

TEXT:
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IISA AALTONEN
AND AINO VILA

MORE OF THESE 'CROSS-BOUNDARY' ACTIVITIES, PLEASE!



SEXUAL EDUCATION-THEMED MYTHBUSTERS WORKSHOPS IN THE HELSEXINKI EXHIBITION
AT HELSINKI CITY MUSEUM THROUGH CO-OPERATION WITH EXPERTS

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1.

**MUSEUMS AND
PARTICIPATION**

> MUSEUMS AND PARTICIPATION

TEXT:
SARI KATAINEN,
PRODUCER

In recent years, the concept of a participatory museum has also been raised in Finland. A participatory museum is a museum that attempts to engage its visitors even more by creating a museum experience and content together with the museum. This way, audiences are not seen as passive consumers but rather as active actors. Traditionally, museums as cultural institutions have acted through their exhibitions and events as a content producer. As a result, all visitors have received a uniform experience that is roughly the same. In participatory projects, the museum provides a platform where different visitors can work as producers of a multidimensional content experience. This means that the museum does not guarantee a similar content and user experience for all visitors but an opportunity for an experience that is produced together.¹

A participatory project no longer only means participating museum visitors but also other stakeholders and partners that may be interested in the project and its results. In order to cre-

ate a successful participatory project, the museum personnel in charge of implementing the project should be able to define and satisfy the needs of all the participating groups. In addition, participatory projects should not only be carried out for fun but because they realise the objectives of the organisation implementing them.² The result of participatory projects may be as diverse as the objectives of the organising organisation. The results may include reaching new audiences, offering learning experiences for visitors or acting as a discussion platform, among other things.³

One way of participatory action is to host participatory content produced by others on museum premises. This is a good way of attracting new audiences that otherwise wouldn't see cultural institutions, such as museums, as places of interest for them and offer content that the museum couldn't produce itself. Unlike in other forms of participation, the museum doesn't have to motivate the visitor to participate.⁴

¹ Simon, Nina (2010) *The Participatory Museum*. Santa Cruz, California: Museum 2.0. p. 2.

² Simon, Nina (2010) *The Participatory Museum*. Santa Cruz, California: Museum 2.0. p. 13.

³ Simon, Nina (2010) *The Participatory Museum*. Santa Cruz, California: Museum 2.0. p. 16.

⁴ Simon, Nina (2010) *The Participatory Museum*. Santa Cruz, California: Museum 2.0. pp. 281–282.

2.

**MUSEUMS,
EXPERTISE AND
AUDIENCES**

> MUSEUMS, EXPERTISE AND AUDIENCES

TEXT:
SARI KATAINEN,
PRODUCER

Museums as a cultural institution have traditionally also been seen as an expert organisation that studies and presents the collections or information it possesses. When engaging in participatory projects, the museum has to think about whose expertise is essential when carrying out these kinds of projects. In these projects, the museum uses its expertise for its premises, equipment and ways of working, among other things, but the expertise for content and also possibly for practical implementation comes primarily from outside, from other audiences and other experts participating in the project. For the museum, sometimes this means a painful surrender of its own expert role and transforming into the new role of an enabler.

In many ways, the museum thinks more of its visitors when implementing participatory projects. However, audience-focused approach in participatory projects does not mean that the project's definition starts from what the museum or pro-

ject can offer but from mapping interesting audiences and thinking what kinds of experiences, information and implementation methods would suit them best. Neglecting the special needs of visitors most affects those who are not yet familiar with cultural institutions and who are still learning what a museum experience is all about. It's important for these visitors to see how cultural institutions, such as museums, may be significant for their own life.⁵

Effective participation is planned well in advance and takes place within provided constraints. Being able to do anything does not motivate to participate. A well thought-out and limited participatory experience offers an opportunity for limited self-expression for the visitor and participating in the actions of a larger group with your own effort, thus making your own effort significant.⁶ This means that, in a participatory project, not only is the individual's information or experience important, but equally important is the social situation in which the information or experience is produced.

⁵ Simon, Nina (2010) *The Participatory Museum*. Santa Cruz, California: Museum 2.0. pp.34–35.

⁶ Simon, Nina (2010) *The Participatory Museum*. Santa Cruz, California: Museum 2.0. pp.22–25.

3.

HELSINKI CITY MUSEUM'S VISION, STRATEGIES AND TARGETS

> HELSINKI CITY MUSEUM'S VISION, STRATEGIES AND TARGETS

TEXT:
SARI KATAINEN,
PRODUCER

Helsinki City Museum has undergone a major renewal in the last couple of years, concerning both its ways of operating and the operating environment. The new City Museum, which was made together with the residents and always has free admission, was opened at the corner of Senate Square on 13 May 2016. The creation of the new museum was a long process that was characterised by openness, collaborative planning and participation. The museum mapped out the wishes and interests of the residents, for example, with the help of a customer panel, and tested new ways of operating in the so called Lyhtysali project on the museum's old premises. In the project, the museum professionals gave the role of content expert to the hands of the residents who participated in the project.

The new museum that was created as a result of the process was extremely well received: the target of 200,000 visitors in the first year was met during the first four months, and by the end of 2017, the museum had approximately 680,000 visitors. Furthermore, Helsinki City Museum has received extensive media coverage and won several Finnish and international awards, including the Museum of the Year award in 2017.

During the renewal process, the museum's strategic focus areas and goals were also updated. Helsinki City Museum also received a new vision: "Everyone has the opportunity to fall in love with Helsinki". The museum's key strategic focus areas are the objective to strengthen the diversity of Helsinki, a customer-oriented approach and doing things together. These focus areas are the backbone of the museum's objectives, which include building equal and meaningful encounters with people, producing services in co-operation with strategic partners and giving the residents more opportunities to have an influence.

The changes to Helsinki City Museum's operating culture were also part of the general changes the City of Helsinki made to its ways of operating and organisational structure. In June 2017, the city's departments were reorganised into larger sectors. Helsinki City Museum is currently part of the culture division of the culture and leisure sector, and its operations are covered by the general objectives of the sector: to maintain the mental and physical well-being of the residents and provide opportunities for education and active citizenship. Resident participation has also become an important objective in the City of Helsinki. In November 2017, the city made a decision to implement a participation model that aims to promote extensive participation and interaction among residents and communities.

➤ **HELSINKI CITY MUSEUM'S VISION, STRATEGIES AND TARGETS**

Customers entering the opening of the New City Museum in May 2016.



4.

**THE MYTHBUSTERS
WORKSHOP
PROJECT**

4.1 BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

TEXT:
SARI KATAINEN,
PRODUCER



The Helsexinki exhibition about sexual rights opened in May 2017.

> 4.1 BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

TEXT:
SARI KATAINEN,
PRODUCER

4.1.1 Helsexinki exhibition

The new City Museum has a space for temporary exhibitions and content on the fourth floor. This space enables Helsinki City Museum to organise new kinds of topical events and content that appeal to emotions, take a stand and evoke conversation.

The theme of the Helsexinki exhibition, which opened in this space on 12 May 2017, is sexual rights. The Helsexinki exhibition focused on sexual rights and their fulfillment, and was based on the personal, first-hand accounts of a number of people living and working in Helsinki. Direct quotations from the interviews were posted on the walls of the exhibition space. The themes covered by the exhibition were also based directly on the interviews.

The Helsexinki exhibition discussed, among other things, how everyone should have a right to an equal life, regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression and how attitudes, laws and practices still persist that limit the right of individuals to enjoy equality and exercise their sexual and gender rights. Sexual rights are for everyone, but the freedom to be yourself is not something all of us can take for granted.

The theme of the Helsexinki exhibition, which opened in this space on 12 May 2017, is sexual rights.

One of the aims of Helsinki City Museum is to promote diversity, and one of the objectives of the Helsexinki exhibition was to allow those who are often silenced for one reason or another to be heard. Another objective was to enable the audience to identify themselves with the interviewees, fight prejudice, empower and share current information on sexual rights.

