice is important. This can for example motivate certain decisions in their facilitative role. Second, either one of the elements can be prioritised during a project and inhibit the other. I gave examples of the MEK curators prioritising the end-product with the result that the collaborative process of making events or exhibitions was inhibited. Furthermore, I showed how projects might be reviewed from either a process or end-product viewpoint, which would change the understanding of whether the project was successful. At the same time, some projects were presented or discussed in a way that the making process was elevated within the end-product. Finally, I gave an example of how produced material can take up an important role in the learning process encapsulated within a making practice. Next, the projects described in this section will be reviewed in order to analyse the second practice of participants 'doing' participation: the practice of sharing.

Sharing

Participants share when they take part in the museum projects analysed in this study. First, people share personal experiences, stories, memories, and/or feelings. This type of sharing can be called inner-world sharing to encompass the broad spectrum of individual experiences, feelings or opinions participants share as part of the participatory process. A second version of sharing regards contributing to a collection, exhibition or event with a collaboratively or individually created product as part of the participatory project that is then shared with a wider audience. This will be referred to as productive sharing, where the importance lies on sharing something that has been produced. In the following sections I first expand on these two types of sharing as they occurred in the *Sommarjobb* project. Then, I will consider how these types overlap in a productive type of inner-world sharing, found in several projects discussed in this study. In these projects the two sharing practices overlap, when personal stories rather than a created object or material are collected or presented.

Inner-world sharing

During the three weeks at Fisksätra Museum, the participants in the *Sommarjobb* project shared experiences, stories, memories and feelings with each other and the facilitators. They shared parts of their inner world, in daily exercises and guest workshops. The facilitators organised two recurring moments for the participants to share their feelings and interests with each

other throughout the course of the project. Participants also shared their opinions as part of workshops.

First, in preparing for the *Sommarjobb* project, Cristina and Joana had agreed to start every day in the same way: by going around the room to ask '*hur mår du och varför*' (how are you feeling and why), hoping that adding the prompt to explain why they feel a certain way would encourage participants to engage in a more elaborate sharing of feelings and experiences.[287] The teenagers typically referred to feeling 'tired, but good'.[288] Sometimes, the question changed to the more specific 'what did you do this weekend' and 'how do you see the work ahead of you', later in the project.[289] Although intended to be a daily practice, the question round did not always take place, either because it was forgotten or a guest came with their own workshop plan. Cristina, Joanna and I would join in the circle and answer the questions too. Sharing how we were feeling at that particular moment allowed for a simple check-in for the group, even if the answers were sometimes a bit short or repetitive.

Another recurring moment during which participants shared something of themselves was the so-called 'show and tell' session. This entailed one person picking a short clip or video to show to the whole group and explaining why they liked it. Although initially the participants were a bit hesitant to sign up, once it started participants were excited to share something of themselves.[290] One person shared a video from their favourite TV show, and another participant chose a game of clue in the form of a video and had the whole group playing along. More serious topics also came up, for example when one of the participants decided to share a video which discussed feelings of depression and loneliness. In all cases, the participants decided how much they wanted to share of themselves with the group: some kept it light-hearted and others shared more intimate stories.

Third, in addition to sharing their feelings or showing their preferences, participants also shared their views and opinions while learning about democracy. The democracy workshop organised by a librarian required participants to share their views and standpoints on certain topics, like the relevance of voting or the use of mobile phones.[291] Joanna also tried to prompt participants to think about democracy differently by repeating a question posed by a workshop facilitator the day before, asking: 'what do you care about?'[292] The participants shared answers on paper, and Joanna read them out loud, resulting in a slightly anonymised peak inside the minds of the others in the group; they cared about school, the gym, friends, or money.

[287] FM Fieldnotes 10 June 2021
[288] FM Fieldnotes 14 June 2021; 15 June 2021; 16 June 2021; 17 June 2021
[289] FM Fieldnotes 21 June 2021; 30 June 2021
[290] FM Fieldnotes 14 June 2021
[291] FM Fieldnotes 16 June 2021
[292] FM Fieldnotes 17 June 2021

In these three inner-world sharing practices, the participants were not always very elaborately engaged, appearing at times to be hesitant to share in this way. This was noticeable in the tendency of the participants to copy each other's answers when asked 'how are you feeling and why' and their initial hesitancy about signing up for show and tell sessions. Throughout the project's three weeks, however, participants and practitioners did share past experiences, memories and opinions in less structured ways, as well. These were spontaneous moments leading to discussions about politics and racism or anecdotes, arising during or in-between exercises.

Productive sharing

Looking at the *Sommarjobb* project also reveals another type of sharing included in participation: sharing something made in a project with an audience. The participants in the *Sommarjobb* project created films which would be shown at the end of the three weeks to whomever they invited, and during the two-day film festival held at the end of the summer. Following how sharing their films was approached by the participants in this project reveals some difficulties related to sharing as part of participation. First, at the start of a project, agreeing to share what you make is an abstract goal, and participants might change their minds later. Second, and related, this is especially difficult when it comes to collaboratively co-created materials, where participants disagree amongst each other about whether something ought to be shared. Third, the question of quality discussed in relation to end-products of participatory projects is reiterated in this case. I will first present the two moments that the participants in the *Sommarjobb* project shared their films, after which I go on to discuss these three difficulties.

On the final day of the workshop series, a viewing party was organised for the last hour.[293] The participants could decide for themselves whether they wanted to invite anyone, and only one did. There was ice cream, cookies, crisps and soft drinks, and the tables in the workshop space were moved aside so that everyone could look directly at the screen. The two groups showed their films. The first group had done different interviews with a politician, a lawyer, journalist, and people on the street, about their jobs and the political crisis. The second group made three short videos with scenes about stereotypes and prejudices. All the videos were met with applause, but the fact that only one participant invited a member of their family suggests they were not completely comfortable about sharing the final product with others.

The second moment the videos were shared was two months later, during the film screenings organised for the whole neighbourhood. On Thursday and Friday that week, Joanna worked to create one file out of the different videos

[293] FM Fieldnotes 2 July 2021

to be shown before the feature film.[294] She combined two films about prejudices, the interview video and a few videos that they created as part of the exercises. She edited the interview video, adding effects that created more light-heartedness and brought together the different interviews. The plan was that this compilation video would be shown on Friday and Saturday as the opener for a family-friendly feature film screened directly after.

On Friday, children and families hung around Braxenpark, a park on the west side of the neighbourhood, eating popcorn or snacks brought from home.[295] One of the participants and the librarian in charge of the whole summer project attempted to introduce the film, but it was hard to get the attention of the audience. After a few attempts, Cristina just started the film without an introduction. Kids were running around high on sugar and the sound quality made it a bit difficult to hear, but the participants' films were displayed to more than a hundred viewers.

The crowd on Saturday was even larger, with a screening on the square in front of the museum, and a pre-programme with free food, face-painting and performances before the movie screening.[296] Right before the movie screening was due to start, a complication arose:

> *An hour before the screening, with the square full of people, I see Joanna and Cristina talking with one of the participants who worked on the interview video. She is asking Joanna to take out the interviews in which she is seen. She does not feel good about it being shown to everyone. After a brief discussion, Cristina and Joanna have to decide what to do. Joanna thinks it is too short notice and that it is best not to show the whole film. Cristina thinks it is possible to still change the video file and goes into the museum to edit the film. She manages quickly and the film is shown without the interviews this time. Later, she tells me that she was angry about it. She had checked beforehand that the teenagers were fine with the videos being screened, and they were, and now a participant asks half an hour before for the film to be changed. 'Joanna had been working for two days on this,' Cristina says, frustrated.*[297]

This situation lays bare a few difficulties that come out of the practices of sharing as part of participatory projects. First, it is hard to imagine in advance what 'sharing' actually looks like. In the case of the film workshops, at the point that participants were first told about the goal of the project, sharing the film on a big screen was completely abstract. Their film did not exist, nor did they have an idea what it would look like or how to make a film in the first place. It is possible that, even though they had seen their own films on the first screening occasion at the end of the workshop, the experience of seeing oneself on a big screen in front of a lot of people who might know you can be

[294] FM Fieldnotes 2 September 2021; 3 September 2021
[295] FM Fieldnotes 3 September 2021
[296] FM Fieldnotes 4 September 2021
[297] FM Fieldnotes 4 September 2021

daunting. As happened here, a change of heart once the goal had become concrete can occur.

Second, there are different accountabilities that the museum has when it comes to this project. The *Sommarjobb* project was connected to the film festival from the start, and the goal for the organisers of the project had been to also screen the films about democracy during the film festival in advance.[298] With external funding and the library as a partner in the whole project, it was expected by several people and organisations. This goal was also communicated to the participants. It had been used as a way to motivate the group, to make them excited about the project and to take their tasks seriously, and to finish their films as the ending of the workshop got closer. Both Joanna and Cristina worked under the impression that finishing a film and showing it to others was an important way to provide 'some sort of meaning to these three weeks,' as Joanna put it in conversation.[299] For the facilitators, thus, sharing the film was an important element in fulfilling the goal of the whole project.

This brings up a difficult question in regard to the decision Joanna and Cristina had to make, during the screening on the second day of the film festival. By following one participant's wishes to be taken out of the montage, they had to take out (parts of) a film created by three other people. This all happened at very short notice, and so the museum staff were not able to confer with the others about what they would like to do. Even if they had conferred, the question remains about whether they could have reached an agreement. It left the decision up to the facilitators, where they had to make a choice between whether every vote by the participants counted equally, or whether everyone had a right to veto the sharing of their image. In the end, they prioritised the latter.

Third, part of the practice of sharing is a consideration of the quality of what will be shared. This came up already in the discussion about process and end-product in the *Sommarjobb* project. Throughout the course of the project, Joanna and Cristina would bring up the quality of the films, showcasing conflicting standpoints. From the start, Cristina assumed they would have to take on a role in the editing stage of the film, drawing on her experience from the previous year. It resulted in her being concerned with the potential workload for her and Joanna if all the participants decided to create their own films and the museum would be left having to deal with editing several films.[300] As such, they decided to divide the group into two, so that there would only be two films to potentially be edited by the facilitators. Indeed, at the end of the workshop series, Cristina helped the two groups extensively with audio and editing, during lunch breaks and after they left for the day, even though

[298] FM Fieldnotes 10 June 2021
[299] FM Fieldnotes 1 July 2021
[300] FM Fieldnotes 10 June 2021

Joanna would urge her not to spend time on that.[301] Both of them wanted to collectively reach the goal of finishing and sharing a film, but they had different ideas about the importance of the quality of the respective films. Cristina thought it important for the films to be good, but Joanna tried to tone down both of their expectations after one of the participants appeared to have difficulty expressing themselves: 'if some have such difficulty writing just two sentences about their opinion, but they do [write something] in the end, we cannot say 'that's not good,' we have to be happy with that.'[302] Rather, Joanna tried to focus on 'the conversations and discussions in-between', instead of the final product.[303] When the films were eventually shared with a larger group during the film festival, however, Joanna did put more time into editing the films, apparently to share a better quality film.[304] So in the end, the quality of the shared film was prioritised over sharing a film that had been completely made (and edited) by the participants.

A productive approach to inner-world sharing

Looking at Fisksätra Museum's *Sommarjobb* project, the practice of sharing as part of participation comes in two forms, each with different goals and difficulties. The group of participants shared their own experiences, opinions and ideas within their group. Recurring practices of inner-world sharing made this a little bit easier as it created an environment where it was common to share. These recurring moments allowed participants to explore their ideas, express themselves, and socialise with the group. Some remained hesitant to do so, however. When looking at MEK projects, another purpose of inner-world sharing can be distinguished, showing that inner-world and productive sharing practices are also entangled with each other, and with the making practice discussed earlier. In the *Revisiting Collections* workshop, *1000 Tücher Gegen das Vergessen* and *Bring ein Ding*, participants shared their personal experiences and memories as an integral part of the product coming out of the making practice. The audience participation projects in the MEK can be interpreted similarly.

In three MEK projects, the museum asked participants to share their memories with an audience. During the *Revisiting Collections* workshops, participants shared their views, memories and opinions in relation to the objects shared.[305] They shared their ideas in two steps. First, participants expressed themselves individually through writing, responding to prompts provided by the student-facilitators. These answers would also be shared directly with the museum, as they kept the written documents. Then, the

[301] FM Fieldnotes 30 June 2021
[302] FM Fieldnotes 18 June 2021
[303] FM Fieldnotes 1 July 2021
[304] FM Fieldnotes 2 September 2021; 3 September 2021; 4 September 2021
[305] MEK Fieldnotes 25 November 2019

participants discussed their written answers within the whole group, with the student-facilitators, curatorial assistant, and curator present. The questions posed referred to personal past experiences with the objects displayed, such as 'what does the object remind you of', as seen in Figure 3.

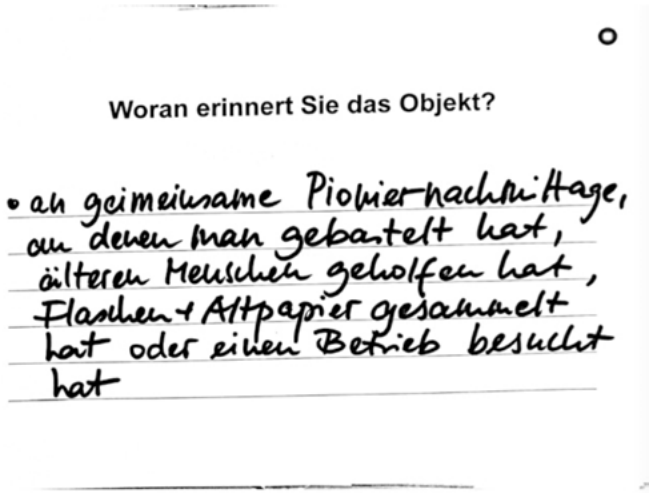

Figure 3. Scan of *Revisiting Collection* workshop answer. RC Participant MEK.[306]

1000 Tücher Gegen das Vergessen, where women embroidered names and figures on handkerchiefs, consisted of group sessions which the MEK curator described as therapeutic. The women, refugees from former Yugoslavia, would talk about their experiences from the past and their missing family members while they embroidered the cloth. Then, the piece they worked on was shared in an artwork used as a memorial, created by an artist. Again, the participants' inner world was shared with others. Similarly, *Bring ein Ding* also required participants to share personal memories. They were photographed with an object meaningful to them. As well as talking, writing or expressing their personal experience or memory, the participants also shared parts of themselves by sharing a personal object. The photos were kept in a book for other visitors to the exhibition to see and the objects were taken home by the participants. As briefly touched upon in the previous chapter, some people were not able to share their story in writing and thus would orate to someone who would write it down. As a result, visitors and other participants would stay to listen to each other's stories. The curator described how 'the museum was, sort of, the stage to activate these memories':

[306] Author's translation: 'What does the object remind you of?' 'Of collective 'pioneer afternoons' when one would do crafts, help older people, collect bottles and paper trash, or visit a factory'

> [It was] always one Sunday a month and people would wait until the photographer was there and everyone looked to see what the others had to tell. Because of that, there was an automatic dialogue. So, it was not just that everyone told their stories, but that people exchanged their memories. It was like a double effect.[307]

In these three projects, the stories participants shared were to be shared with an audience, in the museum: *Revisiting Collection* workshop participants' experiences were (supposed to be) collected to be included in the object records, the *1000 Tücher Gegen das Vergessen* participants embroidered the names of missing family members into an art piece, and the *Bring ein Ding* participants' photographs and stories were made available to museum visitors. It is noticeable that for two of these projects, participants were explicitly invited because of their experiences or identities in relation to the project's theme. As described previously, some project themes require or lead to inviting specific participants whose identity is particularly relevant to an exploration of that theme. In order to explore the theme, they *have* to engage in sharing personal memories or experiences, as it is their personal identity that covers the theme. Like the women in *1000 Tücher Gegen das Vergessen,* the participants in *Revisiting Collections* had a background through which they were personally familiar with the objects they interacted with. The participants' personal experiences, or in the case of the *Comicleben* and *Fast Fashion* exhibitions their professional lives, became the content of the respective exhibitions, collection or art project.

