



Evaluation of BarentsKult

The Norwegian Barents Secretariat's grant programme
for Norwegian-Russian cultural cooperation

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Cover photo: Jonas Sjøkvist Karlsbakk/ Barentssekretariatet

None of the photos used are related to projects referred
to in this report.

Abstract

This report presents the result of the evaluation of BarentsKult, a funding mechanism for Norwegian-Russian cultural collaboration within arts and culture in the Barents Region. The evaluation team concludes that BarentsKult has successfully created sustainable cultural networks across the Norwegian-Russian border. BarentsKult contributes to the creation of international meeting places to a large extent by having allowed some actors to grow exponentially over time. While BarentsKult is seen to contribute to business development to some extent, the effect is difficult to measure. In some cases, BarentsKult funds have a multiplier effect for repeaters who are able to offer permanent positions as part of their activities. Projects correspond to the main focus areas of BarentsKult, and they seem to meet requirements for innovation and equal cooperation between Russian and Norwegian partners. In other words, the BK programme overall reaches its goals as defined in the programme guidelines.

BarentsKult is seen as having high value for project participants. The local value lies in the cultural experiences that are made available to the public, which are seen as enhancing place attractiveness. On the regional level, we see that the projects facilitate the achievement of relevant policies and cooperation agreements. BarentsKult creates synergies with other funding mechanisms in that BarentsKult funding is seen as a quality mark that may unleash further funds from other financial sources.

While BarentsKult does contribute to high quality and innovative art, the way professionalism is defined may narrow the possibilities for identifying relevant partners in Russia, particularly among indigenous people. Lack of knowledge of Russian culture, language barriers, asymmetric relations and the professionalism criteria are among the hurdles pointed to as obstacles for attracting newcomers – be it from Nordland or among indigenous groups. Lack of awareness and visibility of BarentsKult is a more pressing challenge than lack of relevance per se.

Russian participation is seen as equal and very useful on the technical level. The in-kind contribution of the Russian partners is highly valued by the Norwegian partners. The financial contribution, however, remains low. New funding possibilities emerging in Russia could mitigate this in the future, and it will be important for BarentsKult to ensure that Russian project partners explore and utilise national funding options as much as possible.

While Covid-19 definitely has had an adverse effect on the project implementation, it has not been devastating. The pandemic has inspired creativity and contributed to a higher technological competence. Some working tools will be useful in the future, and it is also not unlikely that video conferencing, social media and streaming will serve to include new groups. However, physical meetings will remain the most important form of collaboration.

The editing of this report was completed by 22 February 2022 and reflects the situation under which the case study interviews were conducted. As such, the report does not capture the on-going war in Ukraine.

Sammendrag

Denne rapporten presenterer resultatet av evalueringen av støtteordningen BarentsKult, som finansierer norsk-russisk samarbeid innen kunst og kultur i Barentsregionen. Evalueringsteamet konkluderer med at BarentsKult har lyktes med å skape bærekraftige kulturelle nettverk på tvers av den norsk-russiske grensen. BarentsKult bidrar i stor grad til å skape internasjonale møteplasser, blant annet gjennom å la enkelte aktører, såkalte «gjengangere», vokse seg store over tid gjennom gjentatt finansiering. Mens BarentsKult i noen grad bidrar til næringsutvikling, er effekten vanskelig å måle. I noen tilfeller har BarentsKult-midler gjort det mulig for gjengangere å tilby faste stillinger som en del av sin virksomhet. Prosjektene passer inn i BarentsKults fokusområder og møter generelt kriteriene for nyskaping og likeverdig samarbeid mellom russiske og norske partnere. I all hovedsak når BarentsKult målene for støtteordningen.

Prosjekteierne opplever at BarentsKult har høy verdi. Den lokale verdien ligger i kulturopplevelser som øker stedsattraktiviteten og stimulerer til reiseliv. På regionalt nivå ser vi at prosjektene bidrar til måloppnåelse på relevante politikkområder og andre samarbeidsavtaler med Russland. Midler fra BarentsKult blir sett som et kvalitetsstempel som igjen kan bidra til å utløse midler fra andre finansieringsmekanismer. Slik skaper støtteordningen synergier med andre støtteordninger.