The exhibition was created through the participation of residents and expert organisations. Participation also played a key role in all the events related to the exhibition. Each event always featured an expert organisation that produced the content, and the museum served only as the platform. The exhibition programme included events such as the positive kissing event by HIV Finland and Sexpo Foundation and memory workshops by the elderly sector of Seta – LGBTI Rights in Finland.

Normally, Helsinki City Museum staff give guided tours in the exhibitions, but with the Helsexinki exhibition, the museum thought that even the guided tours should be based on the first-hand accounts of the people. For this reason, the guided tours were held by the interviewees, who shared their personal experiences and stories to the visitors.

> 4.1 BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

4.1.2 Sexual Education in the Helsexinki Exhibition through Co-Operation with Experts

The planning of the Sexual Education in the Helsexinki Exhibition through Co-Operation with Experts project started early in the production of the Helsexinki exhibition, when the exhibition working group thought up ways to make young people heard in the exhibition. This was a particularly important question, because the working group had decided not to interview anyone under the age of 18 because of the topic of the exhibition. Another important question concerned the pressure young people face in relation to sexuality and gender, for example, because of the images that prevail on social media.

Because the working group felt that it was important to organise activities for young people, they decided to apply for funding for the Sexual Education in the Helsexinki Exhibition through Co-Operation with Experts project from the innovative project fund of the National Board of Antiquities in October 2016. The decision to grant EUR 20,000 to the project was made in March 2017, and the concrete preparations of the project began immediately after this. In addition, based on discussions with the expert organisations and among the exhibition team, the name of the project was changed from Sexual Education in the Helsexinki Exhibition through Co-Operation with Experts to Mythbusters workshops, which was felt to reflect the content of the project better.

The motivation for the Mythbusters workshop was to share information about sexuality, gender and sex to young people.

The right to sufficient and accurate information about these themes was also one of the most important sexual rights discussed in the Helsexinki exhibition. Because Helsinki City Museum and the Helsexinki working group had no previous substance or methodological expertise in the field of sexual education, the task of communication was given to the expert organisations. The museum also decided to step out of its comfort zone and serve as a platform for content produced by other organisations instead of an expert institution. The aim was to offer a safe forum for discussions and questions to the young people in a stimulating environment using phenomenon-based learning. The museum also wanted to develop new ways of operating with new partners. Another aim was to encounter young people as equals, react to topical themes and transmit content with social relevance.

The experiences gained during the project would also be used for developing a new, open operational model for Helsinki City Museum. In the new model, the museum would serve as a platform and enabler for external experts who organise exhibition-related events that fall beyond the museum's own know-how. The aim was to use the model in Helsinki City Museum's own operations, in particular, in the temporary content space on the fourth floor. The museum also hoped that the model would serve as a model concept for other museums.

4.2 INTERNAL ACTORS OF THE PROJECT

TEXT:
IISA AALTONEN,
PROJECT ASSISTANT,
AND
SARI KATAINEN,
PRODUCER

The Audience Services of Helsinki City Museum consist of four separate teams: Exhibition and Programme team, Learning and Well-Being team, Customer Encounters team and Sales team. There was a project working group, which was responsible for the practical implementation of the Mythbusters workshops. Its members were a producer and two members of the Helsinki exhibition working group and a project assistant, who worked within the Mythbusters workshop project from September 2017 to November 2017. Each working group member was from a different team, and one of them was even outside of the Audience Services. Because the project was, in its broader context, related to both exhibition and programme production and learning services, the cross-disciplinary nature of the project resulted in slight uncertainty between the teams regarding the practical arrangements. The new strategy of the city's culture and leisure sector, which was formed in summer 2017 and also covers Helsinki City Mu-

seum, identifies agile working culture as one of its targets. Naturally, this target also applies to the internal culture of services within the sector. This project enabled testing an internal culture that crosses team boundaries in practice.

In addition to the project working group, several members of the Helsinki City Museum staff helped in the implementation. For example, the project was supported by the help and expertise of the museum's Marketing and Communications team. They delivered the museum's graphic guidelines to the designer of the student feedback form and the producer of the workshop videos. The person who first contacted the teachers about the Mythbusters workshops was a museum educator, who works at the Learning and Well-Being team and is responsible for editing and distributing the electronic newsletter. The

project working group received technical help from a senior museum technician, who works in the Exhibition and Programme team.

There was a project working group, which was responsible for the practical implementation of the Mythbusters workshops.

4.3 CO-OPERATION PARTNERS OF THE PROJECT

TEXT:
SARI KATAINEN,
PRODUCER

The co-operation partners of the Mythbusters workshop project were Samfundet Folkhälsan i Svenska Finland r.f., the Family Federation of Finland, Seta and Sexpo foundation. Folkhälsan's aim is to promote health and well-being, particularly among the Swedish-speaking population. The Family Federation of Finland also seeks to promote population health and well-being and has an influential role in society. Seta is a national human-rights organisation that aims for a society of equality and individual welfare that includes everyone regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. Sexpo's mission is to promote sexual well-being. All of these four organisations represent the highest expertise in matters of sexual and gender identity, sexuality and gender expression and sexual rights. Another important criteria in the selection of partners was that these organisations have a strong track record of working in the field of sexual education and with young people.

The Family Federation of Finland was one of the partners of the Helsexinki exhibition from early on, starting at the plan-

ning phase, so it felt natural to approach them first with the workshop idea. The first contact was made even before all the relevant funding decisions had been made. When the federation decided to participate in the workshops, the museum contacted Sexpo and Seta, both of which were eager to participate right away. From early on, it was clear that the museum also wanted to offer workshops to Swedish schools, so it was important to have Folkhälsan, which produces services in Swedish, as one of the project partners.

'I was contacted by the museum.'

4.4 CUSTOMERS OF THE PROJECT

TEXT:
AINO VILA,
WORKING GROUP
MEMBER

The primary customers of the Mythbusters workshop project were teachers. Teachers were also the primary target group of communication about the workshops because teachers would decide whether to take their groups to the workshops or not. In general, teachers in the Helsinki metropolitan area are well aware of the learning services provided by Helsinki City Museum, and the museum offers guided tours to groups in pre-primary education, early education, primary education and secondary education year-round. In addition, the museum has frequent visits by groups studying Finnish as a second language. The museum tailors the free guided tours and workshops carefully, taking into account school curricula, and the learning services promote this actively. Thus, a member of the Helsexinki exhibition working group who represents the Learning and Well-Being team carried out a thorough analysis before sending the promotional material, finding out which teachers would be the best target group and which parts of the curriculum were most suitable for the workshops. From early on, the workshops were included in the pedagogic programme of the museum's Learning and Well-Being team.

The exhibition working group co-operated with the expert organisations and museum educators to create an advertisement of the workshops in Finnish and Swedish. The text was included in the electronic newsletter of the Learning team.

Teachers received the newsletter via e-mail well before the start of the workshops, in August 2017, and a reminder in September 2017. The reminder also included a YouTube video made by one of the interviewees. The video was based on their personal experiences, and its aim was to inspire discussions and serve as an introduction to the exhibition themes. The teachers could watch the video by themselves or show it in class. The Mythbusters workshops were also promoted alongside the museum's other student services in Kultus, the shared calendar of learning and culture of the City of Helsinki and the Ministry of Education and Culture. Kultus also promoted the workshops on its Facebook page.

The participants registered by e-mail using the teaching reservation address of the museum's Learning and Well-Being team. The team members responded to enquiries from teachers after consulting the exhibition working group and entered the groups in a table that everyone could access. The exhibition working group contacted the expert organisations, as necessary, forwarding messages between the organisations and teachers. The teachers hoped that the museum could organise workshops also for secondary education students, and the project working group, museum educators and workshop instructors decided to extend the target group to cover also secondary education.