Similarly, in-exhibition audience engagement at the MEK within the *Fast Fashion* and permanent exhibition can also be interpreted as this productive approach to inner-world sharing. Here, anonymous audience members leave behind notes with their thoughts, opinions, memories or ideas, for others to see. The MEK had a pinboard in the permanent exhibition where visitors could leave behind postcards with their ideas in response to prompts about the meaning of Europe or *heimat* (home). During my fieldwork, the question had been changed to ask visitors about their wishes for the permanent exhibition and how they would like to see it improved. One of the curators expressed a view that it is important that people can contribute to the museum with their own stories and experiences, echoing Simon's (2010) stance of participation as a response to contemporary, participatory culture (Jenkins, 2009):

> I don't necessarily want to interact with people I don't know, but I love to read what other people wrote. […] I think a lot of people, like if you go through an exhibition, you will see that a lot of people like to be asked about their opinion

[307] Translated from German: 'Das heißt, immer ein Sonntag im Monat und man wartete bis der Fotograf dran war und jeder guckte was denn der andere zu erzählen hat. Dadurch kam automatisch ein Dialog. Das war also nicht jeder erzählt nur sein Stories, sondern man tauschte sich aus (aha) indem man erinnerte, es war so ein, so ein doppelter Effekt […] das Museum war quasi die Bühne um diese Erinnerung zu aktivieren.'

> or like to be asked something these days. It is no longer that people go to a museum and just want to be filled with new knowledge. They also want to have an opportunity to participate, or contribute to the knowledge.

Of course, the anonymity of this sharing practice also creates situations where things are shared that are really 'not useful,' as the curator explained while referring to teenagers taking the chance to leave behind notes about classmates. Calling this the 'productive approach' to inner-world sharing does not mean that the sharing activity is necessarily very productive to the museum, but that something based on or representing participants' inner world is shared with visitors.

Conclusion

This chapter centred on what participants (are asked to) do during participatory projects. I continued to review the *Sommarjobb* project and others in both museums, to propose two separate practices that signify participants' engagement. First, participants often *make* something as part of a participatory project. Second, participants *share*. I will briefly review what came up in the discussion of both these practices, and then highlight three significant points to be brought up in the following discussion chapter.

The practice of making was discussed as having three characteristics. Making looks different in each project discussed, but the similarities lie in its creative nature – referring both to using creativity and creating something; the fact that it regards practices that are delineated by the project's themes, material, and spatial boundaries; and that it can be both discussed and interpreted as a process or an end-product. The investigation of the second characteristic highlighted the significance of project themes in circumscribing both what is made as well as who is invited to make something as part of a participatory project. Furthermore, I analysed situations in the *Sommarjobb* project during which boundaries were discussed and set over the course of the project. The third characteristic of the making practice is the most intricate, and revealed a layered interpretation. All making in participation can be considered to be about both process and end-product, but in most projects just one of these is stressed by practitioners and participants. I shared a situation in the *Sommarjobb* project that suggests that practitioners might choose to act in a certain way, based on their personal prioritisation of either the process or the end-product of the making practice. This was also seen in the MEK examples in which curators prioritised the end-product and, as a result, strongly circumscribed the collaboration with participants. Furthermore, looking at the *Revisiting Collections* workshop and the *Perlenhochzeit* project, I suggested that sometimes the making process might be fulfilled when the end-product is never finished or made. Concluding whether or not a project

has failed then depends on one's perspective. On the other hand, some projects presented the end-product as completely intertwined with the process in their exhibition displays. Finally, I pointed out that throughout the process of making films in the *Sommarjobb* project, other materials were also produced and used as part of a learning process. So, making might involve multi-layered production of material, not all of which is an end-product.

In the second section of this chapter, when investigating the practice of sharing in the *Sommarjobb* project, I distinguished between two different types: inner-world sharing and productive sharing. The former includes the practices of sharing opinions, memories, feelings and ideas with other participants. In the *Sommarjobb* project this occurred structurally, in daily recurring facilitated moments, in specific workshops, as well as spontaneously, during and in-between meetings. Productive sharing was described as the practice of sharing work that had been created as part of the project, with an audience outside of the project participants. By closely examining a situation in the Fisksätra Museum project, the following complications of this latter type of sharing were discussed: at the start of a project, it is difficult to understand what sharing means or looks like, because it is an abstract goal; participants can create things collaboratively, and might have different ideas about what and how something should be shared; and participants and practitioners might have diverging ideas about the quality of the product to be shared. A third section was devoted to a type of sharing that can be best described as a mixture of the previous types: a productive approach to inner-world sharing. I discussed several projects at the MEK in which the stories, memories and experiences of participants were (in)directly used as the content of exhibitions, collection records or other outputs. Here, participants engage in inner-world sharing with an external audience.

The next two chapters are devoted to discussing the analysis presented in this and the three previous chapters. I will briefly introduce three discussion points coming out of the analysis of the making and sharing practices that will be elaborated upon in the final chapters. First, in the analysis of the making practice I proposed that it can be understood to encompass a duality of process and end-product. In the literature review in Chapter 2, I shared how processes of participation are discussed in the literature, mostly in regard to decision-making power in different participatory projects (Arnstein, 1969; Carpentier, 2011b; Lynch, 2011b). For authors like Carpentier (2011b), the level of power-sharing and decision-making is crucial to determine whether or not a project can be qualified as participation. For Lynch (2011b) it can make the difference between a process that leads to empowerment, or presents solely as 'empowerment-lite'. In this chapter, however, I focused on making and creative processes, rather than participatory or decision-making processes, per se. The focus on *making* rather than deciding likely left out some difficult situations in these projects. At the same time, the intricate breakdown of tensions between processes and end-product might point to places where

participatory processes can be enhanced. Furthermore, it elaborates on participation in museums as 'solely' being about decision-making processes, to include processes of socialising, learning and creating.

The second discussion point is related to the first and builds on Fanziska Mucha's investigation of 'socio-affective spaces for engagement' (2022, p. 235). Mucha elaborates Onciul's (2015) terminology to investigate the creative and collaborative processes in co-creative projects. In a 'socio-affective [space] for engagement', collaborative and creative processes happen through direct communication in social settings, where 'social and affective qualities [of engagement] […] need to be catered to' (Mucha, 2022, p. 238). I argue that the inner-world sharing described as taking place in the *Sommarjobb* project at Fisksätra Museum can be understood to contribute to such catering. Both facilitators in the Fisksätra Museum project emphasised the importance of building social relationships, and participants were happy to 'meet new people' through the project.[308] Introducing recurring inner-world sharing practices such as 'show and tell' and the check-in round can be understood as an affective practice performed by both participants and practitioners, which can contribute to socialisation as well as creative collaboration. At the same time, it is important to acknowledge the in-between moments where this sharing took place, gesturing to the relevance of breaks. Importantly, the participants needed time before they were comfortable to share their opinions, ideas and feelings in the group. This suggests that having a longer time together in a participatory project might contribute to developing such a 'socio-affective space for engagement' (Mucha, 2022). Furthermore, while these affective practices within the group might contribute to creating a positive environment that enhances participatory processes, participants sharing their inner world to become content in exhibitions, as seen in the MEK, introduces another point of discussion about the place of affective practice and emotion work in participatory projects (Munro, 2014; Smith et al., 2018).

Finally, to bring up the common thread between all the practices discussed in this study, this chapter can be understood to shine a different light on the practices discussed from the practitioners' point of view in the previous chapter. In Chapter 8, I discussed the practice of organising and concluded that it can be considered a continuation of the planning practices discussed before. There, I mentioned how practitioners continue planning while a project takes place, through the practice of organising. Now we can see that the result of such planning-in-practice can be that boundaries for participants' making practices embedded in the participatory project are discussed between participants and practitioners. Participants might ask for a revision of certain limitations, and thus practitioners have to (re)organise, or plan, part of the project. This introduces a broadening of the planning and organising practice

[308] FM Evaluation videos: Participant 1

to include an important role for participants and suggests that all the actors involved might have different wishes for how strict these boundaries are. Looking at the *Sommarjobb* project, the participants ended up extending what was possible in terms of *where* they were filming and arranged to be able to leave Fisksätra to film interviews or sketches. At the same time, participants asked for *stricter* guidelines when requesting a list of potential topics for their films. It suggests that boundaries are not just set and left, but there can be a continuous process of setting and refining boundaries to the making practice, throughout a project. In addition to the participants taking up a role as advocate for themselves in the practitioners' work of planning and organising, the practitioners should be understood, in turn, to have an active, ongoing role in the practices of making.

This concludes the last analysis chapter and the last 'zooming in' on practices proposed in this study (Nicolini 2012). Next, all practices – creating financial and social conditions, planning through negotiating, organising, explaining, reflecting, making and sharing – will be discussed as they stand in relation to each other and the literature.

10 Zooming out on practices

The previous four chapters described participation in the MEK and the Fisksätra Museum by way of 'zooming in' on practices (Nicolini, 2012). I discussed practices as they came up in three moments: creating possibilities for participation (Chapter 6), planning participation (Chapter 7) and doing participation (Chapter 8 and 9). In this chapter, I will investigate the relation between practices across these different moments, by way of taking Nicolini's second step of 'zooming out.' I will consider this study's analysis in light of discussions in the literature, in order to elaborate how museums 'do' participation. At the start of this thesis, I introduced the following questions to guide the research:

I. What practices do museum practitioners engage in when preparing for or carrying out participation in their museum?
II. What practices do participants engage in when being part of participatory projects in museums?
III. What organisational structures inform these practices and how?
IV. How are social goals connected to participation present in, pursued, or reached through these practices?

In this chapter, I further discuss the analysis along the four research questions. First, I summarise the practices presented in Chapters 6 to 8. Looking at how these practices relate and produce effect (Nicolini, 2012), I argue that they take place alongside and in extension of each other, beyond specific phases or professionals' work tasks. They can be understood to be a type of 'maintenance work' (Denis et al., 2016; Henke, 2019). In the second section, the two practices of making and sharing are discussed. Emotion work of practitioners and participants embedded in these practices is highlighted and problematised in relation to previous research by Morse (2014) and Munro (2021). In response to question three, findings are discussed in relation to practices through which practitioners navigate with and between different organisational structures. I argue that museums that want to enhance or introduce participation, would benefit from internal structures that support sharing of practice-based knowledge within the organisation in order to allow for responsible experimentation with participation. In addition, the discussion puts forward a broader application of 'radical transparency' in participation

(Marstine, 2011, p. 14). Finally, question four is discussed by reviewing two dualities through which goals, or promises, of participation came to the fore through the analysed practices.

Practices of practitioners

The first sub-research question asks *what practices do museum practitioners engage in when preparing for or carrying out participation in their museum?* From the outset, the analysis primarily focused on practices of museum practitioners. Chapters 6, 7 and 8 all presented how the museum staff in Fisksätra and Berlin *prepare for* or *carry out* participation in their museum. I described and investigated practices as they unfolded in three moments: creating possibilities for participation, planning projects and during projects.

Chapter 6 analysed how practitioners create possibilities for participation in their respective museum. The detailed analysis of Fisksätra Museum's processes of application for external funding suggests that creating financial resources involve managing information about potential funding opportunities and subsequently the writing of applications. In this case, being dependent on external funding, these practices develop through interaction with and in response to funding agencies and their calendars, calls for application, communication channels and deadlines. The reliance on multiple funders furthermore results in a multiplicity of engagement with such systems. As a result, staff deals with clusters of deadlines and experiences an uncertainty in their work in general. Furthermore, a second set of practices is developed in response to this uncertainty. This includes carefully choosing funding agency, framing applications in response to specific calls, and strategically collaborating on applications. Staff furthermore pivots from more standard orders of project planning in response to less favourable outcomes of funding application processes. In short, dependent on external funding, practitioners create financial conditions for participation through applying for funding. This involves the following practices: managing information about applications, managing the process of writing applications, writing applications, choosing which fund to write and framing the application, collaborating on applications, and pivoting or changing course. The first four can be understood to be rather typical, as practices which recurred frequently for the museum dependent on external funding. The latter two are more broadly describing practices observed in Fisksätra Museum, but cannot be considered standard. The museum does not always collaborate with other organisations on applications, nor do they always have to change the order of carrying out a project.

The second set of practices described in Chapter 6 revolved around establishing and maintaining social contacts, as observed in both museums. First, museum staff emphasised being present and meeting visitors. MEK curators deemed this important, but not standard in their everyday work. The

Fisksätra Museum staff makes their everyday, administrative and computer work visible to passers-by in order to stimulate potential interaction with both new and existing contacts. Second, the museum staff tries to maintain contact with existing networks through repeatedly working together and, what one of the MEK curators described as 'impuls geben': pointing out, creating and acting on opportunities within networks.[309] A third practice, based on the Fisksätra Museum's work, was to act as neighbours. The museum staff, even if not all of them live there, build projects centring issues important for Fisksätra, stay aware of local developments, and act on issues that touch both the organisation and its neighbours.

The following chapter presented practitioners' practices to plan participatory projects. Museum staff negotiates with their specific circumstances to make decisions for future action within participatory projects (Suchman, 2006, p. 70). Planning was analysed as negotiations with two sets of circumstances: museum structures and individual interpretations of participatory goals. While planning, practitioners negotiate the specific form and schedules of projects, with their organisation's structures, in particular museum calendars, division of labour, and individual work schedules. Following practice theory's understanding of practices forming in relation to and acting as structures (Nicolini, 2012, pp. 223-224), these negotiations are simultaneously shaping and being shaped by these museums' structures. In addition to the procedures embedded in these structures, staff also takes into account the structures' relative rigidity. In addition, the planning practice concerned museum staff asking critical questions about the purpose of participation, needs of participants and the museum's accommodations through which they negotiated their personal and the museum's interpretations of participatory goals. Practitioners' individual motivations and understandings of what was deemed important in this work, as shaped through their experience working with participation in their specific museum's context, guided their decision-making, as well as knowledge and assumptions about (potential) participants.

Chapter 8 was the third and final chapter that explicitly named practices of practitioners. There, I focused on the moment of interaction with participants. In this moment, practitioners explain, organise and reflect. Through explaining, practitioners create and provide framing of the interaction and diminish potential conflict. Depending on the project, staff explains rules from external funding organisations, limits of the museum and project, expectations of behaviour, use of material, project goals, and terms used. Organising includes both project management and facilitation of exercises. Staff keeps track of the project as a whole, their individual non-project tasks and the museum's ongoing work. Facilitation requires organising, preparing and managing material, presentations and workshops. Staff reflects on their work

[309] MEK Interview C4a

and processes in projects, by discussing uncertainties and ongoing questions. In the Fisksätra Museum, practitioners specifically focused on their relation to and with participants, and the participants' learning process.

Taken together, the investigation into practitioners' practices lead to two findings. First, *preparing for* and *realising* participation happens through practices that are also developed outside of practitioners' jobs and work tasks. Second, these practices can be understood together as maintenance work, drawing attention to the embodied, ongoing, relational, invisible, and improvisational qualities of these practices. These two findings will be discussed in relation to previously introduced literature and theory.

Practices developed outside of work tasks

Through Nicolini's (2012; 2009) approach to practice theory, practices were introduced as organised activities, that are connected and structure social phenomena, whilst being embodied, materially-bounded and -mediated and situated in specific contexts. Studying practices that contribute to participation in museums, as stated in this study's aim, then, meant actually to study practices that can be considered to be constitutive of participation in specific contexts. By focusing on practitioners, these practices largely take place in a work context. The analysis of practices, rather than work tasks (Byström and Hansen, 2005; Huvila, 2008b), revealed a discrepancy between practitioners' practices and their respective tasks and job.

This discrepancy is especially visible in those practices described in Chapter 6. To create social resources for participation, staff develops practices around their more direct tasks at hand. In Fisksätra Museum, practitioners apply for funding, whilst sitting in front of the window. Doing so, they add another purpose to their task of writing applications. Now, they also allow for potential interaction with visitors and passers-by. Similarly, acting as neighbours develops through a personal approach to their work. Staff attunes to what is happening in the neighbouring organisations and the neighbourhood as a whole and have recurring conversations inside and outside the museum space. Work tasks or meetings do not structure these practices, but they are developed throughout, with and around their job.