BarentsKult bidrar til høy kvalitet og nyskapende kunst. Måten profesjonalitet defineres på, kan imidlertid begrense mulighetene til å finne relevante partnere i Russland, spesielt blant urfolk. Manglende kunnskap om russisk kultur, språkbarrierer, asymmetriske relasjoner og profesjonalitetskriteriene blir pekt på som hindringer for å tiltrekke seg nykommere – det være seg fra Nordland eller blant urfolk. Dette er mer presserende utfordringer enn mangel på relevans i seg selv.

Russisk deltakelse blir sett på som likeverdig og svært nyttig på det faglige nivået. Det økonomiske bidraget er imidlertid fortsatt lavt. Nye finansieringsmuligheter i Russland kan gi nye muligheter i fremtiden, og det vil være viktig for BarentsKult å sikre at russiske prosjektpartnere utforsker og utnytter nasjonale finansieringsmuligheter så mye som mulig.

Selv om Covid-19 definitivt har hatt en negativ effekt på prosjektgjennomføringen, har den også inspirert til kreativitet og bidratt til høyere teknologisk kompetanse. Noen arbeidsverktøy vil være nyttige i fremtiden, og det er heller ikke usannsynlig at videokonferanser, sosiale medier og strømming vil tjene til å inkludere nye grupper. Fysiske møter vil imidlertid fortsatt være den viktigste samarbeidsformen.

Redigeringen av denne rapporten ble avsluttet 22. februar 2022. Rapporten reflekterer derfor ikke den pågående krigen i Ukraina.

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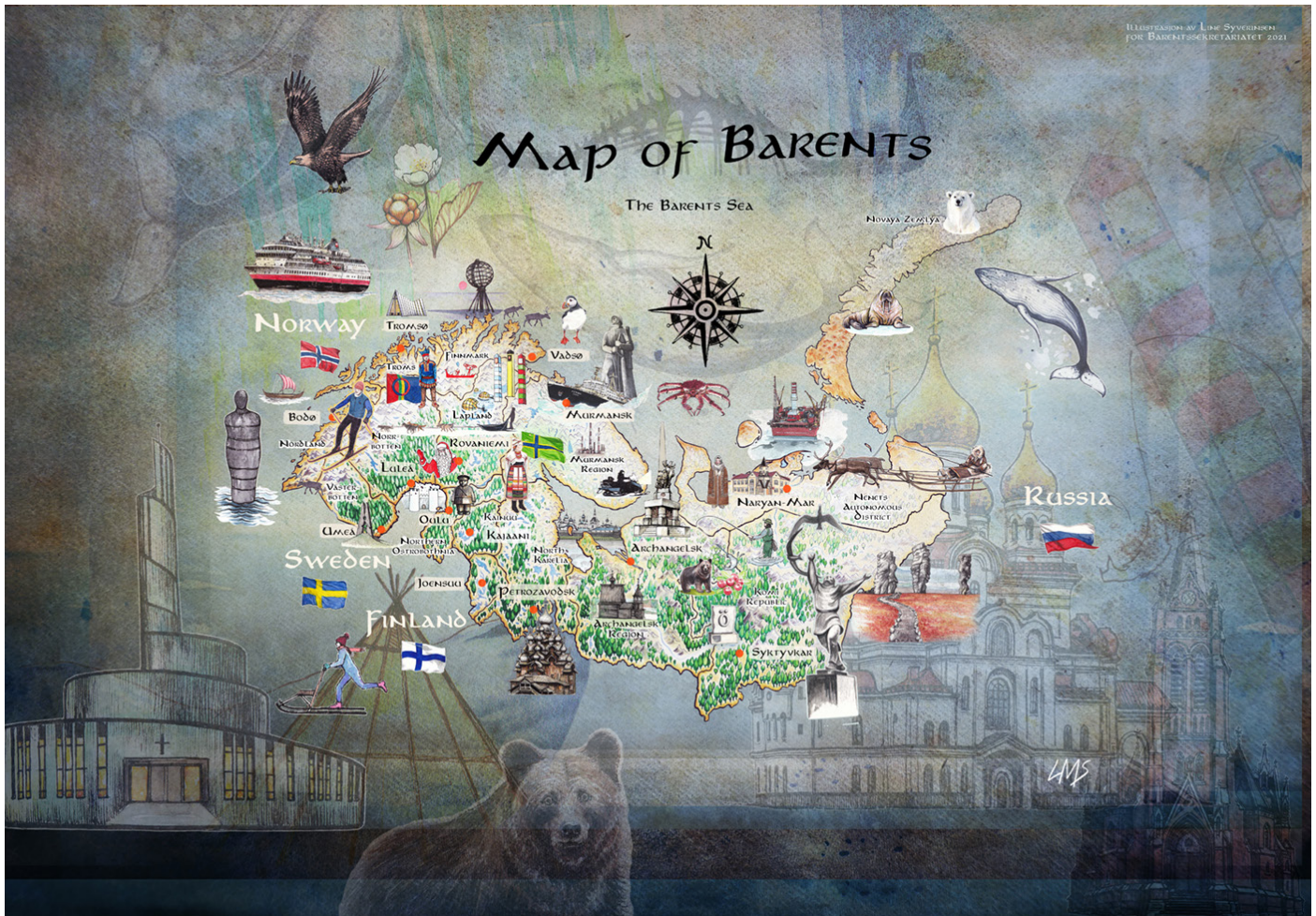