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'I would have gladly brought more eighth grades but their lessons were in the middle of the day.'

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4.5 TARGET GROUP OF THE PROJECT

TEXT:
SARI KATAINEN,
PRODUCER,
AND AINO VILA,
WORKING GROUP
MEMBER

Young people who might still be looking for their own identities have the biggest need for information about sexuality, gender and sex, which is why the target group of the Mythbusters workshops was students on 8th–9th grades and, as per the teachers' wishes, students in secondary education. Originally, the target group specified in the project application included 7th graders, but they were excluded from the target group as too young, based on discussions with the expert organisations during the planning phase.

Children and young people of all ages visit Helsinki City Museum on guided tours and workshops, but reaching students in upper comprehensive and upper secondary schools is still somewhat challenging due to the strictly subject-based timetable many of the schools have. Earlier workshops for young people have, naturally, focused on history, encouraging the young participants to reflect on their own life against history and offering objects of identification and empathy. The top-

ic of the workshop must catch the interest of young people, but it is also important to implement the workshop in a way that feels relevant to them. The Mythbusters working group thought it obvious that the workshop topics would interest the target group, and it relied on the knowhow of the expert organisations in putting the workshops into practice.

'I think it's great to start an open discussion about things that aren't necessarily talked about that much.'

4.6 PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT

TEXT:
IISA AALTONEN,
PROJECT
ASSISTANT



The members of the project working group taking seat cushions to the workshop space before the start of a Sexpo workshop.

> 4.6 PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT



4.6.1 Implementation of the workshop mornings

Before the workshops, the expert organisations had only sent the topics and short descriptions of their workshops to the Helsexinki working group, which included the information in the newsletter sent to teachers in August. In other words, Helsinki City Museum staff did not now much more than the students and teachers about the content and implementation of the first workshops.

The partners had adjusted the content to the new school curriculum, and the workshops were well aligned with many of the learning goals of transversal competences. The museum environment and the exhibition space were part of a diverse learning environment that supports learning. Some teachers said that one of the reasons they chose to participate in the workshops was particularly to have some variety by leaving the classroom for a while.

Before the workshops started, the museum held active contacts with the expert organisations regarding the practical arrangement of the workshop mornings. The partners were asked to share their wishes and needs concerning the preparations and supplies at the workshop space. Some wanted to hold the workshop in the Helsexinki exhibition, while others preferred the relaxed Lounge area next to the exhibition space.

The museum staff acquired and organised the supplies according to the partners' wishes in the morning. The museum had already ordered cushions, condoms and ballpoint pens for the workshops, along with student feedback forms.

The museum let the partner organisations know the grades of the groups, the number of students and any special needs or characteristics in advance. The contact person of one of the organisations changed twice during the project, which caused some problems in communication regarding the workshop timetables. When the co-operation started, the original plan was to start the workshops an hour earlier, and the workshop instructor had not received information about the new time early enough. However, thanks to the flexibility of the expert organisation, the workshop was held as planned.

Information about the project was also shared within the museum. The Customer Encounters team and the cleaning staff received information about the groups and the workshop timetable.

The workshops were held from Monday to Friday between 25 September and 27 October 2017. No workshops were held during the autumn holiday week, from 16 to 20 October 2017. The workshop time was in the morning, from 10 to 11 a.m., before the museum opened to the public. This enabled the participants to familiarise themselves with the themes uninterrupted. After the workshops, if they had time and interest to do so, the groups could visit the Helsexinki exhibition and ask questions from a member of the exhibition working group, who was present throughout the workshop.

> 4.6 PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT

The workshop timetable turned out to be quite challenging for the schools because of the allocation of their classes and daily timetables. However, the museum had to keep the timetables agreed on with the expert organisations, because it could not

The members of the project working group preparing the workshop space before the start of a Sexpo workshop.



assume that the workshop instructors would make themselves available to the museum at all hours or adapt their schedules to accommodate all the wishes of the schools. Luckily, some special wishes could be met, because the external experts had such a flexible approach to the project. For example, Folkhälsan held three of its workshops on one day and had some days without a workshop during its week.

The feedback collected from teachers revealed that many of the schools are still tied to timetables that follow traditional allocation of lessons and dictate their daily activities. For example, one teacher would have wanted to bring several 8th-grade groups to the workshops, but the workshop time was not suitable for them. Many of the groups had to hurry for lunch after the workshop, which meant they could not visit the Helsexinki exhibition as planned.

Usually, the preparation of the workshop started at 9 a.m. in order to have everything ready in time. The space was organised according to the partners' wishes, and the condoms and ballpoint pens were placed in a visible spot so that the students could take them with them easily. The partners arrived at the museum before the workshops started, and a member of the working group let them in. They checked the workshop space together and made any changes according to the wishes of the instructor.

One of the working group members was also ready to receive the group in the museum lobby before 10 a.m., taking the group to the exhibition space or Lounge on the fourth floor with the lift.

> 4.6 PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT

All in all, the project required more HR resources than was originally planned. The preparation and background work involved both the project assistant and members of the permanent museum staff on the exhibition working group. In workshop weeks, at least one member of the exhibition working group had to be present in addition to the project assistant to help with the preparation and cleaning and introduce the exhibition to the students. In other words, the workshop mornings kept at least two employees busy for half a day.

Due to the slow recruitment permission process of the City of Helsinki, it was not possible to have a project assistant for more than two months. Originally, the employment of the project assistant was supposed to last three months, but this would have meant applying for the recruitment permit, which requires too much effort. Because the project assistant worked at the museum for a shorter period than planned, the permanent museum staff had more project-related tasks alongside their regular duties. On the other hand, money saved from the project assistant's wages could later be used for a publication about the Mythbusters workshops, which enabled sharing the experiences about the project to a wider audience in the museum field.

During the project, the producer of the Helsexinki exhibition and the Mythbusters workshop project had to move to a new position and location, which made practical work within the project slightly more challenging. The lesson learnt was that in order to make a project at this scale succeed, the entire museum organisation, not only the project working group, must be aware of all the goals of the project and its extent. The entire organisation must be committed to implementing the project, helping to ensure that the project tasks are performed adequately.



Each partner held a workshop that represented the organisation behind it, and the content of the workshops varied between the organiser.

4.6.2 Content of the workshops

Each partner held a workshop that represented the organisation behind it, and the content of the workshops varied between the organiser. The workshop instructors introduced themselves, their organisation and its key operations at the start of each workshop. The instructors also presented the services and activities the organisation offers to young people and the ways of contacting the organisation. Thus, the workshops were also an opportunity to promote their operations to young people for the partners.

At the start of the workshops, the division of roles between the project working group and the representatives of the expert organisations were not fully clear. The project assistant and at least one member of the exhibition working group were present at each workshop. The working group's task was to help with the preparations, welcome the group and guide it to the workshop space, help the workshop instructor, if needed, monitor and observe during the workshop, collect feedback from students using the feedback form and be present while the students visited the exhibition.

> 4.6 PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT

At the first workshops, finding the right role for the project working group members was a challenge. However, the role of enabler became easier to own in later weeks. Solid trust in the partners' expertise and skills helped in achieving this.