This finding suggests that external systems or organisational structures through which participation tends to be organised, do not sufficiently support what practitioners deem crucial for their work to be completed. This underlines what McCall and Gray (2014, p. 31) argued, when it comes to the 'effective implementation' of policy reflecting new-museological values. They concluded that it is up to the individual museum worker to negotiate policy, roles and functions to make these values work in the specific context, arguing that their motivation to do so is thus crucial. This point will be further built upon at the end of this chapter. Here, however, I want to stress that the discrepancy between practice and work task can lead to a lack of

organisational recognition and compensation of the work for participation. This problem has been previously identified by Morse (2021) and Munro (2014). This study elaborates on their work in two ways. First, by revealing the particularities of this problem in differently structured organisations. Second, by considering how this problem is similarly connected to work practices of participation different from facilitation.

Previous research has highlighted problems of undervalued or unsupported facilitation work in museums which have specific outreach departments responsible for community engagement. Morse (2021) suggested that the immaterial aspect of community engagement is less valued in output- and material-focused museum institutions. Similarly, Munro (2014) stressed emotion work as a significant element of community engagement, which remains illegible for the institution and thus results in a lack of recognition of facilitators' work. The MEK and Fisksätra Museum differently divide the work for participation, but neither have a specific outreach department working solely on participatory projects. For most of the MEK's projects discussed in this study, one and sometimes two curators were responsible from start to finish. They would bring together and coordinate people within and outside of the museum and SMB who were responsible for different elements of a project, such as exhibition design, communication and education. In Fisksätra Museum, Cristina and Amelie were often both engaged in each project, with either one taking the lead. The lead would have a variety of tasks within one project, which larger museums might have distributed over different departments, including for example facilitation, exhibition design or application writing. In the literature, outreach teams' feelings of lack of support seemed to come from differently aligning ideas about the value of community engagement embedded in the scattered, departmentalised institutions in which participation came to fall on one department only (Morse, 2021; Munro, 2014).

This study points at potential other causes. In Fisksätra Museum and MEK, the non-project work that contributed to participation, such as the practices described in Chapter 6, were sometimes overlooked or discounted as contributory by practitioners themselves, or recognised as relevant but interpreted as difficult or an 'extra' practice outside of their actual tasks. It was difficult for practitioners in the MEK to make this work legible in SPK's system of accounting for working hours. The practitioners also expressed already lacking time for their work tasks, and were at times hesitant to include participatory methods in their projects because of this sense of time constraint. Practitioners in Fisksätra Museum were at times systematically underpaid or not paid at all for this work. In Fisksätra, such a lack of stable financial reward was frustratingly accepted as part of the dependency on external funding.

The different organisation of the two museums central to this study, compared to Morse (2021) and Munro (2014), furthermore diversifies our understanding of the lack of recognition or support of practices of

participation. It suggests that not only facilitation but also practices that sustain resources for participation in museums can be undervalued within museum organisations. Furthermore, the findings elaborate on Morse's (2021) understanding of this lack of support to appear through different uses of the participation (or community engagement) among different departments in the museum central to her research. The findings of this study suggest that lack of support might also come up when practitioners themselves do not recognise certain practices as contributory or crucial for participation.

It is paramount to stress and address this lack of support of work for participation as a significant problem. A recent publication about salaries and museum work places this problem within a larger problem in the museum sector (Salerno, Gold and Durocher, 2019). Other positions and roles are also undervalued and underpaid (Turner, 2019), leading to higher turnover in North American museums (Friedman, 2019) and to less diverse staff in the UK (Britten and Grist, 2019). Museum organisations and researchers alike, should pay attention to where practices that contribute to participation mismatch with paid and organisationally recognised labour.

Maintenance work of participation

Doing participation, as the main research question inquires after, can be understood to include practitioners' maintenance work (Denis et al., 2016). Chapter 3 introduced maintenance work as 'a practice for negotiating order in contexts where heterogenous elements come together to create complex social and technical systems' (Henke, 2019, p. 257), that can be distinguished through five qualities: embodied, relational, ongoing, improvisational, and invisible. Practices of practitioners can be understood as maintenance work, as they '[negotiate] order' between materials, resources, external and internal systems, and people to do participation (Henke, 2019, p. 257). I argue that an understanding of practitioners' practices as maintenance work redirects our attention to the embodied, ongoing, relational, improvisational and invisible practices that make up participation. This redirection provides new avenues for critical perspectives on participation in museums, as a way to leave the 'counter-hegemonic cycle' of criticising participatory projects and arguing for better or different participation in practice (Graham, 2012).

'To be there', was one of the ways in which staff at both museums attempted to create and foster relationships. In Chapter 6, staff at the MEK refers to being present at events, maintaining networks, and wanting more often to see their own exhibitions to create opportunities to interact with audiences. For Cristina and Amelie in Fisksätra Museum, being frequently 'there,' allowed for a multitude of encounters with passers-by who were curious about the exhibition-building work going on, or interested to participate in their programmes. This is reminiscent of Cristopher Henke's (1999) description of the embodied aspect of maintenance work. He suggests

that maintenance workers are the crucial connection between the person who requires something to be fixed, and the to-be-fixed material. In the case of museum participation, the museum staff's presence, at events or simply in the museum, is a crucial element of maintaining social relationships, and as such of creating possibilities for participation. In Fisksätra Museum, purposefully being visible in the window of the museum overlooking the public square made it possible for curious neighbours to stop by and sign up for a newsletter, and former participants to stay in touch by spontaneously dropping by. The staff become the crucial connection point through which audiences, potential or former participants, become acquainted with the museum.

That participation requires a type of embodied practice runs deeper than 'being present', however. Museum practitioners personally impact the development of a project, as has previously been stressed: different challenges of participation are to be solved by changing practitioners' training (White, 2016), and their different involvement in participatory processes (Lynch, 2013). The embodied aspect is further outlined in the interpretation of facilitation as 'care work' (Morse, 2021, p. 140) or 'emotion work' (Munro, 2014). The findings of this study, however, add that it is not only their embodied practices of facilitation in participatory projects that are relevant. Rather, throughout the various practices described in this study, practitioners build on their personal and embodied experience, training, and understanding of participation in order to make decisions about collaborative partners, participants' needs, or project plans. Much like Thomas Yarrow (2019) argued, who describes conservation professionals articulating conservation through their individual interaction with documents, policies, and daily dilemmas (p. 8), the museum practitioners articulate what participation can look like in the museum, through their individual practices based on their personal skills acquired through experience. This aspect of embodied practice of participation is further scrutinised at the end of this chapter, when discussing the place of the individual professional in the institution.

Related to the embodied aspect of maintenance work, in Henke's (1999) understanding, is that this work is relational. Meaning, that it continues amongst different people and practices, who perform 'distributed' practice as a 'networked body' (ibid., 63). Creating possibilities for participation through creating social resources is not about one museum staff member being in contact once, with one person. Rather, possibilities are created over time, through repeated work of different people. In the words of one of the MEK's curators, quoted in Chapter 6, building relationships for this purpose 'takes a long, long time.'[310] In addition, the practices described in Chapters 6 to 8 relate to each other outside of the three moments I presented: creating possibilities for participation, planning projects and doing participation. The organising practice in the moment of meeting with participants, described in Chapter 8,

[310] MEK Interview C2

can be considered an extension or continuation of planning, described in Chapter 7. As participants come in, and projects are on the way, the 'circumstances' that Suchman (2006, p. 70) refers to, change. For example, in the *Sommarjobb* project, practitioners facilitated short assignments or workshops, and adjusted their plans as the project continued, responding to things going faster than planned or guests who cancelled last minute. Similarly, in the MEK's *Revisiting Collections* workshop, facilitators discussed if they should change plans and or improvise when participants would be done quicker than planned. A such, planning continues while a project is ongoing, and this was stressed by Fisksätra Museum staff as crucial for their participatory projects.

Focusing on how these practices relate can redirect our eye when it comes to understanding facilitation in participation. Where knowledge about practices of facilitation has mostly been developed by looking at workshops, and has been suggested to be about creating social spaces for people to interact (Benson and Cremin, 2019; Mucha, 2022), this study instead purports facilitation as part of a 'distributed' practice of maintenance of participation, that includes planning and organising as well (Henke, 1999, p. 63). As such, it draws attention to funding mechanisms and organisational practices as potential complicating factors, in addition to the present understanding of the emotional toll of this work on practitioners and dealing with challenging opinions (Munro, 2014). Furthermore, when including explaining project frameworks as a practice of facilitation, as discussed in Chapter 8 and 9, it becomes imperative to include participants' practices as related. Chapter 9 included descriptions of participants negotiating boundaries of projects with facilitators. In that way, facilitation of participatory projects can be approached as a networked practice between museum staff and external stakeholders. Such a networked perspective on facilitation with an eye on the organisational embeddedness as well as ties with participants would, as Knudsen (2016, p. 208) invites us to consider, be one way to see the 'practices of influence' of participation.

Furthermore, some of the practices, especially those described in Chapter 6, simply fall outside of project boundaries, and as such can be considered invisible (Henke, 1999; Star and Strauss, 1999). The previous section argued that some practices remain invisible in organisational structures, as they are developed outside of workers' roles and work tasks. Furthermore, throughout the study, I have argued that not all work that contributes to participation is project-specific or happens in direct relation to participants. That work thereby remains invisible for analysis within the largely project-based scholarship, and also for participants. Applying for operational support and strategically dividing application budgets to include enough administrative costs, is necessary for Fisksätra Museum to fund ongoing costs such as rent and payment for freelancers. These practices are non-project specific, whilst simultaneously crucial for participation. In addition to the funding practices,

those practices through which social resources for participation are created took place outside of specific projects; interacting with museum visitors who might have been or might become participants, keeping up with networks through sharing opportunities, or interacting with neighbours, were all practices that contributed to the museums' ability to do participatory projects. Centring invisible practices that contribute to participatory projects puts forward the question when a participatory project starts. If applying for funding signifies the start of a project, with which of the practices does it start? With the management of calls for funding, writing applications, strategising to collaborate or adjusting project plans to a specific call? Or, if a project starts with participants being present, we should understand how participants were invited by the museum in the first place, as some researchers have pointed out (Boersma, 2022; Lenz Kothe, 2016). These are straightforward findings, but important to stress as it elaborates upon the sub-research question discussed here. Not only is it relevant, as I asked, to look at how participatory projects are *prepared for*, but rather it is important to consider *what practices contribute to participation* in a specific context.

A fourth characterization of maintenance work is that it is ongoing. The practices described can be considered ongoing as they build on experience and are repeated. Curators at the MEK stressed the importance of repeated, long-term contact to establish and build networks. This was equally deemed important by the practitioners in Fisksätra Museum. Both museums worked with similar groups, and sometimes the exact same people for their participatory projects. These were organised community groups, individual participants, or collaborators such as the library or the arts organisation in Fisksätra. Furthermore, some project formats were repeated. The MEK has a successful series of *European Cultural Days* and the Fisksätra Museum organises language cafés repeatedly. I showed how knowing that they would repeat the *Sommarjobb* project, Cristina and Joanna would keep track of their work and prepare for future plans, while working on the current iteration. Stating that participation is done through ongoing, repeated practices contrasts to what some museums might want to get out of participation: finding new audiences (Simon, 2010). This study, however, suggests that the building of long-term relationships and experience with participation through repeated practices, is key to what participation is. Thereby, these results echo what other authors have pointed out: repetition and a focus on relationships can be a way to enhance museum participation (Bienkowski, 2018), and how museum curators might get used to changing roles (Tatsi, 2011).

This ongoing characteristic stands in interesting tension with the fifth quality of maintenance presented in Chapter 3: improvisation. In both museums, even though staff build on their experience and repeat certain project formats, not all practices described are routinised, and improvisation also characterises their practices. The practices of pivoting and organising, explaining and reflecting have improvisational qualities. They all develop in

response to changing circumstances, or 'in interaction with the setting for action' (Henke, 1999, p. 66). Pivoting is the way through which practitioners respond to unbeneficial outcomes as they present themselves upon rejection of an application. The particular ways in which practitioners organise, explain and reflect is dependent on the specific project and people involved. In Chapter 8, staff decides on the spot how to respond to a conflict that comes up or a discussion brought up by participants. Facilitators build on their skill and experience in these moments, as also discussed by Morse (2021, p. 140). The tension between ongoing and improvisational practices of participation in museums, over time, is an interesting site to explore how and which practices become routinised or recognised in an institution.

Taken together, practitioners maintain participation in their respective museum, through maintenance work which is improvisational, relational, ongoing, invisible, and embodied. Such a view initiates new avenues for practitioners and researchers to explore how participation is maintained beyond projects. Furthermore, it highlights practitioners' practices as critical for participation, whilst simultaneously urges us to consider how these stand in relation to participants' practices. This will be discussed next.

Practices of participants

The second research question asked *what practices do participants engage in when being part of participation in museums?* This centres practices of participants, in addition to those of practitioners, as equally constitutive of participation. Chapter 9 homed in on the practices of participants, which I described as making and sharing.

The first practice, making, takes a central part in participatory projects in the two museums. This often is considered the main activity of a participatory project. That means, if someone asks what people do in a participatory project, participants and practitioners would refer to the activities described in Chapter 9. The practice was defined through three overarching conditions. First, making is a creative and, or, an expressive practice. In particular, the practices are about creating something, applying creativity, or contributing to something creative being made. Second, making is defined and delimited by the fact that it happens in a specific museum, at a specific time, with specific people, materials and places. The investigation furthermore suggests that project themes can be especially impactful on participants' making practices. The third condition is that making includes a tension between process and end-product which both practitioners and participants balance out in multiple ways. One of these perspectives might be preferred and motivate actions that stands in opposition to the other. A project's goal might be reached or not, depending on which perspective on making is taken. In some cases, the process and product of the making practice actually gave meaning to one

another: exhibitions stressed the making process or the process was part of the product. It was furthermore shown that participants also make non-end-product materials over the course of participatory projects.

The second practice of participants is sharing. Sharing practices can be firstly understood to be about sharing personal stories, emotions, thoughts or opinions. Such inner-world sharing can take place structurally and in organised ways, as in the *Sommarjobb* project, through which a group bonds and gets to know each other. Simultaneously, sharing can be part of the goal of participatory projects when participants are asked to share with external audiences through project outputs. I called this productive sharing. Many projects mixed these types of sharing. Participants contribute or share stories, memories or experiences to exhibitions or other presentations which are subsequently shared with external audiences. The making practices overlap and relate to the sharing practices. Sharing and making describe different elements of an activity or goal that is embedded in the participatory project. Through the ethnographic investigation of the *Sommarjobb* project, this nuance has been highlighted. The project was about making a film about democracy, but also about sharing that film with others, and sharing something of one self in the film.

The inquiry put forward two practices of engagement of participants in participatory projects. Based on the analysis of these practices, I argue that participants and professionals are engaged in emotion work, in participation. I consider this aspect of participation as productive to creating 'socio-affective spaces for engagement', but the results do point to that not being a straightforward or easy process for all participants (Mucha, 2022, p. 235). Simultaneously, the analysis showed how sharing can involve decision-making processes that are distributed over the course of a project. As such, museums should critically review their responsibility, especially if they centre presentations with external audiences around individuals' stories, images or work.

Emotion work in participation

While participants make and share, participants and professionals are engaged in emotion work, including affective and emotional labour (Hardt, 1999; Hochschild, 1979, 1983/2012; Morse, 2014). This at once contributes to creating 'socio-affective spaces for engagement' which provides space for people to relate to cultural heritage in meaningful ways, and thus can be an attractive strategy for participation in museums (Mucha, 2022, p. 235). When affective practices of participants become the core of what is shared with external audiences, however, ethical concerns should be taken seriously. This research suggests that one place for museums to develop practices that take seriously participants' emotion work is to consider how practices of sharing involve decision-making processes that remain open over the course of a

project. In the following, I briefly touch upon how practitioners engage in emotion work in this study, and how the results elaborate on Morse (2014). Then, I return to the participants' practices.