Illustration map of the Barents region, made by artist Line Marie Syverinsen for The Norwegian Barents Secretariat (2021).

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Barentskult is generally seen by its users as a unique funding mechanism for cultural co-operation projects in the Barents Region. (Foto: Jonas Sjøkvist Karlsbakk/ Barents Sekretariat)

1. Background

The BarentsKult culture grant programme was initiated in the autumn of 2007 and implemented from 2008, with the aim of promoting larger border crossing culture and art projects in the Norwegian and Russian part of the Barents Region. In January 2009, the Norwegian and Russian Ministers of Culture signed an action plan for cultural cooperation in the High North, in which BarentsKult is mentioned as one of the initiatives.

The BarentsKult funding scheme targets Norwegian and Russian artists as well as professional cultural institutions and actors. It is administered by the Barents Secretariat (Barentssekretariatet). BarentsKult enjoys strong support from Nordland, Troms and Finnmark county municipalities. Since its launch in 2008 BarentsKult has contributed to the realization of over 250 Norwegian-Russian projects involving thousands of professional artists and cultural actors. According to the guidelines and criteria for support from BarentsKult that were revised in 2018, BarentsKult targets the following groups:

- Norwegian and Russian artists
- Professional cultural institutions and actors

BarentsKult provides grants for the following areas:

- international collaborative projects in art and culture
- arena development
- cultural business development

BarentsKult emphasises the following criteria in the selection process:

- The projects should have a good cooperation profile and contain cooperation between Norwegian and Russian actors. Real Russian participation in the projects for which support is applied for is a prerequisite.
- The projects should contain elements of innovation.
- The projects should hold high artistic and cultural quality.
- The project should produce measurable results.
- The project applicants should have the ability to implement the project successfully.

The board of the Barents Secretariat has appointed an Expert Committee that assesses the applications and provides its recommendations to the Board. The Expert Committee is composed of representatives from the two (earlier three) northernmost counties. The Barents Secretariat's Board is the final decision-maker for each individual project application.

1.2 Objectives of the evaluation

An evaluation of BarentsKult was carried out in 2014. On 12th December 2020, the Barents Secretariat's board decided to carry out a new evaluation in 2021. The main objective of this evaluation is to conduct a «general assessment of the programme's results and goal achievement in relation to the objectives and criteria set out in the overall programme, terms and guidelines». The evaluation has explored the effect and benefit of BarentsKult on and for participants in projects, and whether the projects have had local and regional value. In other words, the purpose of the evaluation is primarily learning, and not control. The assessment comes with recommendations that can contribute to further development of BarentsKult, and has not primarily looked for errors or omissions that need to be corrected.

The terms of reference posed the following six main questions to be answered by this evaluation:

1. To what degree does BarentsKult meet the goal of stimulating cooperation between Norwegian and Russian professional artists and cultural actors in the Barents region (including St. Petersburg and Leningrad oblast)?
2. In what way (if any) does BarentsKult contribute to create international meeting places and networks for development of art and culture?
3. In what way (if at all) does BarentsKult contribute to cultural business development?
4. How has the goal achievement in the scheme evolved in a longer perspective compared to the findings in the previous evaluation report from 2014? What are the most important development trends in the period 2014-2020?
5. What direct and indirect benefit has the BarentsKult programme had for the project participants, and what has been the local and regional value?
- 6A. To what extent does BarentsKult contribute to reaching the objectives of the Northern Norwegian

counties and ministries as well as their engagements in Norwegian-Russian cultural cooperation and other cross-border cooperation in the Barents region?