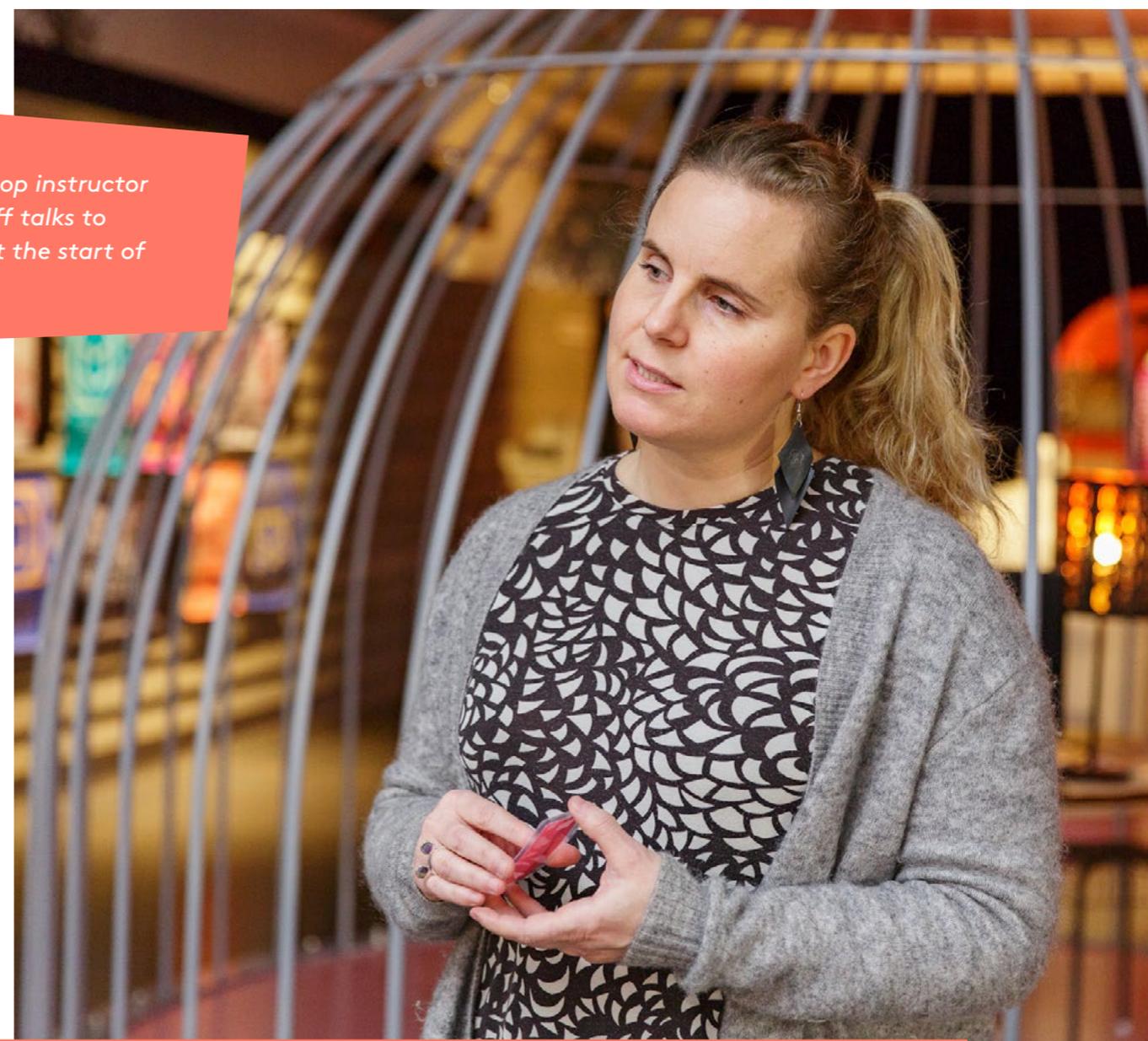
Although the workshop mornings tied some of the museum's employees to the workshops, they also enabled the museum to observe the interactive situation taking place at the workshops more closely, compared to content produced by the museum. Traditionally, the museum's own employees produce the museum's workshops and guided tours, which means they cannot observe the group's participation and details such as the participants' body language as thoroughly as in this case when they were present as outsiders.

Folkhälsan started the workshops, and their instructor was Suss Åhman, specialist in sexual health. Many knew her prior from the radio programme *Sex och Sânt* on the Radio X3M channel, which was also evident in the workshop feedback. The content of Folkhälsan's workshops complemented the themes of the Helsexinki exhibition. Because sex was not the central theme of the exhibition, Folkhälsan's workshop focused on sex. Åhman knew from experience that young people are interested in this topic, even if they do not usually say it aloud.

The topic was approached by discussing and asking questions, which made the workshop into a natural interactive situation, despite its strong focus on providing information. Folkhälsan's workshops were purely based on talking and discussing, and

they did not include any exercises. In addition to sex, the groups discussed norms related to having sex. For example, what do the people portrayed as having sex in popular culture look like and how old they are and what ways of behaviour are "permitted" to different genders in relation to sex and intimacy.

Sexpo's workshop instructor Patricia Thesleff talks to the students at the start of the workshop.



> 4.6 PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT

Students participate in an exercise in a Sexpo workshop.



> 4.6 PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT

The workshops of the Family Federation of Finland were led by Miila Halonen, medical expert in youth matters and Elina Kohonen, sexual therapist with extensive experience in working with young people. On three mornings, young volunteer Tua Videman was also present at the Family Federation's workshops. She helped to organise the workshop and was responsible for asking the quiz questions. Having a young volunteer at the workshops clearly made the atmosphere more relaxed, and some of the young participants may have found it easier to participate in the discussion because of this.

Workshops by the Family Federation of Finland included a quiz. The right answers were checked immediately after the quiz from videos projected onto the wall of the workshop space. The videos were produced by the Family Federation of Finland and published on its YouTube channel. The participants also practised expressing and justifying their own opinions. They were asked to take a stand on phrases such as "We live in a world of appearances" by placing their own opinion on a continuum from fully agreeing to fully disagreeing. Letting the students participate in the workshop actively encouraged a more thorough discussion on the statements. The participants also had a chance to praise themselves by writing their own positive characteristics on a large roll of paper.

During Seta's week, the workshop instructor Marita Karvinen showed the participants photographs of people and asked them to figure out who dates who and why. In the first round, the people were matched only based on their appearance, and the students were asked to explain their decisions. A similar

cultural background and age were among the common reasons for selecting a particular couple. In the second round, the photographs were equipped with additional details about the people, for example, on their age and sexual orientation. These additional details made the students change their earlier selections. The exercise illustrated how norms are produced and how external norms can affect our views of human relations and sexuality.

Project assistant Lisa Aaltonen observes the Sexpo workshop.



> 4.6 PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT

During Sexpo's week, the participants put themselves in the shoes of an imaginary person and assessed the realisation of their sexual rights against statements presented by the workshop instructor, Patricia Thesleff. Whenever a person's sexual rights were fulfilled, the participant could take a step forward. At the end of the exercise, the students stood in different places around the space, depending on the number of steps they were allowed to take.

The exercise was a concrete reminder of the fact that not everybody's sexual rights are fulfilled equally. If everybody's rights were fulfilled, all the students would have taken a step at each statement and made it to the other end of the room.

The experts were professionals, which was evident in how they edited the content of the workshop according to the size and type of the group. Each group was different. For example, there was great variation in the students' previous knowledge and level of participation. Students in upper secondary schools had a much more analytic approach to the workshops, compared to, for example, students in vocational or upper comprehensive schools. If the participants were more quiet, the instructors took an encouraging and activating approach, while giving more time and room for discussions in more active groups.

Surprisingly, group sizes varied a lot: from one to thirty. However, the professional workshop instructors were able to adapt the content to the number of participants. For example, the content of Sexpo's workshops varied greatly depending on the size of the group. If the group was small, Sexpo instructor Patricia Thesleff discussed questions and topics brought up by the participants. If the group was large, she organised an exercise that demonstrated the fulfillment of sexual rights.



Students taking part in Sexpo's workshop.

4.7 FEEDBACK FROM THE PROJECT

TEXT:
IISA AALTONEN,
PROJECT
ASSISTANT



*Student filling in a
feedback form after
the Sexpo workshop.*

> 4.7 FEEDBACK FROM THE PROJECT

TEXT:
IISA AALTONEN,
PROJECT
ASSISTANT

4.7.1 Students

Helsinki City Museum collected written feedback from students in connection with the workshops. This was the first time of collecting student feedback from every group. Previously, the museum's Learning and Well-Being team has only collected feedback systematically from teachers concerning its own workshops. In the feedback form, students were asked to rate the topic of the workshop, the implementation method and the museum as a workshop location. There was also a question about how much new information the student learned during the workshop and a space for leaving comments to the museum and the workshop instructor.