Chapter 3 introduced emotion work as a term that includes both affective and emotional labour. Affective labour has been previously theorised as work that includes producing emotions and feelings in others (Hardt, 1999), and emotion work and labour as the management of one's own emotions (Hochschild, 1983/2012). Previous research has argued that community engagement facilitators engage in such emotion work, in their interaction with participants (Munro, 2014). The findings of this study support and elaborate on Munro's arguments about facilitation. Practitioners in this research, when facilitating practices of making and sharing, manage their own and participants' emotions. The facilitators of the *Sommarjob* project were concerned about how the practitioners felt, which resulted in the practice of reflection, on the participant-practitioner relationship, on the participants' feeling of confusion, or the staff's experience of difficult conversations held during the workshop. Similarly, the facilitators considered the participants' feelings when they were organising the group work and show-and-tell sessions in the workshop series. The young participants were nervous about who they would have to work with, and Cristina and Joanna took that into account when orchestrating the different groups who would make a film together. The concern for emotions of participants came up in interviews with MEK curators as well, especially when recounting certain projects such as the embroidering project, and *Bring ein Ding,* where participants' personal memories were central.

The findings of this study elaborate on Munro (2014), by arguing that emotion work is also present in the practitioners' practices that happen outside of the direct interaction with participants, and potentially enhanced for people in less stable organisational positions. In addition, the finding that participants' affective practices tend to be centralised in participation projects, should be further problematised. Some of the outreach staff interviewed by Morse (2014, p. 50) gestured to their facilitative work lacking organisational support and felt overwhelmed by how 'much work goes into planning these projects' without standardised or evaluated methods. Morse connects does not engage much with the fact that here the non-facilitative practice is highlighted, but instead connects the experienced stress to potential burnout amongst these staff, and continues to analyse emotion work in interactions with participants. This study, however, sheds further light on the embeddedness of emotion work in relation to non-facilitative practices, much like the interviewed curator in Morse's (2014) gestured to. Emotion work was performed by practitioners when the applied for funding and maintained social contacts, in this study. In the application process, emotions and feelings of stress and uncertainty experienced by staff and the potential dire need to find funding for a project are carefully masked in the written applications and only shown (or

performed) in the moment it is explicitly asked for, as was the case for the pandemic-related funding in Fisksätra Museum. Furthermore, these feelings of insecurity were understood and accepted to be part of the job. This was particularly the case for those working as freelancers, or others not in a permanent curatorial position. Much like Butler and Stayonova Russell (2018) described in the case of comedians, uncertainties of freelance labour in the case of Fisksätra Museum involved regulations of emotions that come out of personal as well as organisational financial insecurity (p. 1682).

Furthermore, the practitioners in this study engage in affective labour as part of their practices for the creation of social conditions of participation, again outside of the facilitative role. In Fisksätra Museum, two particular moments showcase this in their practices of being a neighbour. When a former participant and frequent visitor of the museum enters the museum visibly upset, Joanna and Cristina provide their neighbour comfort and listen to her story. Similarly, Cristina rushes out of the museum onto the square when she hears a young kid outside screaming '*ingen är hemma'* (no one is home). Cristina panics slightly, worried for the kid. Once she realises that the child is accompanied by two adults, she returns to the museum, relieved. Such emotional investment marks the work at the Fisksätra museum in which they relate to their stakeholders as neighbours. This extends the understanding of emotion work, later further interpreted as care work by both Morse and Munro (Morse, 2021; Morse and Munro, 2018), to be part of non-facilitative work connected to participation as well.

The investigation into the participants' practices should be understood to stand in relation to the practitioners' emotion work. As I argued, part of the work of practitioners has been to manage participants' emotions and elicit affective practice. In critical heritage studies, affective practice has been described as a 'human activity where emotion is a specific and principal focus of the practice', which can be brought about through interaction with heritage (Smith et al., 2018, p. 5). Mucha (2022) has previously argued that co-creation processes with cultural heritage can be stimulated in spaces that cater to such affective practices (p. 238). Mucha does not distinguish what practices might contribute to such spaces. This study suggests one way, but simultaneously problematises these practices as potentially challenging and argues that practitioners should be weary of centring participants' affective practices only as integral parts of participatory projects' outputs.

Both practitioners and participants in the Fisksätra Museum's *Sommarjobb* project emphasised the importance of building social relationships, and participants referred to 'making new friends' in the evaluation videos. I argued that some of the practices described as inner-world sharing in Chapter 9 contributed to this. These included recurring activities such as 'show and tell' and a daily check-in round, as well as expressing opinions and ideas in a group. This can be understood as an affective practice performed by both participants and practitioners, which can contribute to socialisation as well as

creative collaboration. This is one way in which 'socio-affective spaces for engagement', in Mucha's (2022) words, can be stimulated. The investigation also suggests, however, that not everyone wanted to engage equally in this inner-world sharing. Thereby, the findings elaborate on Mucha's proposition as no only being beneficial for participatory environments but also challenging. The ethnographic investigation furthermore suggests that perhaps it is not all about design of exercises, to create this type of space for engagement. Rather, socialisation through inner-world sharing can happen during moments in between organised activities. As such, this study gestures to the relevance of breaks, the time it might take to warm-up to sharing in a group, and thus the benefit of having participatory projects taking place over a longer period of time.

The inquiry into participants' practices also put critical focus on when participants' emotion work, especially their affective practices, are centred in what is shared with external audiences. In all the cases of productive inner-world sharing discussed in Chapter 9, participants shared personal stories. There, participants' stories – of migration, their job, their hometown, their family – became the most important element of exhibitions or artworks shared with audiences. Either someone else made photographs or artworks based on these stories or their stories and opinions were collected by the museum to be shared later, as was the case with the *Revisiting Collections* workshop, the interview-based exhibitions, and audience engagement in the MEK. Furthermore, when participants made or contributed to something that was exhibited, their stories and perspectives, not *what* they made, were mostly stressed in exhibitions such as *MAT* or *daHeim.* When sharing stories, through whatever participatory method, participants' 'emotion is a specific and principal focus of the practice' (Smith et al., 2018, p. 5). In these cases, their affective practice became crucial to the end-product shared with external audiences.

The overwhelming focus on participants' inner-world in the projects discussed in this study, suggests that building participation on participants' affective practice is not uncommon. A quick look at themes of participatory projects discussed in the literature, concurs this. Chynoweth et al. (2021), for example, includes discussions of projects about homelessness, 'sensitive narratives,' or institutionalised care-receivers. The focus on affective practice in community engagement has been problematised by Munro (2014, pp. 52-55) as an important and taxing element of facilitators' emotion work. This study suggests to further problematise the idea that participation should require affective practice *per se* and stresses the relevance of taking seriously practitioners' role as, what one curator in the MEK called, '*Reflektion pfleger*' (caretaker of reflections) when it comes to sharing what happens in participatory projects with external audiences. The ethnographic account of Fisksätra Museum pointed out how not all participants were interested in sharing their own stories, whereas this was the museum's hope for the films

the participants created. Furthermore, the account showed that when goals of sharing with external audiences change from being abstract to concrete, participants' emotional investment could be influential in their willingness to share their work with external audiences. Practitioners should anticipate such moments and consider that sharing practices involve decision-making processes that can continue over the course of a project.

In sum, the investigation into participants' practices has suggested that practitioners and participants are both engaged in emotion work. Thus, the study concurs with others' research (Morse, 2021; Munro, 2014). The findings elaborate on these arguments that focus on facilitation only, by suggesting that practitioners also engage in the management of emotions in their organisational practices. Furthermore, this study suggests to highlight participants' affective practices, as the product of practitioners' affective labour. These related practices contribute to the shaping of a 'socio-affective space for engagement', can be designed within exercises but also spontaneously occur, and could be productive for participation (Mucha, 2022, p. 235). However, the findings also suggest that not all participants would not necessarily be equally interested or involved in such inner-world sharing. Simultaneously, when affective practices become the focal point of what is shared with external audiences, practitioners ought to tread carefully and be mindful of the moments where previously agreed upon, abstract, goals of sharing become concrete. Understanding that participants' decision-making about sharing with external audiences is a continuous process, would be a way to act as a responsible '*reflektion pfleger.*'

Practising with structures

The third research question asked which *organisational structures inform these practices and how.* This inquiry attuned to the relation between practices and structural elements found in the 'assembled organisation' of the museum (Morse et al., 2018). Socio-material structures, as mediators, collections, and tools of socio-discursive practice (Nicolini, 2012, pp. 223-224), were especially stressed in the practices described as managing and writing applications in Chapter 6, planning projects in Chapter 7, and explaining and organising in Chapter 8. Practitioners developed practices around and with internal structures such as museums' calendars, the division of labour within the organisation, specific resources, spaces and materials, and the developed procedures around these structures. External structures also played an important part in practitioners' practices. This was especially seen the practices developed around acquiring external funding, when practitioners engaged with funding agency's calls for application and application systems.

The investigation about practices in relation to organisational structures brings forward two findings. First, museums' structures that support internal

knowledge sharing, can enhance and support practitioners' practices that constitute participation. Focusing on the development of such structures could benefit museums in which professionals have different attitudes towards doing participation. Without such supportive structures, externally acquired skills become less effective. Second, revealing and working around internal and external structures in their museum, practitioners work towards achieving 'radical transparency' in participation (Marstine, 2011, p. 14). This practice is directed both to participants and colleagues inside the museum.

Structures of knowledge sharing

The inquiry into practitioners' practices found that they are interlinked throughout different moments of preparing for, planning and carrying out participatory projects, and built through repetition. With an eye on the socio-material structures involved as mediators of and contributors to these practices, it becomes paramount to stress that these are practices developed in specific organisational contexts. Supporting participation requires attention to how knowledge about and experience with different organisational and external structures for the purpose of organising, planning or doing participation, is shared within the specific museum. Previous research attests that professionals' have different perceptions about participation in memory institutions (Andresen et al., 2020). This study suggests that such perceptions about participation are likely to be developed in relation to specific organisational contexts, through practice. It follows that it is important for practitioners within the same organisation to share knowledge about how they work with or around specific internal and external structures in order to carry out participatory projects. Without structures in place to support this knowledge sharing, individual professionals' specialised skills acquired through education or experience elsewhere (Lankes et al., 2015; White, 2016), become unproductive in practice.

The practices of practitioners discussed in the first section of this chapter and throughout the thesis, require the practitioners to know and interact with different internal and external systems. Following Tlili (2016, p. 1110), museographic knowledge can be considered to consist of 'knowledge about the museum as a cultural, social, political and organisational entity,' about 'case instances of museum practice' and 'practical know-how.' While doing participation, practitioners interact with funding agencies, organisational hierarchies, collection management systems and calendars, and build on their understanding of these structures. The staff at the MEK and in Fisksätra furthermore required and applied knowledge previously acquired through their work on participatory projects, which allowed them to adapt to unplanned and unfortunate situations caused by uncertainty related to museum structures. They build on 'practical know-how,' in their funding-related practices, when they stay up to date about potential funding opportunities and

understand the various fully online application systems. In order to build strategies through which to adhere to funders' requirements, while simultaneously planning participation with room for adjustment, practitioners additionally needed to know the particular preferences and demands of funding agencies and their own organisation. For example, a curator who worked on the MEK's *European Cultural Days*, connected the ease of organising these collaborations and acquiring funding to her extensive experience with what works well in the organisation, the frequently repeated project, and what is required for applications. In Fisksätra Museum, Amelie also stressed the importance of experience in eventually successfully acquiring financial resources. This asserts that doing participation is a deeply contextualised practice, that is developed in specific ways in relation to specific socio-material structures. Such an understanding centres the importance of practice-based knowledge (Tlili, 2016), build in relation to their specific organisation and to the specific demands of participatory projects. It follows that investigating and investing in structural ways to share such knowledge is crucial.

Some previous research has focused on how knowledge is shared within museums, in general. Huvila mapped out how a museum organisation relies on knowledge manifested in 'routines, internalised knowledge' and exchange between colleagues, on top of the structural and institutionalised forms of documentation such as collection records (Huvila, 2013, p. 1385). A recent study on knowledge management in museums suggests that organisational knowledge management is furthermore supported by less hierarchical organisational structures, supporting the broadening of skillsets amongst practitioners and focusing on use and development of technology, but that these 'knowledge management enablers' are not frequently represented in the small and mid-sized art and science museums they reported on (Vakharia and Poole, 2023). The present study asserts that investing in practices of knowledge sharing and knowledge management, could indeed also support museums' ability to do participation. This is furthermore relevant when taking into account that professionals' perceptions about participation and social engagement can be quite different from each other (Andresen et al., 2020). Focusing on how potential diverging opinions amongst colleagues meet in practice, would be especially interesting for future research.

By arguing that investing in and investigating structures of knowledge sharing within the museum organisation is important, I furthermore purport that investing in and investigating professionals' interpersonal skills, is not the only important aspect for the development of participation in a specific organisation. Chapter 2 discussed how studies concerned with professionals' competencies and identity in relation to participation in museums and other memory institutions has led people to argue that such work requires specific skills (Jensen, 2019; Lankes et al., 2015; Visser, 2017; White, 2016). They homed in on the idea that the work of curators, or others who would be

responsible for participation in museums, would indeed benefit from developing skills for facilitation, collaboration and reflection, rather than (only) in-depth knowledge about specialised topics. These calls in turn perpetuated the idea of a drastically changing profession where curators might sense a loss of control as their role and reliance on topic-knowledge changed (Carpentier, 2011a; Tatsi, 2011). Although this study's findings underscore the relevance of most of the skills proposed by Visser (2017) and Lankes and colleagues (2015), these types of skills become only useful in practice, when applied in specific contexts. This study suggests that to do participation, practitioners require contextualised knowledge about specific systems and the organisation, in addition to such skills.

So, rather than (only) adjusting trainings and education to develop specific skills, as researchers have called for previously (White, 2016), organisations might want to focus on how to share existing practice-based knowledge that underpin practices such as the ones described in this study. For example, through experimentation and evaluation. Lynch and colleagues make very good points about the dangers of unhelpful, or counterproductive participatory projects, as they can be paternalistic and perpetuate prejudice (Chynoweth et al., 2021; Lynch, 2021; Lynch and Alberti, 2010). These warnings are important to take to heart when organisations learn to do participation, especially keeping in mind the work with marginalised communities that seem to be a prevalent focus in contemporary museum practice (Boersma, 2022; Morse, 2022). Simultaneously, the findings of this study suggest that in museums where participatory methods are used frequently, the institution and practitioners benefitted from learning through repetition, whilst building relationships over time. Practitioners at the Fisksätra Museum and the MEK found out over the course of years, and are still finding out, what is working for them, in their museum, with their specific systems, and their stakeholders. Participation requires knowing how to deal with systems in specific contexts, and could benefit from experimentation in practice, in that specific context. Rather than focusing on best practice in other institutions, new methods, or specific skills, museum organisations should consider how to have the mechanisms in place to learn from mistakes made in practice in their own institutions, through evaluation and knowledge-sharing, institution-wide.

Radical transparency: revealing and intervening with systems

The inquiry into practices and organisational structures furthermore suggests that transparency about such structures and related procedures with participants can indeed be beneficial and necessary in moments of interaction. However, the study reveals that this is more complex than previously suggested.

As discussed in Chapter 8, practitioners further implement previously planned projects by organising and explaining structures and rules to

participants during participatory projects. Museum scholars emphasised transparency as a requirement for museums to advance change in society, by being transparent about how they are 'open to influence and impact from outside' and 'responsive to citizens' interests and concerns' (Janes and Sandell, 2019a, p. 15). For Janes and Sandell (2019b) working participatorily should thus always come with being transparent, about *how* this work affects the museum. Transparency from the museum's side has been furthermore heralded as a manner through which trust can be established between participants and institutions (Liew and Cheetham, 2016). More generally, Marstine argued that 'radical transparency' is crucial for 'twenty-first-century museum ethics':

> Radical transparency is a liberatory antidote to the assumed alignments and readability of knowledge. Radical transparency not only describes but also analyzes behavior and considers its significance. It is a mode of communication that admits accountability — acknowledgement and assumption of responsibility for actions (Marstine, 2011, p. 14).