6B. Does the BarentsKult complement, overlap or create synergies with other relevant funding programmes?

In addition, BarentsKult asked to also include the following subset of questions:

New actors:

- 7. Is the cooperation limited to the funded projects (short-term), or do the projects contribute to establishing cooperation/relations/networks that are durable over time?
- 8. Did the cooperation exist before the project, or was it established as a result of the project?
- 9. To what extent does BarentsKult fulfill the objective of stimulating the growth of good, innovative art and cultural projects?
- 10. To what degree do «repeaters» contribute to achieve the objectives of BarentsKult, and to what degree do these projects prevent new actors/applicants?

Ethnical and geographical spread

- 11. To what extent is the programme’s approach relevant for the target groups? What will it take to expand the participation to new applicants, different sectors and a geographical spread?

Russian participation

- 12. How extensive is the Russian participation in the project? (Has this changed over time? If yes, why, and in what way?)

The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic

- 13. How have restrictions due to Covid-19 affected project implementation and goal achievement? What alternative (digital) working methods and platforms have been used to compensate for closed borders and other obstacles? Have the projects reached a larger or smaller audience than planned?
- 14. In what way (if any) has the corona situation contributed to new/innovative solutions and working methods that can be useful in the future?

1.3 Political background: Bilateral relations between Norway and Russia¹

While the political situation between Norway and Russia is not part of this evaluation, the geographical catchment area

of BarentsKult is unique. Subsequently, it makes sense to set the political context wherein BarentsKult operates.

BarentsKult is an integral part of the Barents cooperation which was launched in 1993 and has given an important contribution to establishing trust between the Nordic countries and Russia. Even in present times, when tension has been building up between Russia and the West, notably in connection with the situation in the Ukraine, the Barents cooperation continues to enjoy strong support by Norwegian and Russian authorities and the population in the Barents region. This was reiterated by both sides when the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Sergei Lavrov, visited Norway in October 2021.

In spite of the uneven size and power asymmetry, Norway has had good relations with Russia since Tsar Nicholas II was the first head of state to recognize Norway as a sovereign state in 1905. The Norwegian-Russian border has been stable since its establishment in 1826 (with the exception of the period 1917-1944, when Finland controlled the border area that is now Russian) and historically the countries have kept peace for more than 1000 years.

The fall of the Berlin Wall contributed to Norway and Russia expanding their cooperation. This included cooperation on the management of fisheries resources in the North, environmental protection, securing nuclear installations, activities in Svalbard, and oil and gas resources. A highlight of Norwegian-Russian cooperation came in 2010 when the Norwegian government reached an agreement on the so-called «delimitation line» (delelinjen) in the Barents Sea (Treaty between the Kingdom of Norway and the Russian Federation concerning Maritime Delimitation and Cooperation in the Barents Sea and the Arctic Ocean.)

In the period after 2010, however, Norwegian-Russian relations have deteriorated – largely due to matters not directly related to bilateral relations. From the Russian point of view Norway has been associated with US policy to expand its area of interest closer to the Russian border, the US missile defence system (the Globus II radar in Vardø) and the incorporation of Russia’s neighbouring countries closer into Western European cooperation (EU and NATO enlargement). At the same time, Norway became increasingly critical of developments internally in Russia, especially on democracy and human rights issues. Putin’s concentration of power, the treatment of opposition figures and journalists and Russia’s actions in areas such as Chechnya sparked Norwegian criticism.

Of recent developments in Russia that are of importance for BarentsKult is the Russian «Law of Foreign agents». The bill was introduced in July 2012 by legislators from

¹This chapter was written before the Russian invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022. We have chosen to keep it as it reflects the situation under which the case study interviews were conducted.