The feedback form was designed to appeal to young people: it was the shape of a peach emoji, and the front page contained a quotation about the youth experiences of

1. Oliko työpajan aihe kiinnostava?

2. Oliko työpajan toteutus-tapa onnistunut?

3. Oliko museo sopiva paikka työpajalle?

4. Saitko työpajassa uutta tietoa?

5. Jätä terveiset museolle ja työpajan vetäjälle. _____

HYVÄ KESKIVERTO HUONO

#HelsinginKaupunginMuseum #olkeustietoon

HELINGIN KAUPUNGINMUSEO

★

"I WISH I WAS AWARE OF THESE SORTS OF THINGS WHEN I WAS THEIR AGE"

"That's how I did it, I googled my gender"

one of the interviewees. The form was foldable because it was important to allow the young participants to give feedback anonymously. Taking into account the target group was one of the key aspects of the project, and all the purchases, such as the feedback form, were also carefully adjusted to the target group. Apparently, the feedback form did appeal to the target group: all 209 students who participated in the workshop filled in the form and gave feedback.

The student feedback was analysed after the workshops. All in all, the feedback was mainly positive. Around two-thirds of the respondents rated the workshop topic, the implementation method and the suitability of the museum as a workshop location as good, and around one-third gave an average rate. Only around two per cent of the respondents rated the workshop topic, the implementation method and the suitability of the museum as a workshop location as poor.

Almost half of the students felt that they learnt new information at the workshop well. Less than 40 per cent felt that they learnt new information relatively much and 13 per cent felt that they didn't really learn new information. The variation in the answers to the question on new information was due to the different grades the students were in. Students in upper secondary schools felt that they learnt less than comprehensive school students, who had not covered the topic as profoundly in class yet.

'A great topic for young people. Keep up the good work.'

> 4.7 FEEDBACK FROM THE PROJECT

Students getting to know the Helsexinki exhibition after the Sexpo workshop.



> 4.7 FEEDBACK FROM THE PROJECT

4.7.2 Teachers

In addition to the students, feedback was also collected from the teachers. Helsinki City Museum's Learning and Well-Being team sends a feedback questionnaire to each teacher who has used the museum's services. The aim of collecting feedback is to develop the museum's services for schools. However, the feedback form template was not suitable to the Mythbusters workshops as such due to the fact that the content was not produced by the museum but by external organisations.

The teachers were asked, for example, how they heard about the workshop and what made them decide to participate. There were also questions on their expectations, the suitability of the workshop content to the curriculum, co-operation between the expert organisation and the museum and the museum as a venue. The teachers were asked to rate the content and implementation of the workshop, expertise of the workshop instructor and whether the workshop provided added value to their own teaching.

The feedback questionnaire was sent to 13 teachers, and nine filled it in. All the Swedish-speaking teachers responded to the questionnaire, while the Finnish-speaking teachers were less active in responding. The feedback form was also translated into Swedish, which may have made the teachers feel that the questionnaire was targeted specifically at them.

The most important reasons why the teachers decided to participate were variation to regular classes, free workshops and the suitability of the topic to the curriculum. Most of the teachers felt that the workshop met their expectations and was extremely appropriate for the curriculum of their institution. The

'A good idea. The threshold of the museum was lowered in the eyes of the youth.'

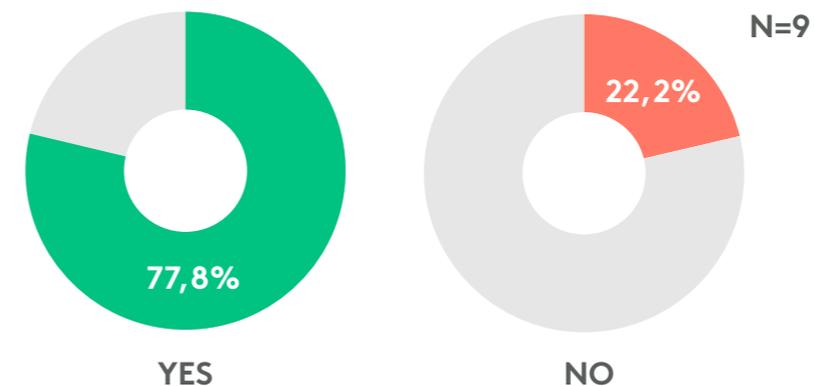
majority of the teachers discussed the themes of the workshop later with the students. The majority rated the workshop content as fairly good and the implementation as excellent.

The expertise of the instructor was rated as excellent, as was the museum as a workshop location. The compatibility between the workshop and the Helsexinki exhibition was mainly rated as excellent or fairly good. However, some teachers considered the exhibition to be difficult for the students because it had a lot of text.

All the respondents felt that the workshop provided added value to their own teaching and said that they would attend a workshop organised by the museum and the expert organisation again. In the open feedback section, the teachers said they would like the museum to organise more activities of this kind.

TEXT:
IISA AALTONEN,
PROJECT
ASSISTANT

Did you discuss the workshop themes with the students later?



> 4.7 FEEDBACK FROM THE PROJECT

TEXT:
IISA AALTONEN,
PROJECT
ASSISTANT

4.7.3 Co-operation partners

Collecting written feedback from the co-operation partners was something the museum had not done before. In other words, the museum had previous experience of collecting feedback from teachers with an electronic questionnaire, but the questionnaire sent to the partners had to be created from scratch because this was the first instance of co-operation where an external organisation produced the learning content and the museum served merely as a platform.

The project working group wanted to know, for example, the partners' expectations before the workshops and their opinion of the museum as a location. The partners were also asked to assess the museum's performance with the practical arrangements, communication and contacts. There were also questions about how well the workshops aligned with the objectives of their organisation and whether they reached new target groups with the workshops.

The response rate to the partner questionnaire was excellent: everyone who received the questionnaire filled it in. Some of the partners were already involved in the planning and implementation of the Helsexinki exhibition, but some were only contacted when planning the Mythbusters project. One of the partners who was only involved at the workshop stage said that they would have liked to be involved in planning the exhibition and that young people should have been taken better into account in the implementation of the exhibition.

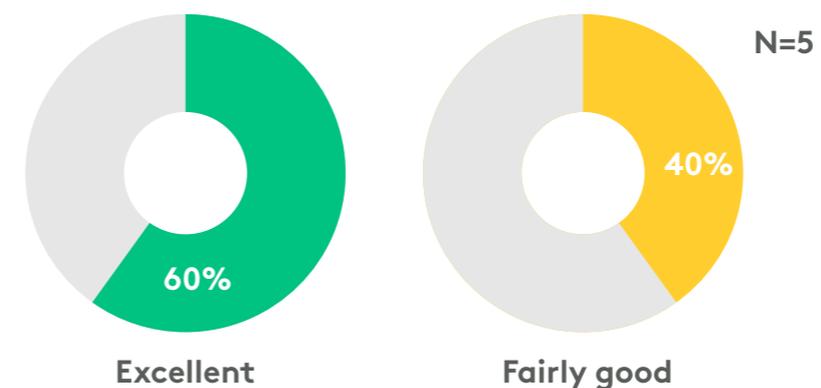
All the partners felt that the museum handled the practical arrangements excellently. Most of the partners felt that the museum did an excellent job with keeping them informed during the project. In general, the museum was rated as an excellent or fairly good location for workshops. All the respondents

also felt that the workshops were well suited to the Helsexinki exhibition.