In the case of participation in museums, such transparency could be considered similar to what Runnel, Lepik and Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt (2014) called providing a type of 'information literacy'. They pointed out that such literacy allows participants to 'be sufficiently knowledgeable about the institution, participation possibilities, [and] boundaries that might allow or disallow participation' (Runnel et al., 2014, p. 230). Marstine (2013, p.3) equally stressed that 'the framing of information, along with the information itself' is a requirement to '[empower] museum communities' in 'equitable knowledge sharing'. In short, being transparent about rules, systems and procedures that participants might encounter would benefit participation and ethical museum practice.

Indeed, in this study, where transparency was lacking, for example in the case of the experience of the students visiting the MEK discussed in Chapter 8, a conflict arose. Furthermore, a lack of transparency about decision making in the process of the *Perlenhochzeit* exhibit – when a funding application was rejected and the theme was changed, or when students' interviews and input were not included in the exhibition plans – also contributed to an overall unsatisfied feeling amongst participants. Similarly, in the Fisksätra Museum, the participants in the *Sommarjobb* project asked several times for more explicit explanations about the expectations regarding the topic of democracy, and grew irritated upon not receiving this.

On the other hand, the results also suggest three complicating factors in a call for transparency. In some cases, during interactions with participants, practitioners might have to weigh transparency against other principles of participation. Practitioners furthermore can be entangled with systems. Meaning, as they work with the procedures connected to institutional

structures and systems everyday, it becomes hard to know what structures or procedures should be made explicit to whom. In addition, they sometimes have to intervene with, and not only reveal, systems. These three points will be elaborated upon now, and thereby this study brings in a nuance in the call for transparency or information literacy in participation projects (Janes and Sandell, 2019, p. 15; Marstine, 2013; Runnel et al., 2014).

In the case discussed in Chapter 8, when facilitators of the *Sommarjobb* project organised discussions about the meaning of democracy, transparency was considered to conflict with participants' self-assertion in decision-making about their films. The facilitators reflected amongst themselves how explicit they should be about their wish for the participants to make films about their own perspectives as an expression of democracy. Cristina and Joanna tried to nudge the participants into making a decision but never explicitly stated what they wanted them to do, out of consideration of allowing freedom of choice.

Furthermore, focusing only on which structures to discuss with participants in order to achieve transparency, can direct attention away from how to provide transparency, inward. On one hand, practitioners need to decide which structures, obfuscated for participants, they should reveal in order to achieve transparency and trust (Liew and Cheetham, 2016). Some examples brought up by MEK curators showed it can be difficult to know in advance the scope of the structures, systems or information one has to be transparent about. What is basic knowledge for practitioners, because it is their working environment, can be unknown to participants. Curators expressed initial surprise about situations where participants were not used to work with strict deadlines or follow what they thought to be basic rules about working in the museum, such as to wear shoes and not drink water in the exhibition space. Similarly, the situation with visiting students arriving late and acting 'too relaxed,' brought up underlying assumptions of the involved staff that the students would simply know how to interact with people in an institution. On the other hand, these situations also show an additional place for transparency. Practitioners have to provide basic transparency about the rules of working in the museum to participants, but they also have to talk with others working in their organisation to explain a participatory project. Meaning, practitioners have to consider which structures and procedures specific to a participatory project to explain to colleagues in the museum who might encounter project work, but are not directly involved. In that way, transparency is not only about establishing trust between participants and the institution, participants and participants and the institution and participants, as Liew and Cheetham (2016) argue. There is also a need to explain, or work towards transparency, in order to establish and maintain trust between different people within the institution.

Finally, the practices of the museum practitioners in this study also go beyond revealing structures to achieve 'radical transparency' (Marstine, 2011). Sometimes they needed to bend or work-around a system. This was the case when the Fisksätra Museum found ways to pay for participants'

participation, by paying them as performers and presenters. Similarly, Amelie explained that they try to keep project descriptions and budgets as open as possible when applying so that programmes can be adjusted throughout. Within Marstine's definition, such reworking of systems would fall under 'acknowledgement and assumption of responsibility' (2011, 14). 'Radical transparency' in participation could thus also include working around structures and rules, rather than revealing them only.

In short, transparency can be beneficial to achieve trust in participation, but this investigation of practices suggests it is not a straightforward revealing of organisational structures that impact decision-making in participatory projects. Transparency might occur through conflict and can appear to contradict with other participatory principles. It requires reflection on which structures or procedures to discuss with participants, including those that are obvious to practitioners themselves. The results furthermore suggest that transparency also ought to be directed inward, and participatory projects and their procedures might be obfuscated for staff not directly involved, but confronted with projects or participants on the side line. Finally, the results stress that 'radical transparency' in participation does not only revolve around making organisational structures visible, but could require practitioners to work-around them instead, and thereby taking an 'assumption of responsibility' (Marstine, 2011, p. 14).

Dualities in participatory practice

At the start of this thesis, it was made apparent how participation in museums is typically motivated by the potential for a project to allow the museum to enact a social role in society. In Chapter 2, I reviewed various promises of participation presented in the literature, in particular those embedded within calls for democratisation of the museum. The fourth research question was geared toward that element of participation: *how are social goals connected to participation present in, pursued, or reached through these practices?*

That participation for both museums is connected to social goals could be seen in their mission statements, discussed in Chapter 5. The MEK describes that they 'promote dialogue,' 'work collectively' and 'take a stance' in their work, their participatory work is a way to do that (Museum Europäischer Kulturen, 2020). The Fisksätra Museum states that they work with participatory processes and 'focus on issues that are seen as important among residents' ('Om Fisksätra Museum', n.d.). Elsewhere, they further stress this local and social focus by writing: '[a]nchored in many forms of collaboration with inhabitants of Fisksätra, groups, networks and individuals of the local community, we are simultaneously developing the museum as a platform for cultural heritage and different art forms' (Tham and Madsen, 2015, p. 47). Throughout the various projects, these goals were never far. In Fisksätra,

language cafés and exhibition making projects are meant to empower local women through supporting their network and learning Swedish. In the MEK, participatory methods are employed to help people represent themselves or feel represented in the museum.

Even though the social goals, or underlying promises of participation, did not play a leading role in the analysis chapters, they still marked the analysed practices. Rather than discussing what exact goals of participation were pursued by the institutions, the study identifies two dualities through which different participatory goals shape, become apparent in, and are shaped in practice. First, practitioners pursue a balance between meaning and function in project design, and thereby focus on the practical possibilities of participatory goals. Second, democratic goals of participation are acted out and acted on by individual staff, based on their own understandings and motivations, but their individual actions constitute participation in their respective museum. This draws out the role of the individual actor in the institution, as a second duality. The purpose of pointing out these two dualities is not to say that these are unresolvable, but to see how participatory goals are *present in, pursued, or reached through* the analysed practices.

Meaning and function

A participatory project can only be meaningful if it is also functional. Practices to make a project meaningful, through adherence to various participatory goals, are always intertwined with what is practically possible within the museum. The question and meaning of meaning, as well as its duality with function or practicality is something other researchers also pointed out in relation to participation. This study confirms that indeed practical concerns can limit a project's achievement of participatory goals. However, it elaborates on others' work, by purporting that these practical concerns simultaneously can prove contributory to the pursuit of participatory goals, especially by making projects relevant (Nielsen, 2015) or useful (Lynch, 2021).

Chapter 7 analysed a few questions through which practitioners negotiated their interpretations of participatory goals into project plans. The questions asked by practitioners in this study mirrored what other researchers have pointed out in their discussions of the diversity of meanings given to participation. Graham (2010) made a distinction between museums doing participation that is 'good for us,' 'good for them', or 'good for all.' Similarly, Nuala Morse (2021) observed that many of museums and researchers describe and argue for participation from such a 'good for us' mentality. She describes this as a 'contributory logic,' where participation is approached as beneficial to the museum. Returning to the Fisksätra Museum's mission statement and some of the MEK's curator's expressions, such a tendency can also be discovered in the way they describe their approach to participation. In the

Fisksätra Museum, participants are described to 'help us to 'make' the museum' ('Om Fisksätra Museum', n.d.). In the MEK, curators approached participatory methods as an extension of good anthropological and ethnographic work. In order to represent people well – their duty as an ethnographic museum – participatory methods 'of course' have to be employed when it came to everyday life of contemporary cultures.[311] Such phrasing of participation can be interpreted to operate from a 'contributory logic' or a 'good for us' mentality: including participants is a way to fulfil the museum's task. However, in this study, sometimes multiple logics or benefits of participation would be attached to one project. In that way, the findings confirm what both Morse and Graham stress when discussing their categories or logic: that these are not necessarily mutually exclusive (Graham, 2011), nor incapable of including other meanings or logics (Morse, 2021). This study's findings suggest one place to look for how these different meanings given to participation come to overlap or exist simultaneously, in practice: in the interplay between meaning and functionality.

The study confirms that practical and organisational realities of participatory projects can act as limiting factors, as others described. Lynch and Alberti describe how the need to finish a project in time made that a museum staff team had to finalise an exhibition, and 'pragmatics overtook idealism' (Lynch and Alberti, 2010, p. 24). A more nuanced explanation of how organisational structures can come to counter participatory goals was proposed by Morse by analysing different accountabilities museum staff have to deal with when doing community engagement projects (Morse, 2018). Furthermore, Boersma (2022) outlined different infrastructures within museums which impact the outcomes of participatory projects. Similarly, this study included instances of museum staff having to adhere to demands from funders or adjusting projects to fit in the museum's schedules or buildings. Planning for participatory projects, includes negotiating a project into such museum's structures. The effect of this shines through in the practices of making, as discussed in Chapter 9. There, it was argued that when finishing a product because of a strict set of deadlines participants' practices of making are limited. Undoubtedly, participatory projects are shaped to fit the museum's context. The study elaborates on these previously made observations, however, by arguing that practical concerns are not solely present as a limitation to fulfil participatory goals.

Practical concerns were important as they allowed meaning of participatory projects to be pursued through functionality. In this way, practitioners made projects to be useful (Lynch, 2021) and relevant (Nielsen, 2015). Staff at both the MEK and Fisksätra Museum stressed that participatory projects should be worthwhile of participants' time. They attempted to achieve this by offering compensation as well as literally asking what participants need from

[311] MEK Interview C2

participating in a project. The practitioners worked towards social goals of participation by making a participatory project meaningful from two standpoints: it should practically work within the museum and it should be useful for participants. Such a pragmatic approach to meaning echoes what Nielsen (2015) brings up in the discussion of the place of relevance in museums. Nielsen argues that it is hard to plan for 'meaning-making' or relevance, as both are subjectively derived from experiences (Nielsen, 2015, p. 366). Ultimately, she argues that relevance could be achieved through a multitude of museum practices, which centre 'meaningful and useful experiences for both museum and users' (Nielsen, 2015, p. 376). Making museums useful is where Lynch finds potential ways out for museum projects which attempt but fail in delivering shared decision-making in co-producing exhibitions and thereby simply perpetuate prejudice, and thus are 'unhelpful' at least and 'unhealthy' at worst (Lynch, 2021, p. 13). She proposes that usefulness can be achieved in participatory projects through collaborative reflecting, working towards 'agency and activism', focusing on 'building capability' and working with principles from 'co-researching' (p. 16-22).

This study elaborates on Lynch's (2021) suggestions by arguing that looking for usefulness as meaning in participatory projects, can build on a pragmatic approach to participation. Even though some of the projects discussed in this study might be criticised by Lynch because of a lack of collaborative reflections, shared decision-making, or practitioners' 'therapeutic' interpretation of some events,[312] practitioners' attention to making projects functional contributed to them becoming useful to some extent. Lynch and Alberti (2010) presented pragmatism explicitly as opposing the participatory processes in their project and thereby argued that the project lost meaning by not fulfilling the set-out goal. However, this study proposes to not consider practical considerations, fuelled by the limitations museum practitioners encounter in their everyday experiences of museum's resources and structures, as necessarily the opposite to idealistic social, participatory or democratic goals. Rather, I would extend an understanding of pragmatism as not only a potential inhibitor of these goals, but also the necessary catalyser, much like proposed by those arguing against the 'unhelpful museum' (Chynoweth et al., 2021), or underlining the potential social activist role of museums. In short, practitioners' pragmatic approach to participation can contribute to making their museum useful.

The individual in the institutional

The second duality through which to understand the presence of participatory goals in the analysed practices, is that between the individual practitioners and the institutional. The analysis suggests that what researchers found about

[312] MEK Interview C4a

professionals' attitudes involved in citizen participation in other types of institutions, can be seen in the museum setting too. Oftentimes, it was the personal choice of the individual practitioner about how to do their job that contributed to how and if participatory goals connected to a project were reached. This suggests that positive personal attitudes of practitioners toward participation is an important element in institutionally organised participatory projects, confirming what research about professionals' role in participation in other fields pointed out previously (Steen and Tuurnas, 2020). On the other hand, however, the analysis suggests that even though colleagues might share positive attitudes towards participatory methods, different interpretations of underlying goals of these methods can be present within the institution. Embedded in both these findings is that individual practitioners' attitudes to and understanding of participation, in their relation to the organisational environment in which they are doing their work, impact how they work towards goals of participation. I suggest that reflections and discussions on the purpose of participation, amongst colleagues, could benefit a more organisation-wide streamlined approach to participation.

Throughout the analysis of practices of practitioners, their personal attitudes towards and understandings of participation came to the fore. Chapter 6 highlighted that individual staff members have to actively make a choice to meet visitors in exhibitions, or spend time to maintain a previously established network, or to make themselves visible to passers-by. I suggested that these practices, together, contribute to maintaining social contacts which in turn contribute to participation, but that it is apparent that practitioners treat this as individual choices rather than necessary tasks. In Chapter 7, I included descriptions of the MEK curators' perspectives on their work connected to participatory projects which they tended to see as different and more time consuming than their other work. They described the participatory work as very hard, exhausting or stressful. As they were largely personally responsible for dividing their time over different tasks, their personal motivation can end up determining if and how they will choose to do a participatory project. Some curators displayed more positive attitudes to participatory methods than others. Furthermore, in Chapter 8 I described how Cristina and Joanna each seemed to stress a different way of completing the *Sommarjobb* project, resulting in one preferring to help to edit films, and the other to refrain from doing so. I suggested that this indicates that different ideas of what participation should do, or put differently, which participatory goals are to be reached, can become motivation for different types of actions in practice.

Researchers who study participation in other fields have found that perspectives of professionals matter when it comes to doing participation, and that these influence if goals connected to participation can be fulfilled in the first place (Yang and Zhang, 2009; Yang, 2005; Steen and Tuurnas, 2020). These studies pointed out the correlation between public administrators' attitudes towards citizen input as well as their trust in citizens, and their

willingness and likelihood to implement participatory processes. As mentioned in Chapter 2, studies about citizen participation in public governance have long focused on professionals' roles in such work, but this research has no previously been used in relation to museum participation. The findings of this study, in their affirmation of the influence of professionals' attitudes, suggest that it could be potentially worthwhile to further investigate overlaps in practices and potential challenges of participation as carried out in different institutions.

Furthermore, in addition to individual attitudes towards participation, the analysis also suggests there can be differences in individual interpretations of participation as a concept as well as participatory goals. This helps to understand the results from three surveys amongst professionals in various memory institutions throughout Europe, discussed in the literature review (Andresen et al., 2020; Audunson et al., 2020; Huvila, 2016). Together, these surveys indicated that professionals in memory institutions have differing opinions and attitudes towards various social engagement services, whether or not their respective institution offers it. In particular, the surveys highlighted that even though people shared positive attitudes towards social engagement efforts, they could disagree on the form and purpose of these services and how the social engagement goals should be met exactly. Furthermore, Tuurnas (2015) showed how differing or conflicting approaches to and understandings of co-production are paramount in participatory public service projects as well, and can cause confusion amongst professionals. The present study's results echo and elaborate on these findings. It elaborates on the findings from the surveys by suggesting that these differences in understandings of participation and how to fulfil participatory goals can exist within the same institution. The study also suggests that similar tendencies found by Tuurnas (2015) in public governance projects, can be observed in museum organisations as well. This study furthermore elaborates on Tuurnas (2015, p. 594) by identifying one potential element of 'conflicting interests' in participation: differing understandings of participation upheld by professionals.

