

Encatc Working Group

"Creative entrepreneurship and education in cultural life"

Seminar "The Creativity and Innovation in Cultural Cooperation Projects"

Working group meeting • Feb 26 2009 • University of Barcelona, Spain

Participants

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Notes from meeting

We started the meeting with attending the seminar "The Creativity and Innovation in Cultural Cooperation Projects" at the University of Barcelona (for a full programme, look at www.culturalentrepreneur.se under "Seminar on creativity in Barcelona").

At the working group meeting we started with short refreshment on the purpose of the working group. The idea is to meet and discuss on topics concerning members related to entrepreneurship and education. The working group is a meeting among professionals, where we start a meeting with a study visit or attending a seminar. We continue with a discussion, exchanging ideas and reflections on the topic addressed.

The questions for this meeting was the following:

What was the most important thing that was said today on creativity and innovation?

What are in your experience the key factors for innovation and creativity in education?

Will anything in your specific program change according to this?

A discussion followed and many issues and reflections were put forward. The notes below are just short notifications of what was said. There is no attempt to write down the full conversation. But hopefully these traces can be useful for remembering the essence of the discussion.

We need to have a more open attitude to failure. To fail is an important part of innovation.

The mentality of many institutions that offer grants to develop projects at European national and local level needs to change. Institutions are not open to new ideas and failure. Institutions need to change.

In the Basque country you need to measure innovation, which is very difficult. How do you measure this? On the seminar talent and passion was pointed out as important, this is hard to measure in quantitative terms.

The world is in the midst of the financial crises. Innovative ideas are needed to deal with this situation.

Creativity is not closed within the artist. Many people can be creative. Creativity is often closed into one's mind. We need to find methods to open it up, and make creative ideas and solutions are part of the society.

In Slovakia innovation is still discussed as a technical activity. Authorities in Slovakia are putting forward this side of innovation, not as innovation and creative processes as discussed on the seminar. Another example discussed is France, where two different opinions were put forward. One saying that last year when EU put forward the year of Intercultural Dialogue, you could see a range of activities. This year, Innovation and Creativity, has not at all been met with the same interest. Another opinion was that this was not entirely the fact, interest could be found here and there.

As educators we are lucky since we work with students. They give the most input to the institution and you as an educator. As educators we need to give students an open framework in the educating situation and show different evaluation tools that reaches beyond figures and numbers. In an economical crisis, the outputs accepted tend to become economical. What is our role as educators today? And what if you instead measure risk, to build in risk in evaluation?

The financial crisis is like a sudden wake-up call. Things have been working for a long time, in educational systems for instant, but what is the real need for people? Terms are misused today and loose they're meaning, terms like entrepreneurship, creativity, and innovation...

In UK and the British language, it's a large difference between the word "training" and the word "education". As education is the word for Universities and long-term education, training is only very short training sessions. The difference is enormous.

We need to gather creators and help them go from idea to action.

Innovation is sometimes misunderstood in different areas. In cultural heritage, for example, innovation is thought of as something not for them, something technical. Instead, we need to use creativity and innovation in all sectors as a factor to think new within different areas, as heritage, handicraft etc. It can be seen as methods, a way of thinking, possible to use in a wide variety of areas.

Innovation is to return to the origin.

There is a translation from "student" to "customer". Some students understand the dilemma in this, but some act as if they were customers, as if they bought an educational course as a commodity. Learning takes time. There need to be time hanging around, not being effective, but giving time for reflection and discussion.

The learning situation is very traditional, many times. You sit and learn. Students get upset and afraid if they don't know exactly what is expected from them. What do educators need to do, to give students methods for risk taking, creativity?

It's also a large responsibility for educators and teachers. We need active educators. Teachers who can give students a project and then let them work on their own, "learning by doing". Another method is role-play and simulation games, often used at the University in Barcelona. What new kind of games needs to be developed?

Another topic discussed was the relation between structure and creativity. How much structure is supportive for creativity? When does it become an obstacle?

Competition is important to stimulate creativity. How can competition be built in role-play models?

Taking notes,
Lotta Lekvall