Delimitation line agreement Barents Sea. Signing in Murmansk, september 2010. Norway Russia. (Photo: Jonas Karlsbakk/Barents Secretariat)

the governing United Russia party and signed into law by President Vladimir Putin on 20 July 2012. The new legislation is a series of amendments to existing laws with changes being applied to the criminal code and the laws «On Public Associations», «On Non-commercial Organizations», and «On Combating Money Laundering and the Financing of Terrorism.»

The law went into effect in November 2012, but was not actively enforced until Vladimir Putin instructed law-enforcement officials to do so during a speech to members of the Federal Security Service in 2013, stating that «Any direct or indirect interference in our internal affairs, any form of pressure on Russia, our allies and partners is unacceptable.»

Cooperation projects with Russian organizations may to some extent be affected by the this law, that requires non-profit organisations, media organisations and individuals that receive foreign donations, engage in «political activity», study and report on crime, corruption and other problems within the military, space and security industries to register and declare themselves as «foreign agents».²

Once registered, organisations and individuals are subject to additional audits and are obliged to mark all their publications with a 24-word disclaimer saying that they are being distributed by a «foreign agent». In Russian, this phrase has strong connotations with cold war-era espionage, and the law has been criticized both in Russia and internationally as a violation of human rights and as

being designed to target opposition groups. Supporters of the law have compared it to United States legislation on lobbyists employed by foreign governments.

As to projects supported by BarentsKult, this legislation so far has not had any reported serious practical problems for the programme. This may change in the future, making national funding schemes in Russia, such as the President's Fund, all the more important. A Russian financing scheme for BarentsKult projects was discussed on a Ministerial level when BarentsKult was established but has so far not been implemented.

It is also worth noting that from the Norwegian side, the people-to-people cooperation between Russia and Norway is seen as especially important in times when the general relations are strained. In a speech by Eivind Vad Petersson on 11 November 2021, the Norwegian state secretary of Foreign Affairs, said: «We believe that there is significant potential to expand the cooperation and dialogue with Russia. We want to expand dialogue and cooperation with Russia. Regular contact is vital for solving specific issues and discussing disagreements. (...) The Barents cooperation is a unique platform for cooperation on the national, regional, and local levels.»

BarentsKult can play an important role by maintaining and improving the relations between Russia and Norway even in times when the general relations are strained.

²The official title of the law is: «On Amendments to Legislative Acts of the Russian Federation regarding the Regulation of the Activities of Non-profit Organisations Performing the Functions of a Foreign Agent». See also «What is Russia's foreign agent law?», *Deutsche Welle*, 3 January 2022, <https://www.dw.com/en/what-is-russias-foreign-agent-law/a-60652752>

2. Evaluation methodology

In this chapter, we present the methods used in the evaluation. The choice of methods have been agreed between the Barents Secretariat and Conow. The below

evaluation matrix sums up which methods have been used to answer the different evaluation questions. Thereafter, a description of each of the methods follows.

Table 1 Evaluation matrix

Evaluation questions	Interviews	Survey	Document analysis	Case-study
Six main questions:				
1. To what degree does BarentsKult meet the goal of stimulating cooperation between Norwegian and Russian professional artists and cultural actors in the Barents region (including St. Petersburg and Leningrad oblast)?	Barents Secretariat/ Expert Committee/ Board	Grant recipients Rejected applicants	Programme reports Approvals and rejections to applications	✓
2. In what way (if any) does BarentsKult contribute to create international meeting places and networks for development of art and culture?	Barents Secretariat Expert Committee/ Board	Grant recipients	Programme reports Approvals and rejections to applications	✓
3. In what way (if at all) does BarentsKult contribute to cultural business development?	Barents Secretariat/ Expert Committee/ Board	Grant recipients	Programme reports Approvals and rejections to applications	✓
4. How has the goal achievement in the scheme evolved in a longer perspective compared to the findings in the previous evaluation report from 2014? What are the most important development trends in the period 2014-2020?	Barents Secretariat/ Expert Committee/ Board		Analysis of programme reports versus former evaluation	
5. What direct and indirect benefit has the BarentsKult program had for the project participants, and what has been the local and regional value?	Barents Secretariat/ Expert Committee/ Board	Grant recipients		✓
6 a. To what extent does BarentsKult contribute to reaching the objectives of the Northern Norwegian counties and ministries as well as their engagements in Norwegian-Russian cultural cooperation and other cross-border cooperation in the Barents region?	Barents Secretariat/ Expert Committee/ Board	Grant recipients	Analysis of guiding documents versus programme reports	✓
6 b. Does the BarentsKult complement, overlap or create synergies with other relevant funding programmes?	Resource persons			

