

ARTISTIC INTERVENTIONS FOR INNOVATION

How does innovation happen?

Enhancing the innovation capacity of society is essential for societal prosperity and economic development. Innovations are sparked off by challenging old ideas and practices and trying out new ones. They require courage and creativity, as well as space for experimentation and reflection. Organisations of all kinds can consciously develop their innovative potential by strategically tapping into wellsprings of knowledge outside their established frame of reference and experimenting with creative practices. They can thereby learn how to increase the quantity and quality of new ideas they generate, as well as to evaluate their value and, most importantly, to implement them.

Why work with artists in innovation processes?

Inviting artists to intervene in organisations (businesses, public institutions, social organisations) is one of the most direct ways of stimulating innovative thinking and experimentation. Artists are skilled in **engaging people's creativity** and they can **disrupt the established routines, mindsets and management processes**, thereby opening space for fresh ways of thinking and acting. Working with artists can help organisations to re-assess themselves with new eyes and **to question what they do, how they do it and why they do it**. A particular competence of artists is in grappling productively with the uncertainty that is at the heart of innovation. People and teams at all levels in organizations need help in exploring the unknown so that good ideas are not killed off under the pressure to find quick fixes.

What are the impacts of artistic interventions in organisations and society?

Research¹ shows the contribution of artistic intervention to:

- **Developing services, products and processes innovation:** disruptive thinking, creative approaches and new methodologies of interaction generate new ideas.
- **Supporting social innovation:** improving social relations amongst employees and enhancing new skills contributes to creating better working conditions, social cohesion and inclusion.
- **Rethinking ways of relating to users and communities:** artistic processes help identify or refine corporate culture and values, supporting the development of creative communication strategies.

Artistic intervention increasing efficiency, motivation and corporate culture: Producer of artistic interventions Tilt, worked with Swedish mineral insulating wool factory Paroc (2000 employees), and the actress and director Victoria Brattström to solve serious communication problems between employees of one of Paroc's production plants. Within ten months, the artist succeeded through her artistic methods in improving the social atmosphere and communication between employees by letting them produce a photography documentary of their work and workplace. It increased motivation and collective responsibility, and contributed to increased efficiency at the plant.

¹ Ariane Berthoin Antal, Research report, *Transforming organisations with the arts*, December 2009; Ariane Berthoin Antal in collaboration with Roberto Gómez de la Iglesia and Miren Vives Almandoz. (2011). *Managing artistic interventions in organizations. A comparative study of programmes in Europe*. 2nd edition updated and expanded. Gothenburg, TILLT Europe; Giovanni Schiuma, *The Value of Arts-Based Initiatives*. Mapping Arts-Based Initiatives, Arts&Business, London; Lotte Darso, *Artful Creation, Learning Tales of Arts-in-Business*, Samfundslitteratur, 2004, Fredriksberg.

What are the impacts of artistic intervention on art and culture?

- Artistic interventions help to develop new artistic methods and provide artists with additional work opportunities.
- They democratise access to culture and stimulate cultural participation.
- Artistic interventions draw on culture as a catalyst for entrepreneurship and innovation.

Artistic intervention contributes to all policy sectors:

- **Business innovation:** similar to design, it enhances non-technological, user-driven innovation through changes in business models, new working and organisational processes.
- **Social innovation:** it stimulates skills and competencies, encourages disruptive and creative thinking in organisations. It offers solutions to strengthen social cohesion. It contributes to a better offer of public services.
- **Creative Europe:** artistic intervention promotes culture as a catalyst for creativity and innovation.

Transforming organisations with the arts in Europe

Thanks to the emergence of professional producers of artistic interventions, organisations throughout Europe are gaining experience with this approach to learning and innovation. Among the strongest are those in Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, the UK.

With support from the EU Culture Programme 2007-2013, Creative Clash raises awareness of the value that artistic interventions can add in all kinds of organizations in all sectors.

Artistic intervention improving public service delivery: The French producer of artistic interventions 3CA helped the public hospital Saint-Antoine in Paris to commission artist Melik Ohanian to create a work of art for the hospital's new emergency services. The medical practitioners wanted to work with an artist to find a way of realising a new health policy that would balance "cure and care". The artist listened to the staff's desire to create a stimulating environment that would address the anxiety of waiting and offer a moment of contemplation. Recognizing that the patients in this service often lie on stretchers, he focused on the ceiling and designed an arrangement consisting of sixty-nine hanging geometric modules. With a slow and regular cadence the modules shift from one luminescent state to another. Like an imaginary landscape, the work introduces the idea of an expanded space and an on-going motion, which extends beyond the hospital world.

Artistic intervention for product innovation: Grupo i68, a software engineering company in San Sebastián (Spain) that provides customised solutions for management innovation wanted to develop a new interface to access information systems. The producer of artistic interventions Conexiones improbables initiated the collaboration between the company and Paola Tognazzi, choreographer and interactive audiovisual installations designer. She was a good match for the project because her work explores artistic experiences that physically and emotionally involve audiences and encourage the development of sensory awareness. Over a period of 9 months they developed together "Humanising Software" to maximize usability and ergonomics. In order to create an expert system whose intelligence emerges from human exchange and interaction, a system that can learn from and with users, the artist worked with various artistic/creative exercises and experiences that fostered and encouraged new perspectives in the R&D process.

More information can be found on www.creativeclash.eu