11 Conclusion

Museum definitions do not define what happens in museums. Rather, everyday practices of practitioners define, or constitute, the museum. Working with 'the participation of communities,' as ICOM states, happens in practice (ICOM, 2022b). This study set out to investigate such practice. I ethnographically investigated how practitioners organise, plan for and do participatory projects in two museums that have been doing so for over a decade: Fisksätra Museum in Sweden and Museum Europäischer Kulturen (MEK) in Germany. The fieldwork brought me to meetings, workshops, and everyday work settings. There, ideas about the respective institution, the role of museums in general, needs and wishes of (potential) participants, and participation as a political concept were translated into practice. They were translated into practice within specific organisational and institutional contexts emerging through external and internal structures, procedures, materials and systems. Participation happens through messy, conflicting, distributed, everyday practices of museum practitioners, participants, collaborators, visitors, and funders. These practices are sometimes planned out or improvised, underpaid or overlooked, intentional or ongoing, developed in interaction with systems and with other people. Using a practice theory approach (Nicolini, 2012), building on information studies' tradition of exploring professionals' work in memory institutions, I zoomed in and out on these practices. In academic and museum settings frustrated with the largely project-based work of participation perpetuated by project-based funding, this inquiry contributes to an understanding of organisationally situated participation-in-practice and practices that constitute participation, beyond the participatory project.

In this conclusion, the main findings will be summarised, to then be contextualised in light of the study's limitations. Based on the findings, I make an initial proposal of a practice-based infrastructure of participation. It suggests future research avenues and directions for practice inside institutions and their organisational fields, that decentre the participatory project and instead consider it one of multiple contexts of participation-in-practice.

Main findings

Focusing on how participation was organised, maintained and done in two museums, the study primarily focused on practitioners' practices. Deconstructing their work in three moments – creating opportunities for participation, planning for and doing participatory projects – mapped out a series of practices through which they do participation in their respective museums. Table 3 includes an overview of these practices, as well as practices of participants that were organised through practitioners' work. The analysis suggested that both personal understandings about and motivations for participation, experience of work, individual and institutional networks, and external and internal structures shaped how participation is done. The following sections summarise the main findings based on the analysis and discussion.

Table 3. Overview of practices identified and analysed

Creating opportunities for participation	
Financial resources	*Social resources*
Managing applications	Being present
Writing applications	Taking care of networks
Framing application to specific funders	Being a neighbour
Collaborating on applications	
Pivoting	

Planning a participatory project	**Doing participation**	
Negotiating museum structures	*Practitioners*	*Participants*
Negotiating interpretations of participation	Explaining	Making
	Organising	Sharing
	Reflecting	

Supporting maintenance work

It became clear that even though they were presented as taking place in different moments, the practices analysed in this study are related; planning does not stop once a project starts but turns into an organisational aspect of facilitation and 'being present' continues during participatory projects. This continuous perspective on practices that constitute participation makes it useful to consider practitioners' practices as maintenance work. Through this work they bring together people, internal and external structures, and material to make it possible for participatory projects to take place in their specific museums. Calling this maintenance work highlights it as embodied, improvisational, ongoing, relational, and invisible work that requires structural and financial support.

This maintenance work is challenged in a few ways. Importantly, some of the practices that contributed to participation were developed outside of direct work tasks, considered difficult or one of too many tasks in the museum staff's busy schedules. As a result, these practices could end up being un- or under-supported by the organisational structures for compensation, or not recognised as contributory by practitioners themselves. Especially those practices that do not fall neatly within project boundaries seem to be at risk of remaining organisationally invisible. The most important of this in-between-projects work are those embodied practices through which social contacts are maintained and initiated, where locally-specific, interpersonal and direct contact was deemed crucial. Through repeating and maintaining these social practices, practitioners laid bases for future participation. But, although practitioners stressed the importance of working with the same people over longer periods of time, repetition of projects was sometimes inhibited by the dependency on external funders and their requirements for new project ideas. Fisksätra Museum's staff expressed difficulty with repeating successful projects, as they encountered occasional rejections for applications for similar or repeating ideas.

Practitioners, museum organisations, and funders should find ways to support this maintenance work. Key to this support is to understand the practices constituting participation to be shaped in relation to specific organisational contexts. So, rather than suggesting to introduce skillsets through hiring new people or implementing methods from toolkits, this study proposes how practitioners, organisations and funders each could take a first step to support maintenance work. First, practitioners can enhance inward transparency about participatory projects by involving and updating non-project staff about the impact of participants' involvement on existing procedures. This would allow for a broader set of people within larger organisations to understand and support work with participants, even if they are not directly involved in a project themselves. Second, organisations can focus on providing support for the sharing of internally developed practice-based knowledge. Practitioners working with participation have finetuned knowledge about, for example, how to deal with internal and external structures and networks, such as funding agencies and calendars, and potential supportive or inhibiting procedures embedded within the respective institution, in specific ways. Creating supportive knowledge management structures and evaluation processes that support organisational learning would make it possible and worthwhile for practitioners to then mindfully experiment with participation. Third, importantly, it became apparent that some of this maintenance work can be shaped by uncertainty caused by a dependency on external funding. Funding agencies should support organisations to investigate the ways in which participation is maintained in their specific museum, by providing funding for such investigation. Furthermore, I underscore what Bienkowski (2018) suggests in his evaluative

report, that funders might consider how they can support organisations to build and maintain 'long-term relationships that do not start with a fixed project idea' (p. 28). This is not only a matter of looking beyond funding short-term projects, as has long been argued for (Lynch, 2011b), but this is also about funding work that builds on or repeats previous successes. Offering opportunities for longer-term funding that is non-project specific, allows for repetition, and is geared towards relationship-building would explicitly support museums' ability to work 'with the participation of communities' (ICOM, 2022b).

Diversifying participants' practices

In the two museums central to this study, participants' practices primarily revolved around making and sharing. The analysis of making practices showed how participants are engaged in creative or expressive practices, within specific limitations set out by project themes, museums resources and project schedules, which could be interpreted through a focus on the process of making, or the produced end-product. Practitioners and participants would sometimes differently emphasise either the product or process of making. This can lead to a different understanding of which project goals are achieved and how. Sharing was further distinguished to include both inner-world sharing, where participants would share their thoughts, opinions, feelings or ideas with others in the group, and productive sharing, where sharing with external audiences became part of a project's goal. Oftentimes, these sharing practices mix, and participants are asked to share their personal memories and stories with external audiences. The commonly found practices centralise participants' productive and contributing role in participatory projects, and thus perpetuate what Morse (2021) has described as the 'contributory logic' of participation. Practitioners engage participants in these practices during moments of interaction through organising and explaining.

The research confirmed that these moments of interaction involve emotion work of practitioners (Morse, 2021; Munro, 2014), and asserts that through practitioners' affective labour, participants engage in affective practices. This can be both productive and problematic. At once their emotion work can contribute to the creation of 'socio-affective spaces of engagement,' in which people make connections with each other and around museological content (Mucha, 2022). This could be further explored, because the findings also suggest that participants might be hesitant to do such emotion work. Furthermore, the study suggests that when participants' affective practices become instrumental in the creation of content shared with external audiences, for example when their stories shared in participatory interactions form the content for exhibitions, practitioners need to seriously consider the purpose of participants' engagement as well as their own role as caretaker of people's reflections. In order to transform participatory projects within a 'contributory

logic' into a 'logic of care' as suggested by Morse (2021), attention should be given to how projects engage participants in specific practices that perpetuate their productive or contributing role. Future studies and practice can focus on developing alternatives, such as creative and remediation practices suggested by Mucha (2022).

Participatory projects versus participation

Throughout this study a tension became apparent between the participatory project, as the locus of attention of practitioners and academics, and participation, as a concept deriving meaning from its ideological origins and from interpretations of the museum within new museology. The focus on everyday work, rather than underlying ideology or questions of power, helped to see how practitioners negotiated goals as democratisation and empowerment tied to the concept of participation into project design. This happened throughout project development, for example when interpreting meaningful participation as projects that are useful for participants, reflecting amongst colleagues about how to facilitate while being mindful of power dimensions, or questioning if inviting people to participate is worth their unpaid time. As such, this study suggests that participation is always pragmatically achieved. Practical considerations, however, are hardly taken serious in academic literature as constituting of the meaning of participation. If practical concerns are presented, the focus has been on analysing organisational structures supporting or inhibiting participatory goals, rather than on the everyday pragmatic solutions found by staff through which participatory goals become actualised in projects. Hence, this study invites future research to attend more to the realisation of participation as it unfolds in practice, in relation to organisational structures and peer-to-peer reflection, but also in interaction between practitioners and participants.

In addition to this call to scholarship, the study suggests that practitioners further pay attention to moments of negotiation of participatory goals when they design and work on projects. First, museums can pay attention to these negotiations by analysing how a participatory project is managed as a work project within the organisation. The discrepancy between a work and participatory project can reveal where participatory goals might conflict with the procedures, structures and timelines of a work project in which the participatory project has to be integrated. Work projects can start well over a year before, with idea development and application processes, and end after reports to funders have been written. More people than facilitators and participants are part of this work project, and participatory goals could be explicitly discussed starting with initial planning meetings, application writing, and negotiations with institutional actors. Furthermore, when participants leave, report writing to external funders and evaluation within the organisation, are further work project elements that are managed. Considering

from the start how the goals and deadlines of the work project will be managed in relation to the participatory project, anticipating where they overlap or potentially conflict, can point practitioners to moments in which to pay extra attention to how participatory goals can be realised. In turn, recognising the discrepancy between the management of the work and participatory project, could also identify places to enhance involvement of participants.

Second, the study highlighted that practitioners can have strong ideas about why participation is important, or why a project should or should not be participatory. They can be passionate about and strongly motivated by these ideas. Their ideas, however, might be different from their colleagues', even if participation is included in the museum's mission statement. In staff's everyday work settings in the museum, while under time pressure and confronted with multiple critical tasks or assignments, pragmatic decisions about participatory projects are more pressing and discussed than the participatory goals discussed in the literature. As a result, without communication about individual practitioners' underlying ideals connected to participation, conflicting practices within the same organisation might arise. Practitioners and organisations should thus consider having, and taking seriously, conversations about their understanding of participatory goals.

Overall, rather than advocating for specific methods, participatory processes, or even organisational structures, this investigation into practices urges practitioners and researchers to consider that participation goals and ideals are always contextually bound and shaped in practice. Participatory projects are only one of these contexts. This study further described the organisational context, and urges to pay attention to museum's societal context in future research and practice. Importance should especially be placed on the connecting points between these contexts. After I contextualise the findings through a discussion of the limitations of this study, I conclude with a proposal that brings together these three contexts in a practice-based infrastructure of participation. This proposal provides avenues for further research and developments in practice.

Considerations for future research

The study mapped out and analysed practices constituting participation in two museums. The investigation generated ethnographic data through participant observation and interviews that shed light on the everyday, organisationally situatedness of participation in museums. This qualitative inquiry contributes to the fields of museum and information studies with rich descriptions and detailed understandings of practices constituting participation in memory institutions. At the same time, the findings are based on data necessarily defined by the general limitations of ethnographic fieldwork.

Within the context of the focus on ALM institutions in information studies, this study has specifically and solely homed in on participation practices in museums, and left aside the library and archival settings where participation is equally on the agenda (e.g. Benoit III and Eveleigh, 2019; Cuong Nguyen, Patridge and Edwards, 2012; Hetland et al., 2020). The study has, however, provided further interpretation of some findings presented in boundary-crossing ALM surveys (Andresen et al., 2020; Audunson et al., 2019; Huvila, 2014). The findings of this study could be relevant for those institutions that frequently work with project-based participation. The identified practices in this study could furthermore be used to develop further comparisons between memory institutions, and to interpret findings of future quantitative studies covering a larger scope of practice.

Another choice made in the study design, to include a broad interpretation of participation based on practitioners' practices, could be considered a limitation. Scholars focused on the political and ideological origin of participation have previously warned against a watering down of the concept (Carpentier et al., 2019). From the outset, the focus of this study has been on how participation is done in practice, as such, it was considered to be crucial to centre what practitioners in both museums call participation *as* participation. Because both museums organised a great variety of projects, but none in digital settings, this definition remained broad but excluded online participation. In the analysis, the investigation further built on the organisational situatedness of participation in practice, rather than ideological meanings of the concept. In future studies, it would be interesting to consider the identified practices in relation to more narrowly defined participatory methods such as co-production, or the growing and quickly developing field of digital participation. This would also benefit from increased attention to participants' practices in these particular settings.

Finally, by centring the 'assembled organisation' in the empirical study and analysis (Morse et al., 2018), practices in the organisational field of both museums remained out of focus. This created a strong basis to understand participation as it is bound within internal organisational contexts. However, this excluded descriptions of the particularities of the geographic setting of each museum. This limitation was furthermore introduced through the largely Anglo-Saxon and Nordic literature referred to throughout the study. This was partly inevitable with most of museum studies literature produced in those geographic settings. The findings point to the relevance of considering practices in professional networks, funding agencies and governmental institutions as framing participatory practice, as other have previously attested in relation to museum practice in general and participation in specific (McCall and Gray, 2014; Rex, 2018, 2020; Robinson, 2020). The proposal for a practice-based infrastructure of participation presented next, includes suggestions how to include these areas in future studies whilst continuing to centre participation-in-practice.

Beyond the participatory project: a practice-based infrastructure of participation

As the final conclusion I make an initial proposal in the shape of a vocabulary for future research and practice, based on the analysis presented in this study. I suggest to consider participation as a practice-based infrastructure. Like Juneström (2019), who analysed journalistic practices as related within and the basis of specific information infrastructures, I find the practice lens to be contributory to an infrastructural understanding of participation. With such an understanding, the particularities of a specific (museum) context become central, rather than method, processes or relationships alone.

I propose to look at how practices relate as infrastructure, following the general ideas I outlined in Chapter 3 about a practice-based understanding of infrastructure, building on infrastructure studies (Bowker and Star, 1998; Larkin, 2013; Star and Ruhleder, 1996). Infrastructures are understood to be consisting of materials, systems or structures, and people brought and held together through practices, and producing practices. I specifically pointed to infrastructures appearing through practice (Star and Ruhleder, 1996, p. 113), which entails both an understanding that infrastructures are designed and built (Marttila and Botero, 2017), and that infrastructures produce practices (Star and Ruhleder, 1996, p. 114). I also pointed to Larkin's (2013) contribution to understand infrastructures as having symbolic meaning in addition to their function.

Throughout this study, three particular contexts of participation came forward that bring in specific materials, people and systems or structures: the 'assembled organisation' of the museum (Morse et al., 2018), the moment(s) of interaction between museum and participants, and the museum's relation to and position in society. Participation is done in practice, through the bringing together of these three contexts.

The first context of configured material, people and systems or structures in the practice-based infrastructure of participation, is the organisational context, or the 'assembled organisation' (Morse et al., 2018). This context includes the materials, structures and people that form together specific procedures, organisational culture, demands and possibilities for participatory projects. Both function and characteristics of internal systems impact this context. This study described museum calendars and their rigidity, division of labour within organisation, funding structures that can produce uncertainty in museum practice. Others have previously highlighted further elements of this context, such as documentation practices (Rex, 2018), collection records and management (Huvila, 2013; Turner, 2016), and information infrastructures (Jansson, 2018; Kist and Tran, 2021). Each organisation includes a variety of actors, ranging from curators, facilitators, educators, communication staff, volunteers, conservation staff, exhibition designers. Each with different relations to the organisation as freelancing, volunteering, consulting, part- or

fulltime salaried staff. The resources and collections of museums, but also everyday work-related materials are part of this 'assembled organisation'.