Sub-questions				
New actors				
7. Is the cooperation limited to the funded projects (short-term), or do the projects contribute to establishing cooperation/relations/networks that are durable over time?		Grant recipients	Approvals and rejections to applications	✓
8. Did the cooperation exist before the project, or was it established as a result of the project?		Grant recipients		✓
9. To what extent does BarentsKult fulfil the objective of stimulating the growth of good, innovative art and cultural projects?	Barents Secretariat/ Expert Committee/ Board Resource persons		Approvals and rejections to applications	✓
10. To what degree do “repeaters” contribute to achieve the objectives of BarentsKult, and to what degree do these projects prevent new actors/applicants?	Barents Secretariat/ Expert Committee/ Board Resource persons Potential applicants	Rejected applicants		✓
Geographic and ethnic spread				
11. To what extent is the programme’s approach relevant for the target groups? What will it take to expand the participation to new applicants, different sectors and a geographical spread?	Barents Secretariat/ Expert Committee/ Board Resource persons Potential applicants	Rejected applicants		✓
Russian participation				
12. How extensive is the Russian participation in the project? (Has this changed over time? If yes, why, and in what way?)	Barents Secretariat/ Expert Committee/ Board	Grant recipients	Program reports	✓
The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic				
13. How have restrictions due to Covid-19 affected project implementation and goal achievement? What alternative (digital) working methods and platforms have been used to compensate for closed borders and other obstacles? Have the projects reached a larger or smaller audience than planned?		Grant recipients		✓
14. In what way (if any) has the corona situation contributed to new / innovative solutions and working methods that can be useful in the future?		Grant recipients		✓

2.1 Case studies

Case studies are useful for formulating concepts and can have a high conceptual validity in qualitative research. Case studies add descriptive richness and are suited to explain outcomes in individual cases that may be generalised. Whether case studies can be used to fully specify causal mechanisms will depend on whether one succeeds in establishing «weak» or «strong» causal chains. Strong chains actively connect elements of the causal chain to produce an outcome whereas weaker chains may just be intervening variables.

To avoid biased case selection, Conow has used a «diverse cases»-selection method which is useful when the population under study can be subdivided into clear variables. The underlying assumption is that each case is representative of the other cases with the same variables. It must be underlined that this assumption seldom holds hundred percent, and generalisations from single cases across the population should be done with uttermost caution.

Conow was given spreadsheets from the Barents Secretariat that featured all projects since 2008. The team sorted the list for approved projects 2014-2020 and found 148 projects. Of these, 10 had not been implemented, thus there were 138 projects from which to select the 10 cases. The projects were approved between 2014 and 2020 as showed in table 2 above. After the selection proces, project owners for one of the cases were unable to participate in the evaluation, bringing the final number of cases to nine.

2.2 Document analysis

Document analysis is a qualitative research method that uses a systematic procedure to analyze documentary evidence to answer specific research questions. An analysis has been conducted of the following documents:

- all guiding documents for BarentsKult
- policies or strategies that outline main objectives and commitments for Norwegian-Russian cultural cooperation for the two Northern Norwegian counties and the two the ministries that fund BarentsKult
- allocation letters to BarentsKult from financing partners

Table 2 Approved projects per year

Year	No of approved projects
2014	18
2015	17
2016	15
2017	17
2018	26
2019	24
2020	21

Table 3 Selection of cases

Categories	Number	Variables
County of applicant	3	Nordland, Troms, Finnmark
Owner structure	4	Public institution; Individual, Company, Foundation/organisation
Annual grant	5	i) >100.000, ii) 100.000-300.000, iii) 300.000-500.000, iv) 500.000-1.000.000, v) <1.000.000
Project length	3	One year, two years, three years
Repeating grantees (grantees of different projects);	2	Yes No
Indigenous people	2	Yes No
Cultural sector	14	Theatre, Music, Song, Movie, Photo, Sculpture, Exhibition, Lecture, Literature, Dance, Visual art, Handicraft, Performance, Installation
Russian partner's county	4	Murmansk, Archangelsk, Leningrad Oblast, Other

- periodic programme reports to the board and financing partners from 2014 until today
- justification for approvals and rejections of all applications 2014-2020

2.3 Interviews

The case study interviews followed a conversation guide for cross-comparison between Russian and Norwegian partners within the same project and between projects. Interviews were semi structured.