All the partners felt that the workshops aligned with the objectives of their organisation. However, the majority did not reach new target groups with the workshops. Based on the feedback, three-fourths of the respondents felt that the workshop provided them with added value to their own work. The responses differed between the partners, depending on how actively they work with young people normally. Some of the partners hold workshops almost every day, while others felt that the workshop gave them an up-to-date view of the lives and thoughts of young people.

Only one of the expert organisations had co-operated with a museum before, but everyone said they would co-operate with Helsinki City Museum and other museums again. The partners had a flexible approach to the nature of the co-operation.

In your opinion, how was the museum as the workshop location?



4.8 DOCUMENTING AND COMMUNICATING THE PROJECT

TEXT:
IISA AALTONEN,
PROJECT ASSISTANT,
AND
SARI KATAINEN,
PRODUCER



The members of the project working group help workshop leader Patricia Thesleff from Sexpo with the workshop preparations.

> 4.8 DOCUMENTING AND COMMUNICATING THE PROJECT

From the point of view of the overall effectiveness of the project, it was important to document the project actively in photographs and videos. The documentation was considered important because the photographs and videos enable sharing information and experiences of the project in more illustrative ways to the museum sector at large. The museum ordered two short videos from video production professionals. These were made with Suss Åhman from Folkhälsan and Miila Halonen and Elina Korhonen from the Family Federation of Finland. On the videos, the partners were asked questions about their experiences with the Mythbusters project. The videos also included practical examples from the workshops. The videos were released on the museum's YouTube channel and embedded in a blog post by the project assistant.

Photographs of the practical implementation of the workshops were also taken during the last workshop by Sexpo. The photographer photographed the preparation, the workshop and the visit to the exhibition after the workshop. In other words, each phase of the workshop morning. Permission to take and publish photographs was needed from the parents of the participants. The producer of the Helsexinki exhibition and the Mythbusters project designed the permission forms for this particular purpose, and they were sent to the parents in advance. However, before the workshop it became evident that most of the 21 students did not wish to appear on pho-

tographs, even though the producer had sent an even more detailed description of the workshop content and targets to the class upon the teacher's request.

In the end, only six students agreed to appear on photographs or had permission from their parents. This was probably due to the topic of the workshop, the stigmas associated with these topics and possible false assumptions about the workshops.

The project was first mentioned in public in the Työn alla blog on the museum's website. The blog featured a post by the project assistant soon after the end of the workshops in early November 2017. The museum also shared the blog post on its Facebook page.

The project was presented to the staff of Helsinki City Museum after the workshops in a Lounge event. Helsinki City Museum organises open Lounge events to its staff every other month. The Lounge events feature presentations of current projects to the entire museum staff, offering an open and interactive forum for discussions on the projects. One of the objectives of

the project was to develop a conceptual model that could later be used at Helsinki City Museum and in the museum sector in general. For this reason, it was important to share information about the project, discuss it and receive internal feedback while the concept was still being developed.

'The flow of information was straightforward, and regarding the practicalities, we got all the help we needed.'

SEXUAL EDUCATION IN A MUSEUM ENVIRONMENT

TEXT:
IISA AALTONEN,
PROJECT
ASSISTANT

Työn alla blog

Sexual education workshops for the young were held at Helsinki City Museum in September and October 2017. Thematically, these Mythbuster workshops were connected with the Helsexinki exhibition that opened in spring 2017. Helsexinki tells the personal experiences of people living or working in Helsinki in relation to sexual rights and their realisation.

The Mythbuster workshops were held by four expert organisations: Folkhälsan, the Family Federation of Finland, Seta and Sexpo. Each organisation was responsible for workshops and content over one week. The sexual education workshops were targeted at 8th and 9th graders and students in secondary education. Workshop participants could also visit the Helsexinki exhibition and ask further questions from members of the exhibition team. They were also asked to give written feedback on their visit.

The expert organisations were given complete freedom over the content and implementation of the workshops. The museum offered the space and the supplies and served as the exhibition venue. The museum personnel helped the organisers with workshop preparations and other small tasks. In other words, the museum's role was to serve as a platform that en-

abled the workshops. For museum professionals, this new kind of a co-operation meant letting go of one's traditional role as a specialist and trusting the expertise of others.

Photo cards and discussions

The content and practical implementation of the workshops varied between the organisations surprisingly much, ranging from interactive lectures and quizzes to YouTube videos and matchmaking with the help of photo cards. Despite the difficult themes, almost every group had active students who showed a genuine interest in the topics and seemed to learn something new in the workshop. The experienced workshop instructors were able to create a safe and comfortable environment in which the young participants could discuss and approach the themes with the help of concrete examples, exercises and questions. The workshops were held in Finnish and Swedish.

▶ <https://youtu.be/N0nnOIVdJf0>

▶ <https://youtu.be/GhcTbzf4qTk>

> 4.8 DOCUMENTING AND COMMUNICATING THE PROJECT

BLOG



The workshop instructor played a major role in motivating and involving the participants.

> 4.8 DOCUMENTING AND COMMUNICATING THE PROJECT

BLOG

Folkhälsan organised the first workshops. Folkhälsan's workshops included a discussion on the images and norms associated with different genders as well as a humoristic approach to sex, which seemed to interest the participants a great deal. The workshops started with seemingly simple questions, such as "What does sexuality consist of?" and "What is sex?"

During the week of the Family Federation of Finland, the participants practised expressing and justifying their own opinions. They were asked to take a stand on phrases such as "We live in a world of appearances" by placing their own opinion on a continuum from fully agreeing to fully disagreeing. Letting the students participate in the workshop actively encouraged a more extensive discussion on the statements.

During Seta's week, the participants were shown photographs of people and asked to guess who dates who and why. The exercise illustrated how norms are produced and how external norms can affect our views of human relations and sexuality.

Sexpo's workshops discussed sexual rights and their realisation in Finland. The participants put themselves in the shoes of an imaginary person and assessed the realisation of their sexual rights against statements presented by the instructor. Whenever a person's sexual rights were realised, the participant could take a step forward. At the end of the exercise, the students stood in different places around the space, depending on the number of steps they were

allowed to take. The exercise was a concrete reminder of the fact that not everybody's sexual rights are realised equally. If everybody's rights were realised, all the students would have taken a step at each statement and made it to the other end of the room.

Material for forming one's identity

Museums are turning from expert organisations into low-threshold identity institutions that can serve as platforms, partners, enablers or event venues, as needed. Increasingly often, the new role of a museum is to provide material, opportunities and encouragement for identity formation instead of pre-thought-out answers.

If even one of the participants found help and tools for finding an answer to the difficult questions surrounding identity at the workshops, the project met its primary goal.

The Mythbuster workshops focused on sexual identities, which is a topic rarely addressed by museums. The workshops were targeted at young people, who may still be looking for their own sexual identity and in the need of information, which made them an excellent target group for this kind of a project.

If even one of the participants found help and tools for finding an answer to the difficult questions surrounding identity at the workshops, the project met its primary goal.

The Mythbuster workshops received funding from the innovative project fund of the National Board of Antiquities.

4.9 REACHING THE OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT AND ITS EFFECTS

TEXT:
IISA AALTONEN,
PROJECT ASSISTANT,
AND
SARI KATAINEN,
PRODUCER



At Sexpo's workshops, the participants put themselves in the shoes of imaginary people using cards and assessed how well their sexual rights were fulfilled.

> 4.9 REACHING THE OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT AND ITS EFFECTS

The Mythbusters project was a way of implementing the strategic focus areas and objectives of Helsinki City Museum, similarly to the Helsexinki exhibition and other related programme. The co-operation with the expert organisations enabled the museum to target at young people content related to sexuality, gender and sex that it could not have produced in-house. Another important aspect of the project was that the young participants were treated as equal actors and given a chance to affect the workshop and its themes. The workshop themes and the participatory approach also promoted the project's agenda of social influence.