The second context is that of the moment(s) of interaction between museum and participants. These include distinguished participatory projects, with their own specific goals, methods, resources and parameters of how people meet. These projects can be multivarious: long or short, with many moments of interaction or one-time workshops, taking place in backstage museum spaces, outside the museum or in exhibition halls, including multiple processes, and various materials. As well as facilitating practitioners, this context includes (potential) participants and their networks, ideas, interests, and schedules. In addition to organised participatory projects, however, this study also suggests that moment(s) of interaction happen between projects. These meetings are not guided by particular methods or plans, but rather can be more spontaneous interactions. As such, the context thus also includes a more diverse group of people, including source communities that are not participants, stakeholders, organisational partners, organised groups, passers-by, one-time audiences, frequent visitors, artists, or local collaborators. Materials such as written project plans, project resources, or the museum collection, as well as agreements about previously established collaborations or externally created participatory methods can furthermore form this context.

The third context is the museum in society. This context includes external policies and discussions taking place in the so-called organisational field as understood in neo-institutional theory (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983), as well as a museum's network. Professional networks such as ICOM, in addition to the academic and professional literature form the organisational field, as a place where participatory goals and definitions are discussed, criticized, and explicated. In addition to the organisational field, the social context includes the local network of the museum, such as external, local and international organisations, which bring their own ideas, materials, methods and people into a collaboration. Overall, in this context practices are shaped around, amongst others, external policies affected by politics and translated through funding calls, people's ideas about and relationship with a museum, and the material and socio-technical infrastructures present in external partner organisations and political systems.

Practices constituting participation in museums are shaped in and shape these three contexts. Simultaneously, and here comes the point of an infrastructure-view, they 'produce effects' between these three contexts (Nicolini, 2012, p. 235). This study has centred many of these relational practices, but also revealed spaces where further research can be beneficial in the three connecting points between contexts.

The first connecting point lies between the context of the 'assembled organisation' and moment(s) of interaction. This study shed light on how projects plans are put into practice, as one element of this connecting point. It will be fruitful to consider what happens the other way around and how

moments of interaction influence, rather than contribute to, the organisation. Studies like Boersma (2022), focusing on outcomes for participants and museums in projects with 'flight migrants', have recently contributed to such understanding. Further research might investigate how participatory practices and non-hierarchical decision-making are or could be integrated within museum organisations. Results from such studies could further help to distinguish what a supportive organisational culture for participation in museums would look like, much like Steen and Tuurnas (2020) and Tuurnas (2015) have pointed out as crucial in governmental institutions working with co-production. Another contribution could lie in focusing on how non-project staff relates to and interacts with participants and participatory projects in their everyday work, including staff such as conservators, janitors, guards and communication personnel.

The second connection point in this practice-based infrastructure of participation, lies between the moment(s) of interaction and the museum's external context. This point offers avenues for further research in visitor studies, information studies and the broader field of research on citizen participation. This study briefly touched upon how both museums included descriptions, pictures or materials about the process of production in exhibitions created through co-production. The question remains how such inclusions shape or change visitors' understanding of these exhibitions, participatory practices and the particular museum. More systematic analysis of exhibition materials that translate participatory processes to wider audiences could be a fruitful topic in visitor studies. Such research could focus on how visitors' understanding of a co-produced exhibition is impacted. Furthermore, this connection point should be understood to also include participants' individual networks and contexts. Participants' practices are admittedly only limitedly included in this study and could benefit from further investigation and contextualisation. From this infrastructure view on participation, I specifically suggest that, in addition to studying participants' motivations (Pruulmann-Vengerfeldt and Runnel, 2018) or experiences and practice (Boersma, 2022; Knudsen, 2016; Lynch, 2011b), it is important to create knowledge about the contextualisation of participants' participation. This regards their engagement with the museum through projects as well as through other spontaneous and unstructured moments of interaction, and how individual participants integrate and understand these encounters in their personal lives. Such investigations can benefit the broader field of citizen participation, and the understanding of people's motivation in relation to work with museums. Finally, this connection point also puts forward interesting spaces for cross-institutional comparisons and studies about the interplay between professionals' and their organisational field, from an information studies perspective. Literature has focused on professionals' attitudes about their respective institutional practices with social engagement and participation (e.g. Andresen et al., 2020). It would be interesting to study how

the organisational fields of museums, libraries and archives interlink these respective institutions and investigate potential crosspollination between the professionals' use of literature, toolkits and reports geared toward other types of institutions.

The third connection point lies between the 'assembled organisation' and the societal context of the museum, including their organisational field and local context. Understanding this convergence requires further concentration on communication from museum to funding agencies, through written reports during and after projects. Such a study could furthermore elaborate on the work of Rex (2020), which identified bases of decision-making about museum funding from the perspectives of funding agencies and governmental institutions. This convergence is probably most visible in management practices, and has been partly investigated by Morse (2021) who focused on the internal impact of management. The academic discussion about participation in museums could benefit from further research into the practices of management in relation to external partners, funding agencies, or political institutions to better grasp the conjunctions between organisational field and organisation. This also is a fruitful relation to investigate conversely, in order to understand how participation methods and critical perspectives travel from academic and professional literature into practice and vice-versa.

As a whole, the practice-based infrastructure view on participation offers a way to dissect institutionally organised participation in museums and outside, centralising a practice-based, contextualised understanding of participation as distributed in the 'assembled organisation', moment(s) of interaction and social context of the institution. Arguing that participation is specific to and embedded in an organisation with their respective organisational structures, their socio-political context, their institutional history, their staff and participants (with their own motivations, interests and connections), urges researchers to be less concerned with different modes, models and levels of participation. Rather, the infrastructure view proposes spaces to investigate how and why these methods, levels and models can appear both rigid, as they are difficult to change by one practitioner or participant, and flexible, as they appear through negotiation, as well as repeated and ongoing practice, in specific contexts. Furthermore, these infrastructures of participation can then be investigated in order to critically analyse how participation methods, projects and processes, gain symbolic meaning, following Larkin (2013).

The discussion above, as a whole, puts forward suggestions for further empirical studies considering how participation is constructed through different materials (e.g. mission statements, reports to funders, exhibition materials), actors (e.g. collaborators, non-project museum staff, funders), and structures and socio-technological systems (e.g. online exhibition spaces, collection records). Finally, this proposal can point museum practitioners and funders to potential directions of strengthening or elaborating current work with participation, that does not centre project-based but longer-term practices

of participation and collaboration with people and groups. Ultimately, I hope the findings prove useful for practitioners in institutions wanting but struggling to initiate working with 'the participation of communities' or wishing to open up their project-focused approach to a longer-term outlook. So instead of looking for methods of participation to implement, they would look at practices to enhance, critically investigate, or support.

Sammanfattning (Swedish summary)

Bortom deltagarprojektet: praktiker för att organisera, planera och åstadkomma deltagande

I sitt demokratiseringsarbete har minnesinstitutioner – som bibliotek, museer och arkiv – i allt högre grad börjat intressera sig för att arbeta med medborgarna. Museer, som står i fokus för denna studie, organiserar olika slags deltagarprojekt. Detta är projekt som är centrerade kring samarbeten, engagemang och/eller besökarnas eller deltagarnas delaktighet. Denna nya tendens på museerna är i linje med det generellt ökade fokuset på medborgardeltagande och långsiktiga insatser för att göra tillgången till kulturarvet mindre exklusiv. Deltagande är ett koncept som omfattar olika löften som är relaterade till demokratisering. I den egenskapen organiseras deltagarprojekt för att förändra eller demokratisera museer. Samtidigt har beslutsprocesser, mål och resultat i sådana projekt problematiserats inom forskningen. Ofta utgår studierna från en uppfattning om vad som är ett bra eller ett dåligt deltagarprojekt. Museianställda själva uppges ha både positiva och negativa inställningar till, och erfarenheter av, detta komplicerade arbete. Något som gör det extra svårt är att dessa projekt ofta är kortsiktigt finansierade och bara kan genomföras en gång. Forskning har visat att de yrkesverksammas roll som experter håller på att förändras och lyfter fram att det krävs en rad färdigheter för detta nya sätt att arbeta. Dessutom är det inte alla organisatoriska förfaranden och system som stöder de olika krav som arbetet med medborgare medför. Kort sagt: deltagande är kopplat till olika löften om demokratisering, och museerna arbetar till stor del med projekt som medför en rad olika utmaningar.

Hittills har forskningen främst gett oss kunskap om vad som händer inom ett deltagarprojekt och behandlar museets organisation som en bakgrund till detta arbete. Samtidigt efterfrågar yrkesverksamma och forskare deltagarprojekt som är bättre integrerade för att uppnå målen med deltagandet. Vi saknar kunskap om hur deltagarprojekt organiseras, planeras och genomförs inom museernas specifika organisatoriska kontexter. Den här avhandlingen bygger därför vidare på den informationsvetenskapliga traditionen för att undersöka de arbetssätt som yrkesverksamma på minnesinstitutioner använder. Studien utgår från uppfattningen att det är

genom olika praktiker – hur människor agerar och vad de gör – som vår värld skapas, och ställer i den egenskapen frågan hur museer ”åstadkommer” deltagande.

Syfte

Syftet med denna avhandling är att undersöka de praktiker som bidrar till deltagarprojekt för att förstå på vilket sätt deltagande är organisationsbundet, hur det underhålls och hur det åstadkoms på museer. Studien analyserar projektgenomförarnas praktiker och, i mindre utsträckning, deltagare i och mellan olika museiprojekt. Utifrån denna analys ger studien kunskap om hur deltagande skapas i praktiken, ”bortom deltagarprojektet”, som titeln antyder.

Den övergripande forskningsfrågan är indelad i fyra delfrågor:

I. Vilka praktiker använder sig projektgenomförare av vid förberedelserna inför eller under själva genomförandet av deltagarprojekt på det museum där de arbetar?
II. Vilka praktiker är deltagarna delaktiga i när de är en del av deltagarprojekt på museer?
III. Vilka organisatoriska strukturer genomsyrar dessa praktiker, och hur?
IV. Hur kopplas sociala mål till det deltagande som sker i, eftersträvas eller uppnås genom dessa praktiker?

Metod och material

Forskningsfrågorna undersöks genom att etnografiska empiriska data analyseras. Under två perioder mellan 2019 och 2021 utförde jag etnografiskt fältarbete – deltagarobservationer, intervjuer och dokumentanalys – på två museer i norra Europa: Fisksätra Museum (FM) i Sverige och Museum Europäischer Kulturen (MEK) i Tyskland. Båda dessa museer har en lång tradition av att bedriva deltagarprojekt, men är två väldigt olika organisationer. De presenteras inte i egenskap av användare av bästa praxis, utan undersöks som platser där deltagarprojekt organiseras, beaktas och ifrågasätts. Snarare än att göra en utförlig jämförelse mellan de båda museerna fokuserar jag på praktikerna som de tillämpas i förhållande till de specifika organisatoriska kontexterna. Som deltagande observatör gjorde jag omfattande och detaljerade fältanteckningar utifrån möten, workshops, projekt, den vardagliga arbetsmiljön och samtal med museianställda. Vidare genomförde jag intervjuer med personalen om tidigare genomförda och aktuella deltagarprojekt. Etnografiska studier präglas alla av att de undersöker en specifik tid och plats och en mindre, specifik representation av ett fenomen.

Denna metod ansågs dock nödvändig för att kunna göra en detaljerad och djupgående analys av praktiker som hittills har kunnat gå under radarn.

De deltagarprojekt på MEK och FM som diskuteras i den här studien kan sammanfattas som platsbundna, personliga samarbeten med eller aktiveringar av externa intressenter med inriktning på att producera material eller kortvariga resultat som anses meningsfulla utifrån museets, deltagarnas och/eller besökarnas perspektiv. Detta är en medvetet bred definition av deltagande som bygger på det arbete som har utförts på de båda museerna under mer än ett årtionde. Exempel på dessa projekt är bland annat utställningar av material som har skapats av deltagare och/eller som bygger på deltagares berättelser, konstnärliga interventioner i permanenta utställningar, workshop-serier för filmskapande, språk och grafisk teknik, offentliga evenemang som organiseras tillsammans med olika intressegrupper, utställningar som innefattar deltagarnas egna berättelser utifrån intervjuer, workshops där människor bjuds in för att reflektera kring samlingar samt aktiviteter för att göra besökarna delaktiga i en utställning.

Att skapa möjligheter för, planera och åstadkomma deltagande

Analysen presenteras i fyra kapitel. Den inleds med de praktiker genom vilka projektgenomförarna skapar möjligheter för att organisera deltagande på sitt museum. Detta syftar på de sätt genom vilka projektgenomförarna skapar och bibehåller ekonomiska och sociala resurser som främjar projekten. På museum som är beroende av extern finansiering lägger projektgenomförarna mycket tid på att skriva projektansökningar och invänta svar. De måste söka och hantera information om finansieringsmöjligheter och implementera detta arbete i sina dagliga arbetsuppgifter på museet. Finansierande organisationer arbetar ofta med specifika ansökningar och tidsfrister och museets ansökningsarbete genomförs därför i förhållande till dessa externa system, deras språk och deras tidsfrister. Finansieringscykeln skapar osäkerhet. Denna osäkerhet leder till att de museianställda noggrant utarbetar sina ansökningar till särskilda finansiärer och samarbetar strategiskt med olika partner. En tredje konsekvens av denna osäkerhet är att museet antingen senarelägger eller tidigarelägger projektstarten, oberoende av om finansieringen har blivit godkänd eller inte. Intressant är att även i de fall där projektfinansieringen inte godkänns kan det material som har skapats under processen användas i vidareutvecklingen av projekten.

Deltagande förutsätter också att museet har, tar initiativ till och upprätthåller kontakt med olika personer. Dessa personer kan vara besökare, potentiella och före detta deltagare samt partnerorganisationer som man samarbetar med. Museianställda på MEK och FM försöker skapa dessa sociala resurser för deltagande genom att vara närvarande och tillgängliga. De anställda underströk vikten av att ha direktkontakt med besökare, även utanför de specifika projekten, som en fortlöpande och långsiktig investering. Detta

är dock inte en standardrutin eller något som ingår i deras arbetsuppgifter. På liknande sätt upprätthålls befintliga nätverk genom att man gång på gång arbetar med samma organisationer eller deltagare och de anställda tar egna initiativ för att hålla kontakten genom att skapa och peka på möjligheter för personerna i sina nätverk. Det lokalt inriktade FM har en särskilt positiv inställning till att bibehålla sociala resurser, eftersom deras projekt är centrerade kring lokala frågor och de anställda agerar utifrån ett personligt ansvar gentemot grannskapet. Genom dessa praktiker skapas ramar för deltagarprojekten. Tidsramar och budgetar fastställs inför ansökningar, och besökare, samarbetspartner samt tidigare och potentiella deltagare kontaktas eller tittar förbi.

Därefter omvandlas dessa ramar till handlingsplaner genom planering. Ur ett etnometodologiskt perspektiv ses planering som en form av förhandling – att arbeta med och anpassa sig efter olika organisatoriska strukturer och individuella perspektiv. De anställda på de båda museerna planerar projekt i förhållande till hur överenskommelser sker, eller kan ske, inom organisationen baserat på dess kalendarium, arbetsfördelning och individuella arbetsscheman. Projektgenomförare och museer har dessutom konkreta idéer kring vad deltagande är eller borde vara. Båda dessa personliga och organisatoriska perspektiv har inflytande över varför ett deltagarprojekt planeras. På liknande sätt beaktar de anställda deltagarnas särskilda önskemål eller behov inför projekten. Att planering handlar om att förhandla innebär att alla dessa faktorer beaktas tillsammans. I praktiken måste de anställda prioritera de praktiska möjligheterna och planera utifrån museets kapacitet.

