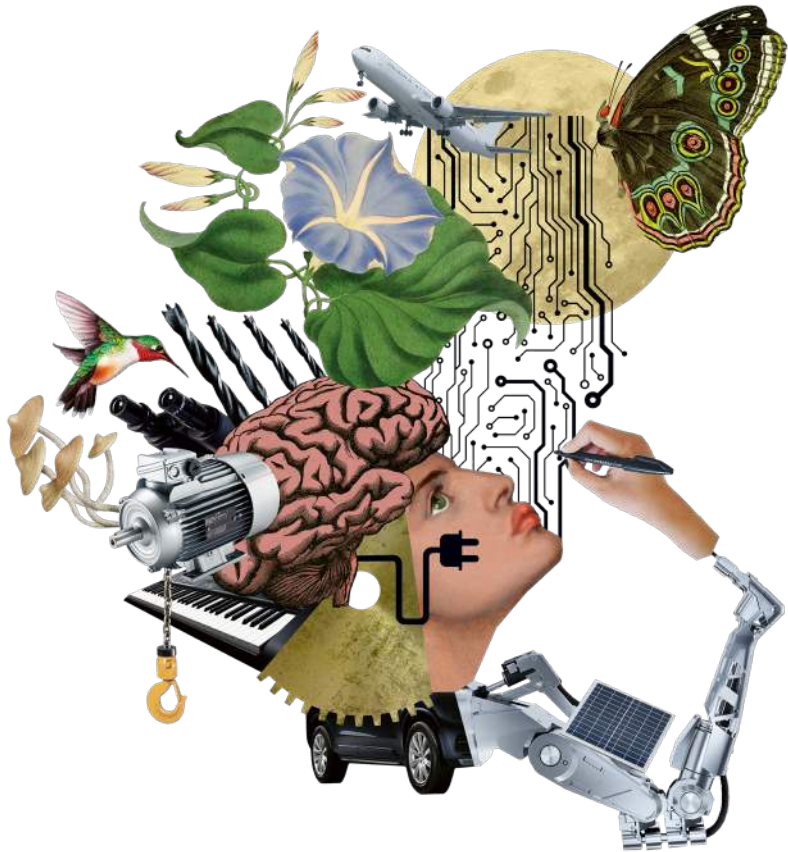


Cross Innovation Toolbox



**Learnings from the Creative
Insight as a Service pilots**

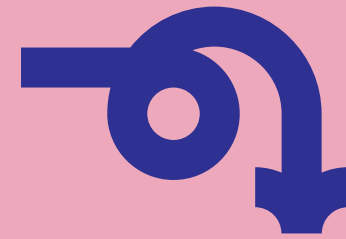
Subtopia

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Introduction



The project Creative Insight as a Service supports the development of creative cross innovations in the Baltic Sea Region. In this project a new cross innovation methodology was developed and piloted in two companies in two partner countries – Poland and Latvia – in 2023.

The aim of the project was to develop and test a creative method for how an intermediary could support cross-sector collaborations between artists and companies. The pilots were set off to question, can creative insights be produced to specific topics on demand?

The Creative Insight as a Service process started with matchmaking the company with a suitable artist for the job. The company defined a relevant challenge or topic, to which they needed new insights and perspectives. The artist had the chance to be onsite at the company or work remotely for a period of one month. The task was to make further inquiries

for the topic, and find one's creative approach, an insight, to be presented back to the company. The insight could be in any format, not necessarily a ready piece of art, yet a sketch, a concept that could convey the approach.

This project has chosen to focus on finding the right questions rather than answers. Every practical cross-innovative collaboration process arises a set of new questions. It is relevant that these questions are shared and discussed, with peers who aim to further develop and implement the practice.

Knowledge sharing is key to further establish cross-sectorial explorations between artists and companies from various sectors.

How to Use this Toolbox

A toolbox is a box to organize, carry, and protect tools for different purposes. In this document we suggest a number of themes – a set of tools – to structure and organize cross sectoral collaborations.