One of the objectives of the projects was to increase information on sexuality, gender, sex and sexual rights among young people. Clearly, there was a need for this information: the original target group was extended to cover also students on secondary education due to high demand. The older students also felt that the workshops were important, although they did not learn as much new information in them as the 8th and 9th graders.

Helsinki City Museum reached new target groups with the project. The new content that was implemented in novel ways attracted to the museum teachers who do not normally bring

their classes to the museum. Usually, history teachers bring their groups to the museum, but many teachers of subjects such as health education and psychology brought their classes to the Mythbusters workshops. The Mythbusters workshop project demonstrated that the new curriculum, which emphasises phenomenon-based learning, allows the museum to meet the needs of more subjects and teachers with its exhibitions and services. The project also showed that co-operation with an external expert is a way to offer more extensive content to schools, even in topics that the museum does not have sufficient expertise.



**Helsinki City Museum
reached new target groups
with the project.**

> 4.9 REACHING THE OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT AND ITS EFFECTS

The project enabled the museum to network with new kinds of organisations.

The Mythbusters workshop project enabled reaching young people who were already included in the target group of the Learning and Well-Being team but not necessarily taken sufficiently into account in the target group of the Exhibition and Programme team. The aim of the Mythbusters project was to organise a programme for young people, not only as separate learning assignments but in relation to the Helsexinki exhibition. The relaxed workshops and discussions in a tranquil museum that was closed to the general public might attract the

young people to the museum again. Many of the teachers also said they plan to take their class to visit the museum's other exhibitions and attend its other events.

In many respects, the Mythbusters workshop project was a learning experience also for Helsinki City Museum. The museum learned new information about the diversity of the workshop themes and implementation methods as well as on the implementation of new kinds of projects that feature the museum as a platform for content produced by others. The Mythbusters workshop project demonstrated that expert co-operation is a way of implementing exhibition-related learning content that falls beyond the museum's own know-how. Furthermore, similar principles can later be applied to other content that requires external expertise. All the feedback from the project was analysed and archived for later use in similar projects, which also helps in achieving this target.

The project was also innovative from the point of view of Helsinki City Museum's internal operations: it was seen as a co-operation across team borders. Another aim of the project was to build partnerships and develop new ways of co-operation. The project enabled the museum to network with new kinds of organisations. Awareness of the museum increased within the extended network, and the new networks enable continuing similar co-operation in the future.

5.

THE OPERATIONAL MODEL OF THE PARTICIPATORY LEARNING MATERIALS IN CONNECTION WITH EXHIBITION THROUGH EXPERT CO-OPERATION PROJECTS

1. STARTING THE PROJECT

TEXT:
SARI KATAINEN,
PRODUCER,
AND AINO VILA,
WORKING GROUP
MEMBER

MUSEUM

- Knowledge, skills, expertise, methods
- Personnel's competence and sufficient resources, premises, equipment, common intent to create additional value



CO-OPERATION PARTNERS

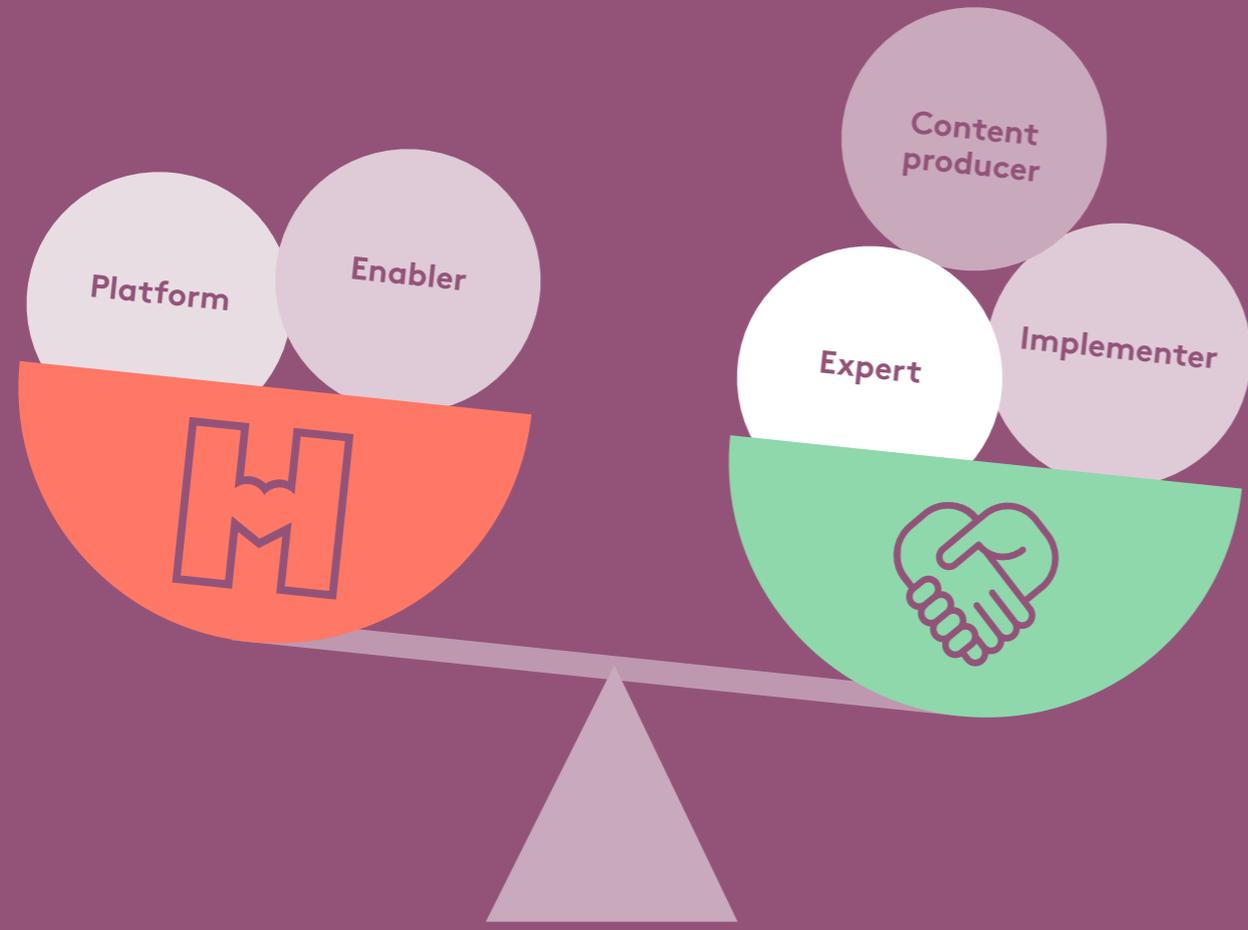
- Knowledge, skills, expertise, methods
- Personnel's competence and sufficient resources, common intent to provide information