Efter planeringen möts projektgenomförare och deltagare under själva deltagarprojektet. Deras praktiker är kopplade till varandra men presenteras i två olika kapitel. De praktiker som projektgenomförare använder sig av och som analyseras i den här studien är: förklara, organisera och reflektera. De anställda, som här fungerar som facilitatorer, förklarar (eller förklarar inte) hur man använder nödvändigt material, särskilda teman eller jargonger samt de organisatoriska gränserna. Genom att förklara skapar facilitatorerna ramar för deltagarinteraktionen på museet för deltagarna. Ibland kan det vara svårt att avgöra vad som ska förklaras, eftersom projektgenomförarna själva är vana vid museets organisatoriska strukturer. Om förklaringar av underliggande förväntningar eller praktiker som kan påverka ett deltagarprojekt inte ges kan detta leda till konflikter. Den praktik som tillämpas för själva organiserandet kretsar kring att arrangera projektets praktiska delar. Detta innefattar såväl framtagande av material och resurser inför möten som fortlöpande projekthantering. På sätt och vis fortsätter planeringen under hela det pågående deltagarprojektet. Den tredje praktiken som analyseras är reflekterande. Genom reflektioner kan projektgenomförarna hantera svårigheter när dessa uppstår i praktiken. Det kan röra sig om svåra frågor som ofta är kopplade till målen för deltagandet, som maktrelationer och beslutsprocesser.

Genom dessa praktiker får projektgenomförarna deltagarna att bli delaktiga i skapandet och delandet. Projekten kretsar ofta kring det som deltagarna skapar eller gör. Skapandet ser annorlunda ut i varje projekt som diskuteras, men tre egenskaper har identifierats. Skapandet är kreativt och syftar på både själva användandet av kreativiteten och skapandet av något. Praktiken avgränsas också av projektets teman, material och rumsliga gränser. Vidare kan den både diskuteras och tolkas som en process eller en slutprodukt. Denna senare egenskap kan leda till en annan förståelse för vilka projektmål som uppnås, och hur. Analysen identifierade också två olika typer av delande: delandet av den egna inre världen (”inner-world sharing”) och det produktiva delandet. Det förra innefattar delandet av åsikter, minnen, känslor och idéer med andra deltagare. Produktivt delande handlar om att dela det arbete som skapades som en del av projektet med en extern publik. Ofta överlappar dessa typer av delande varandra och projekten är inriktade på delandet av deltagarnas personliga berättelser, minnen och erfarenheter som (in)direkt kan användas som innehåll i utställningar, samlingar eller på annat sätt.

Avslutande diskussion

Analysen visar att personliga uppfattningar om och motivation för deltagande, arbetserfarenhet, individuella och institutionella nätverk samt externa och interna strukturer avgör hur projektgenomförarna skapar deltagande. Deras praktiker kan förstås som att de står i relation till varandra och som att de pågår mellan och under deltagarprojekten. Flera viktiga resultat framkom i analysen.

Projektgenomförarnas praktiker som bidrar till deltagande på museer kan ses som ett underhållsarbete. Detta arbete förkroppsligas, vilket innebär att projektgenomförarna utgår från sina personliga uppfattningar och erfarenheter, vilka har förvärvats genom praktik. Det innebär också att deras fysiska närvaro är avgörande för möjligheten till, och utvecklandet av, deltagande på det museum där de arbetar. Dessutom kräver detta arbete ständig uppmärksamhet på, och arbete med, de analyserade praktikerna. Deltagande sker inte genom ett projekt, en gång, eller genom ett möte med potentiella deltagare, utan är snarare något som behöver underhållas över tid. Samtidigt är det aldrig en enkel upprepning av praktiker utan kräver snarare improvisation. En viktig insikt är att detta arbete ibland kan sakna organisatoriskt stöd, antingen för att systemen för ersättning inte värdesätter det – det är bara en av många arbetsuppgifter – eller för att projektgenomförarna inte prioriterar det.

Finansiärer, projektgenomförare och museer bör prioritera att kartlägga och stötta detta underhållsarbete. För att ge stöd åt detta arbete är det viktigt att inse att det är starkt kopplat till den specifika organisatoriska kontexten. Det betyder att det är nödvändigt att ha praktikbaserad kunskap om hur man kan arbeta med vissa organisationsstrukturer och rutiner på museer och utanför dessa. Av den anledningen bör stödet vara inriktat på att skapa möjligheter att

dela denna praktikbaserade kunskap mellan kollegor och mellan institutioner. Analysen understryker vidare att enskilda projektgenomförare kan ha starka åsikter om syftet med deltagandet, men att skillnader i synen på hur målen för deltagandet bör uppnås kan uppstå i praktiken. Tidsbegränsningar och osäkerhet kan leda till att underhållsarbetet för deltagande främst kretsar kring praktiska beslut. Det är en god idé att tydligt diskutera individuella tolkningar av deltagande utöver dessa praktiska frågor.

Studien visar också att projektgenomförare och deltagare även är känslomässigt engagerade, bland annat genom känsloarbete. Detta bekräftar resultaten från tidigare studier, vilka har fokuserat på dessa skilda grupper i andra kontexter. Den här studien vidareutvecklar denna forskning genom att lyfta fram förslaget att både projektgenomförarnas och deltagarnas känsloarbete bör förstås och problematiseras som att de är relaterade till varandra. Deltagarnas känsloarbete kan gynna deras interaktion med kulturarvet, men de är kanske inte alltid intresserade av att bli engagerade på det viset. Dessutom bygger ofta det som delas med externa besökare på deltagarnas affektiva praktiker. När personliga berättelser eller bilder står i fokus för det som delas med externa besökare bör projektgenomförarna gå försiktigt fram och vara uppmärksamma på de ögonblick då tidigare överenskomna, abstrakta mål för delandet blir konkreta. Deltagarnas beslutsfattande kring delandet med externa besökare är en kontinuerlig process.

Under arbetet med den här studien blev det tydligt att det finns en spänning mellan deltagarprojektet, som står i fokus för projektgenomförarens och akademikerns uppmärksamhet, och deltagande som ett koncept vars mening härrör från dess ideologiska ursprung och i relation till museets nymuseologiska tolkningar. Fokuset på det dagliga arbetet, snarare än på en underliggande ideologi eller frågor om makt, gav insikter i hur projektgenomförare förhandlade om mål som demokratisering och egenmakt kopplat till deltagandekonceptet som en del av projektets utformning. Snarare än att förespråka specifika metoder, deltagarprocesser eller organisationsstrukturer uppmanar den här undersökningen av praktiker projektgenomförare och forskare att ta hänsyn till att mål och ideal när det gäller deltagande alltid är kontextbundna och utformas i praktiken. Deltagarprojekt är bara en av de kontexter i vilka praktiker utvecklas. Den här studien beskriver även den organisatoriska kontexten och uppmanar till medvetenhet om museets institutionella och samhälleliga kontext i framtida forskning och praktik. Med utgångspunkt i resultaten föreslås deltagande utgöras av de praktiker som formar material, människor och system i och mellan dessa tre kontexter. Framtida forskning bör vara särskilt inriktad på förbindelsepunkterna mellan dessa kontexter. Förslaget öppnar också upp för andra undersökningsfrågor i studier som rör medborgardeltagande på andra (minnes)institutioner.

Slutligen kan detta förslag leda museianställda och finansiärer i riktningar som kan stärka eller utveckla det aktuella arbetet med deltagande på ett sätt som inte kretsar kring projektbaserade utan långsiktigt inriktade praktiker för deltagande och samarbeten med personer och grupper. I slutändan är det min förhoppning att resultaten kan vara användbara för projektgenomförare på institutioner som vill, men som har svårt att, börja arbeta med ”medborgardeltagande” eller som vill vidga sin projektinriktade strategi till ett längre perspektiv. I stället för att försöka hitta metoder för deltagande att implementera skulle de då titta på praktiker som kan stärkas, kritiskt undersökas eller stödjas.

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Appendices

Appendix A – Example Interview guide

Used as a guideline for semi-structured interviews with museum staff.

Phase 1: Introductions

Interviewer introduces herself, discussion of research project and use of data, discussion of previously received information sheet, signing of consent form (if not already previously done), permission to record.

Phase 2: General questions about work in the museum

1. Let's start, would you please introduce yourself?

2. How did you end up in your current position?
   Biography, important dates, changes and events, motivation
   - When did you start at [name of museum]?
   - How is it for you to work here?
   - Have you always had the same position and job description?
   - How has your job changed?

3. Could you please describe a work day for me?
   Work tasks, responsibilities, colleagues
   - Is it a typical day? What makes it typical?
   - What impact your working day? Does it look the same throughout the year?

4. Could you describe an exhibit that you worked on? How did this exhibit come about?
   Work tasks, responsibilities, colleagues, 'standard' work
   - Can you describe your responsibilities and work toward that exhibit?
   - What other people worked on the exhibit?
   - Was this a typical exhibit in your experience?

Phase 3: Questions about participation in the museum and from their perspective

1. I understand you have also worked on participatory exhibits at the museum. What does participation mean to you?
   View on participation, description of concept in own terms

2. How does it relate to what you do?
   View on participation, description of concept in own terms

3. Could you give an example of a(nother) project you have worked on that involved participation? How did this exhibit come about?
   Description of participation in own terms, description of work practices related to participation, description of exhibit
   - What was your role?
   - Who did you work with, inside and outside the institution?
   - How was the exhibit conceived and received within the institution? Why, do you think?
   - What did you find particularly important in the work? What most influenced the exhibit?
   - Looking back, are you satisfied with how it went?

4. If there are no limits, no constraints from within the institution or outside, and you can do the most extraordinary participatory project, what would a participatory project look like?
   - What would be possible that you think is not possible now?
   - Who would participate and what would your role be?

Phase 4: Closure of the interview

Interviewer lets interviewee know these were the final questions, asks interviewee if they would like to add something. The interviewer thanks the interviewee for their time and stops the recording.

Appendix B – Interview data

Name	*Interviewee*	*Date, time, method*
MEK Interview C1	Curator and administrator at MEK	October 2019, 71 minutes, transcribed audio recording, German
MEK Interview C2	Curator at MEK	October 2019, 61 minutes, transcribed audio recording, English
MEK Interview C3	Curator at MEK	7 November 2019, 116 minutes, transcribed audio recording, German
MEK Interview C4a/C4b	Curator at MEK	C4a: 18 November 2019, 124 minutes, transcribed audio recording, German C4b: 2 December 2019, 94 minutes, transcribed audio recording, German
MEK Interview C5	Curatorial trainee at MEK	27 November 2019, 96 minutes, transcribed audio recording, German
MEK Interview C6	Curator at MEK	27 November 2019, 63 minutes, transcribed audio recording, English
MEK Interview C7	Participant in *Perlenhochzeit exhibition*	1 February 2020, an hour, written notes, English
FM Interview Amelie	Co-director at Fisksätra Museum	3 November 2021, 123 minutes, transcribed audio recording, English
FM Interview Cristina	Co-director at Fisksätra Museum	23 April 2021, 53 minutes, transcribed audio recording, English

Appendix C – Documents collected

Museum Europäischer Kulturen

Title	*Type*	*Use*
MEK Application Perlenhochzeit 2019	Digital. Word. Application text	Analysis and triangulation
MEK Cultural Days budget planning 2022	Digital. Excel. Application budget	Triangulation
MEK EKT Working budget Schottland 2022	Digital. Excel. Working document budget	Triangulation
MEK Begeleitprogramm Perlenhochzeit 2019	Digital. Word. Application	Analysis and triangulation
MEK PH Liste Künstlerinnen Perlenhochzeit	Digital. Word. Application appendix	Triangulation
MEK RC Workshop Excel	Digital. PDF. Output of participation workshop	Analysis and triangulation
MEK RC Workshop Scans M15	Digital. PDF. Scans of anonymised written answers participation workshop	Analysis and triangulation

Fisksätra Museum

Title	*Type*	*Use*
FM Inkluderingsprojekter Nacka Kommun 2019	Digital. PDF. Application Nacka municipality	Analysis
FM Fisksätra Museum Annual Report, 2020	Digital. Word. Annual report	Analysis
FM RAÄ, 2019	Digital. PDF. Application to Riksantikvarieämbetet	Analysis
FM Kulturrådet, 2021	Digital. PDF. Application to Kulturrådet	Analysis
FM Verksamhetsstöd Nacka Kommun, 2019	Digital. PDF. Application to Nacka municipality	Analysis
FM Presentation Amelie at NCK conference, 2022	Digital. Word. Written version of public talk, attended by author on 16 February 2022	Analysis

FM Planning document *Sommarjobb* project 2021	Digital. Google Doc. Planning document for 2021 Sommarjobb project.	Analysis and triangulation
FM Evaluation videos	Digital. Notes of evaluation with participants of Sommarjobb project, conducted by the museum. 6 of 8 participants joined the evaluation.	Analysis
FM Verksamhetsplan 2020	Digital. PDF. Internal document with plans for 2020.	Analysis
FM Verskamhetsberättelse 2020	Digital. Word. Internal document with report of realised plans in 2020.	Analysis
FM Verksamhetsplan 2021	Digital. Word. Internal document with plans for 2021.	Triangulation
FM Kallelse årsmöte 2021	Digital. Word. Agenda for board meeting 2021	Triangulation
FM Årsmöte 2021	Digital. Word. Notes of board meeting 2021	Triangulation
FM Community Art och Forskning	Digital. Word. Text for website about meaning of participation.	Triangulation
FM Fisksätra Museums vänner	Digital. Word. Draft text for to be formed network of friends of the Fisksätra Museum	Analysis

Appendix D – Translations

Chapter 5

Tham, A. and Madsen, I. (2015). Vad är Fisksätra? Fisksätra Museum. [online]. Available from: https://www.fisksatramuseum.se/fisks%C3%A4tra-museum-rapport.

Original in Swedish: Fisksätra museums självformulerade uppdrag är att undersöka hur ett museum kan ta plats som ett i vid mening kulturpolitiskt laboratorium. Vi vill knuffa på gränserna för vad ett museum kan vara i ett samhälle som präglas av migration. Med förankring i många former av samarbeten med fisksätrabor, grupper, nätverk och enskilda i lokalsamhället, utvecklar vi parallellt museet som scen för kulturarv och olika konstarter.

Author's translation: Fisksätra Museum's self-formulated mission is to investigate how a museum can be a cultural-political laboratory in the broadest sense. We want to push the boundaries of what a museum can be in a society characterised by migration. Anchored in many forms of collaboration with residents of Fisksätra, groups, networks and individuals of the local community, we are simultaneously developing the museum as a platform for cultural heritage and different art forms.

Fisksätra Museum. Om Fisksätra Museum. Fisksätra Museum Website. [online]. Available from: https://www.fisksatramuseum.se/om-fisksatra-museum [Accessed 26 March 2023].

Original in Swedish: 'Vi ser våra besökare, i alla åldrar, också som deltagare. Våra besökare i samhället hjälper oss att "göra" museet, när de deltar i projekt, föreslår nya satsningar, nya möjliga projekt. Museet arbetar som helhet konstnärligt, i olika konstarter. Och vi arbetar kontinuerligt med fisksätrabornas globala kulturarv. Vi samlar in, ställer ut, iscensätter och levandegör olika kulturarv. Livsberättelser, och andra berättelser, bilder, mönster, musik, kokkonst och andra traditioner. Och i arbete med Community Art/ deltagarprocesser har vi också fokus på frågor som ses som viktiga bland invånarna: erfarenheter av migration, arbetslöshet, ojämlikhet och rasism, brister när det gäller skolutveckling, behov av lokal samhällsutveckling och att som boende på platsen uppleva att kommunens politik inte lyssnar på samhällets invånare.'

Author's translation: 'We see our visitors, of all ages, also as participants. Our visitors in the community help us to 'make/do' the museum, when they participate in projects, suggest new initiatives, new possible projects. The

museum as a whole works artistically, in different art forms. And we are continuously working with the inhabitants' global cultural heritage. We collect, exhibit, stage and bring to life different heritages. Life stories, and other stories, images, patterns, music, cookery and other traditions. And in working with community art/participatory processes, we also focus on issues that are seen as important among residents: experiences of migration, unemployment, inequality and racism, the lack of development of local schools, local community needs, and as local residents, feeling that the municipality does not listen to the community's residents.'

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