Under each theme will be found a number of questions, relating to each tool; each stage of the collaboration. You can also find digital resources and templates belonging to each theme and an open document, where users may shape the future of cross-innovative collaborations together.

Glossary

Artist a professional practitioner of any artistic or creative expression.

Company an organization that hosts the artist; it may be a corporate, SME, public body or NGO, or a department of a larger organization.

Intermediary is an external institution with expertise to support the bridge building between companies and artists for innovative activities.

Collaboration a situation in which people work together on a shared goal.

Cross innovation using tools and methods from one sector in society, to innovate another sector. In this document we focus on using artistic tools and methods in other parts of society.

Method

1. Matchmake

What kind of company has readiness for a cross innovation process? What kind of topic/area of the company's operations would be a good fit; what department could be hosting the process? What kind of topical challenges and needs of development in the company could the creative cross innovation process support? How to make the process needed and relevant for the company, to find their why to collaborate?

What kind of artist could be a good match for the company? How to ensure artistic and collaborative quality of the artist? How can different artists and approaches be presented; how to include diversity and variety to the offering? How to support the company to understand the differences and decide who they want to collaborate with?

How are the process resources created? What resources are needed for the intermediary? How does the process commence, how does it finalize?

2. Set Up the Process

What is the structure, framework and practical road-map of the collaboration? What is the timeline and milestones of the process? What kind of phases does the artistic work include, and what are the phases of the company? What are the responsibilities of the different parties and what kind of agreements need to be established? How does the process start, how does it end? Does the process involve a delivery of an item, an activity or an insight?



Digital Resources
Templates for invitation and contract



3. Facilitate and Support

How can the intermediary build a bridge between the parties and establish a common ground? How to be a translator between working cultures, and ensure a shared why? How to support the artist in navigating the work, and inspire to take artistic risks? How to support the company to create access for the artist, to realize the values created, and support the abilities to take them forward? How to build trust between the parties?

How to Ask the Right Questions

What are the essential questions for this collaboration? What are the initial questions, and how does the questions evolve on the way? What is the needed information for the different parties of the collaboration; what are the relevant questions of the artist, and of the company?

How to Manage Expectations

What are the expectations of the artist, of the company and of the intermediary? How can these expectations be managed, revisited, communicated and developed? How to be aware of each other's expectations, and share them to build a common ground? What is a success for this process, for the artist, for the company, for the intermediary? How to leave space for exploration – creative unexpected possibilities – expectations also for the unexpected?



Digital Resources
Settings for a productive
outcome



4. Communicate

How can communication best support the facilitation and outcome of the process? What is told about the process, why, when and how, for whom? Who creates the communication contents, and who needs to be involved? How can the communication support managing expectations of the parties? How are the participants in the process (including employees and others) being part in the communication, as in pictures, stories etc.? What is documented and shared to a wider public? What has to remain candid, and why? How can the value of the collaboration be revisited through activities of communication?

5. Evaluate

How to identify the values of the process? How can these be explored in an inclusive, co-creative manner with the different parties? How to gather evidence; what kind of evidence should be prioritized and why? What can be evaluated, by whom, and what is excluded from the evaluation? What kind of indicators can be created? How is evidence gathered and what can be known about the collaboration? How can the evaluation support the reflection of the process and the result? How is the gathered knowledge supporting the building of the next steps; how can the evidence be useful, now and for future iterations? For whom should the evidence be useful and how can it build on a shared knowledge base with open access?

6. Develop the Value

How can the results of the process be formulated, shared and discussed? How can there be a space for reflection, new knowledge and insights? How can the results be integrated in the company? What can the participants learn from the process and what kind of new seeds for further collaborations are emerging? What kind of unexpected outcomes are there and avenues for further exchange? How to discover and affirm immediate value, and identify the possible long-term side effects to be followed up?

6.