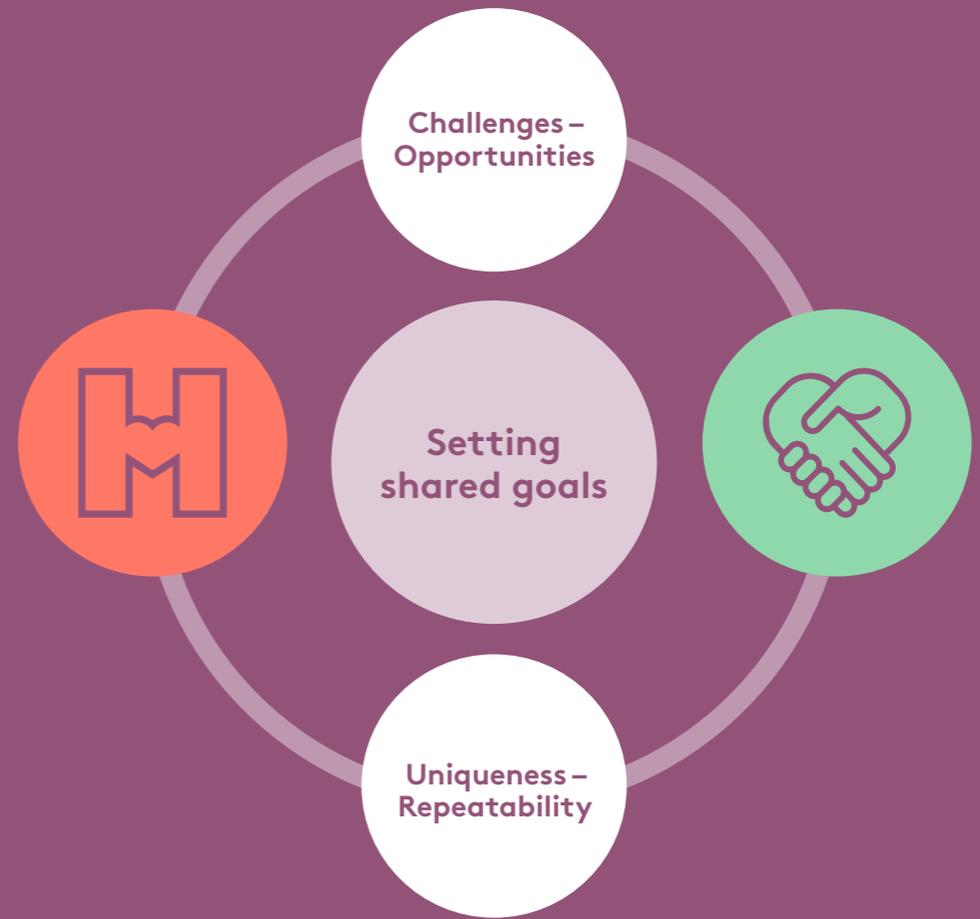
TARGET GROUP

- Needs, wishes, information and experience background
- Accessibility, common intent to participate

> **STARTING THE PROJECT**

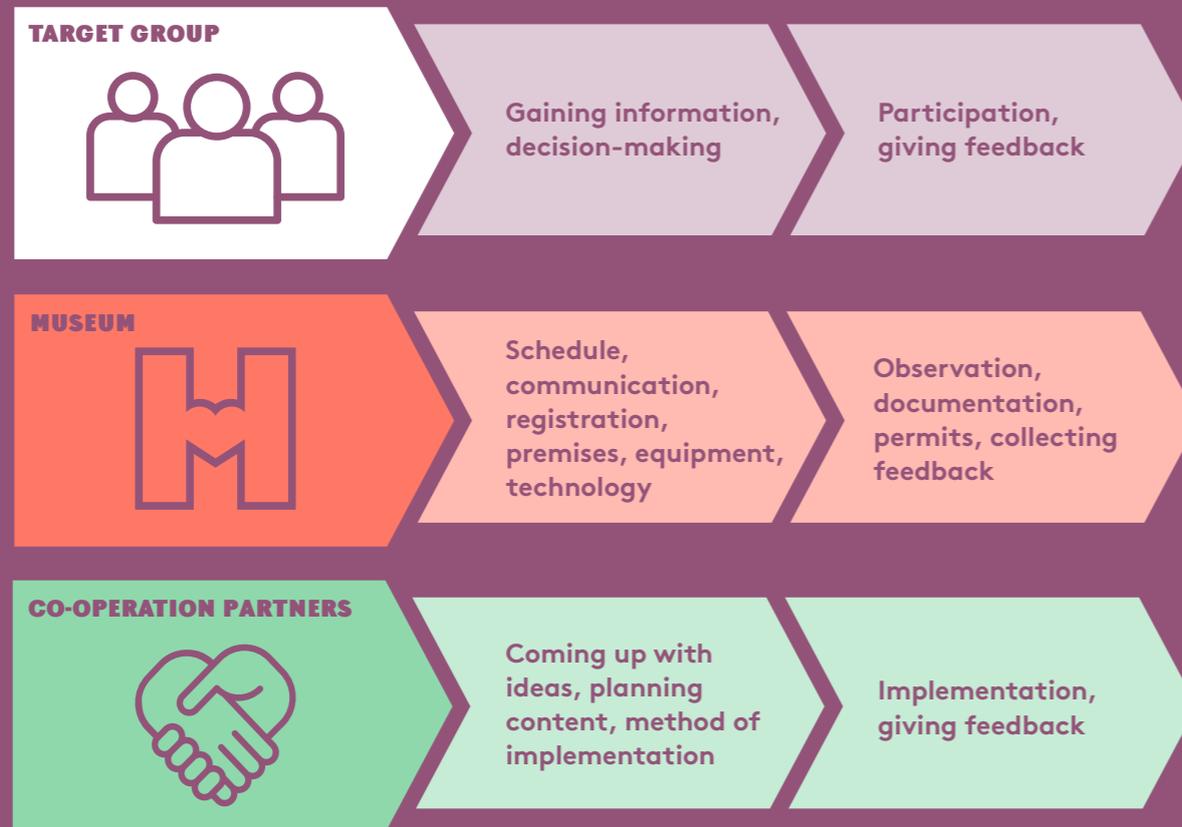


ROLES IN THE PROJECT

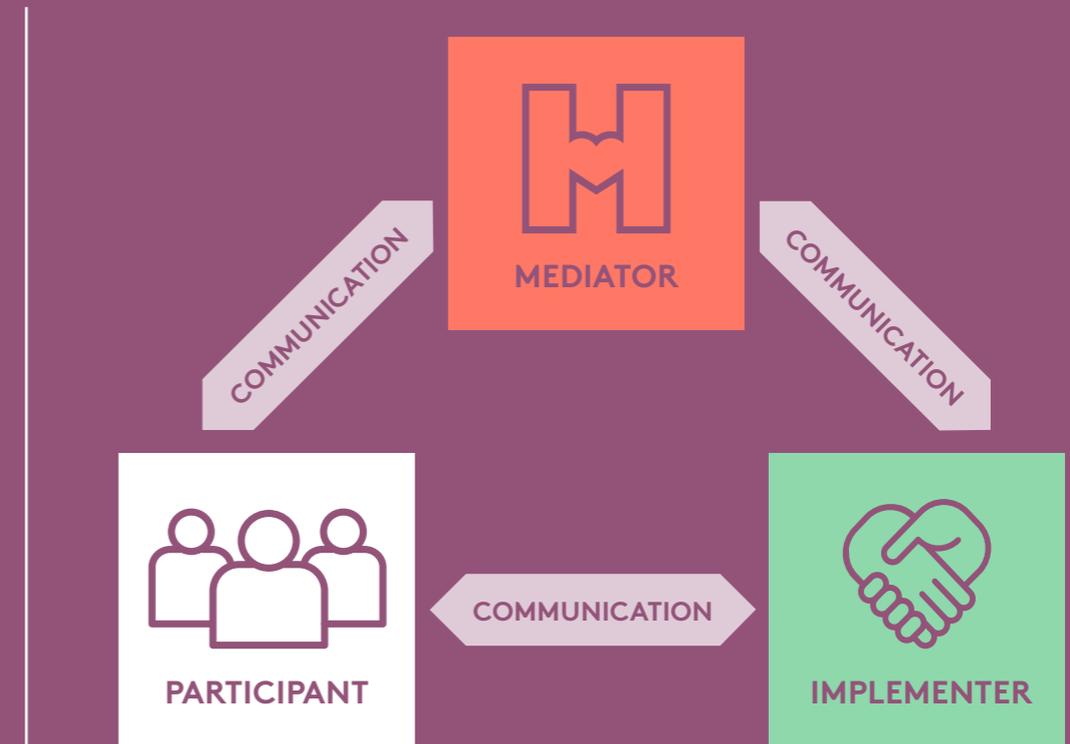


STARTING THE PROJECT

2. PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT



PRACTICAL IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PROJECT



ROLES IN THE PROJECT

3. CLOSING THE PROJECT