**Digital Resources
Evaluation Tool**



Case Study 1

Draugiem Group, Latvia

At the end of May 2023 the Creative Insight as a Service project wrapped-up its first pilot at the Draugiem Group in Riga. The purpose of the pilot was to bring artistic practice into the company's every-day setting, and through the artistic approach, exploration and experimentation to create new dialogues and insights into the specific theme and challenge set by the host company.

The company was offered a selection of three different artists, and chose artist and illustrator Mārtiņš Zutis, who worked with Draugiem for a pilot period of four weeks.

The Challenge

With the pandemic experience behind them, Draugiem Group, as so many other companies, are facing the challenge of community building in the post-pandemic era. In this pilot the Draugiem Group wanted to look for creative insights on how to ignite connectivity, unity and community of the group; how to make its 12 rapidly growing and independent companies a family.

The Creative Insight

At Draugiem the task of Mārtiņš was to experiment, come into dialogue with the employees, make inquiries and to learn more about the given topic of unity. During his residency Mārtiņš experimented with different kinds of approaches to create dialogue: from inviting employees to a drawing workshop or a tea-ceremony, doing small interactive installations, and one-to-one conversations by drawing portraits of the employees, and making observations.

When creating his insights and conclusions, Mārtiņš approached the question of unity from another angle and invited the group to “go back to the roots” by keeping the focus in the small units and communities of each Draugiem Group company. How could the different companies learn from each other, and that way nurture the overall community of the Draugiem Group?

Wrapping Up

All Draugiem Group employees were invited to take part in the wrap-up event of the pilot. Krista Petājājārvi from NDPC facilitated the event and kicked-it-off by presenting the project and the proposed topic Mārtiņš was invited to explore. She was followed by Mārtiņš Zutis with an inspiring story of his journey at the company and the insights. The employees were invited to discuss further and relate to the topic of unity and Mārtiņš' approach. The presented insights and illustrations are set to serve as a basis for dialogues when the Draugiem Group community discusses further its aims and possibilities to develop their unity.



Digital Resources
Read the full article



Artist

Mārtiņš Zutis (1988) is an illustrator, author, animator and graphic designer.

His illustrations, comics and animation often stand out with their unusual characters, word games and exact patterns that are turned into visual language.

Case Study 2

Porsche Centrum Łódź, part of Krotoski Group, Poland

3 Lessons Learned. A few Notes From the Diary of the Intermediary.

Each Process is Different

We came together, with all the project partners, and designed the pilot process of creative insight together: each and every stage, each action that needed to be taken by the intermediary on the way to reach the most satisfactory result. The initial idea was to follow it as closely as possible.

We initiated the contact with the company, presented and agreed on the process, defined the challenge, selected and presented the list of artists with the capacity to elaborate on

the topic in a meaningful way. The artist was chosen, and met with the company, and the topic of creative insight crystallised. And that is where similarities between plan and reality ended.

Why? Working with creative cross innovation is not only balancing and trying to melt two very different worlds – very different organisational cultures – but most of all it is about the people, the individuals you work with. That means that no matter how professional they are, how dedicated, there are also other factors to be considered. To put it simply: life happens.

So lesson no. 1 would be: Trying to stick to the original plan no matter what, fixating on recreating the ideal, originally designed process can become a source of frustration. Design the process as you would like to see it, draft all the major stages but do not forget that it is exactly what it is called: a process. It should be treated as a point of reference and when you act as an intermediary you need to be ready to react and be open to adjustments.

More Than One Person

The whole process is based on humans, therefore sometimes “life just happens”. As a result, the process might not proceed smoothly and according to the schedule, losing its tempo and momentum. Depending on how advanced the work is, it might be impossible to replace an individual artist involved, or to have any kind of backup plan in this regard.

The situation looks slightly different when it comes to the

company where by default, there is more than just one person employed. So this part of the equation can be taken care of, secured from the get-go.

Hence, the lesson no. 2: Make sure that there is more than just one person engaged, fully immersed in the process on the side of the company. When “life happens” it might come in handy.

Take Your Time

The insight is there to bring new perspectives, inspirations, and/or solutions. Most importantly, the company should leave the process with the conviction that the insight met the task, fulfilled its purpose. Apart from the right matchmaking, the key factor for reaching that goal is having a well-defined and agreed-upon challenge. And that requires time and patience.

The lesson no. 3 therefore is: Do not rush while defining the challenge i.e. the main task to tackle. Do not be afraid to ask questions and make sure that all involved parties understand that challenge in exactly the same way. Be open to reframing, and redefining the challenge. Have some extra time in your schedule to do it.



Digital Resources
Essay by the artist



Artist

Andrzej Konieczny (1993) is a musician, performer and unstable media creator, living in Poznan and Den Haag.

He worked with Porsche Centrum Łódź around how to reach new target groups, and the concept of luxury in a contemporary context, resulting in a short essay.

How to Develop the Toolbox?

What did we learn from these processes? What work is still left to perform? What are the greatest benefits of cross-sector collaborations? What are the most difficult hindrances? What is most needed for the immediate and long-term future – resources, frameworks, policy, practice, marketing? How to integrate all work done by others in this cross-over sector, in Europe and worldwide?

Living Document

Creative Insight as a Service have provided a starting point: a document free for all users to modify and develop. By using and interacting with this resource, we believe future cross innovation collaborations may be more easy, structured and rewarding for all parties included.



Digital Resources
Living document



Cross Con

The cross innovation Toolbox is presented at the international conference for cross innovation – Cross Con – in Subtopia, Sweden, 23rd November 2023, in connection to a comprehensive presentation of Creative insight as a Service, its framework, cases and identified values. It is the intention of the authors that this first edition of the Toolbox will be followed by many more.

Project Partners

Lead Partner Subtopia (2002) is a creative cluster; a production facility and meeting place for creators and entrepreneurs from a number of artistic expressions, in Botkyrka, south of Stockholm, Sweden. Their creative incubator Katapult has invested large efforts into creative business development, and cross innovation topics in particular.

The Northern Dimension Partnership on Culture (NDPC) was established in 2010, its members being the Ministries responsible for culture in the Nordic and Baltic Sea countries. NDPC secretariat is based in Riga, Latvia. In the NDPC strategy (2023-26) one of the main aims is to support the Culture and Creative Sector impact on sustainable development and to contribute to the development of creative crossovers with CCS and other sectors of the society.

Fabryka Sztuki in Łódź (2007) is a multidisciplinary art center, exploring primarily the edge areas of culture, but also a business support institution, supporting the development of creative entrepreneurship and the professionalization of the cultural sector.

Piloting Companies

Draugiem Group's (2004) brands work in many different fields, from print products, smart home solutions to scavenger hunt

games for adventurers, all sharing one thing in common – technology. The minds of Draugiem Group are always ready to look for the best possible solution for any challenge, and consists of 12 brands, 10 locations, 2000 employees.

Porsche Centrum Łódź, part of Krotoski Group (2018), is one of the largest car dealers in Poland. As an authorized dealer of the Porsche and other brands, they offer high quality service, and comprehensive support to their customers at every stage.

Funder

The Swedish Institute (1945) is a public agency that builds interest and trust in Sweden around the world. They work with Sweden promotion, cooperation in the Baltic Sea region and global development.

Associate Partners

University of Lapland, Faculty of Art and Design curricula emphasis on art and design for sustainability, societal change and Arctic innovations.

University of Szczecin, Faculty of Economy Finances and Management; focuses on cross innovation practises, design as strategy, and implementing principles of design.

Your Own Notes

Contributions

The Toolbox is part of Creative Insight as a Service, a project by Subtopia, NDPC and Fabryka Sztuki. Funded by the Swedish Institute.

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FABRYKA SZTUKI

**Northern
Dimension
Partnership
on Culture**