Due to Covid-19 and related travel restrictions, it was not possible for the team to obtain a visa to Russia until November 2021. Direct air connections were not restored until 9th November. The border at Storskog has mainly been used for official delegations with a special permit. This was still the situation in December 2021. In

Table 4 Ten selected case studies:

County	Indigenous	Sector	Applicant	Grant	Length	Repeating grantees	Partner location
Finnmark	Yes	Film	Company	ii	1	No	Komi
Finnmark	No	Festival	Company	v	3	Yes	Murmansk
Finnmark	No	Photo	Association	ii	2	No	St. Petersburg
Nordland	Yes	Dance	Company	iv	2	No	Murmansk
Nordland	No	Music	Association	i	2	No	Archangelsk/ Moscow
Nordland	No	Sculpture/ Memorial	Association	ii	2	No	Archangelsk/ Moscow
Troms	Yes	Theatre	Association	iii	1	No	Karelia
Troms	No	Music	Company	iv	1	No	St. Petersburg, Karelia
Troms	No	Music	Association	v	1	Yes	Murmansk
Troms	No	Literature	Public	iv	2	No	Several

combination with the difficult infection situation in Russia, this has made it impossible for project participants to travel across the border. Subsequently, travel to parts of Northern Norway were also put on hold. While a field trip to Harstad, Bodø, Narvik, and Troms was conducted in June 2021, the rest of the case study interviews were carried out using video links. In total, 11 informants who were project owners and eight informants who represented Russian project partners were interviewed.

Virtual group interview with Barents’ Secretariat and Board, and BarentsKult’s Expert Committee

A virtual group interview was held with representatives from the Barents Secretariat, the Board, and the Expert Committee on Thursday June 17th. The interview was carried out as a plenary conversation with some individual written chat exercises in between.

Virtual conversation with external resource persons from the cultural sector

The Evaluation team gathered external resource persons with various backgrounds from the cultural sector for a virtual conversation about BarentsKult. Participants were selected by the team from a list of around 20 resource persons from different cultural sectors such as movie, ballet, different genres of music, festivals, ethnic culture etc.

Interviews with potential applicants

Short individual phone interviews were carried out with five persons or entities that were seen to be potential applicants to BarentsKult who have not applied for financial support. Interviewees were selected and contacted by the Barents Secretariat. These were representatives from two music festivals (jazz and classical), two umbrella organisations and one representative from the indigenous sector who manages a center for contemporary art.

2.4 Survey

While interviews in its different forms have been the main data gathering method, there were some questions to which the team believed it would be beneficial to collect quantitative data. A web-based survey was sent via e-mail from the Barents Secretariat to 54 grantees from 2014 through 2020. There were 30 respondents. With a 95 percent confidence level, this gives us a confidence interval of 12 percent. In practice, this means that it is probable that any given result from the survey can be generalised with plus or minus 12 percent. I.e. if 50 percent of the respondents gave the same answer to one question, it is likely that between 38 and 62 per cent of all the grant recipients would have answered the same.



Kirkenes is getting ready for The Barents Spektakel 2022. BarentsSpektakel is an example of an arena that draws together cultural actors from the entire Barents Region. (Photo: Barents Secretariat)

Also, a web-based quest back survey was sent via e-mail from the Barents Secretariat to 23 applicants who have had their project proposals rejected in the period from 2014 to 2020. Only four people responded to the survey, which gives a confidence interval that is too broad (45 per cent) for the answers to be used statistically. However, where relevant, their free texts have been treated as qualitative data in the same way as data from interviews.

2.5 The 2014 evaluation of BarentsKult

Finally, the evaluation team draws on the previous evaluation that was conducted by The Fridtjof Nansen Institute (FNI) in 2014. The evaluation pointed to a number of positive results and concluded that the programme is an important contribution to the art and cultural life in Northern Norway. BarentsKult was seen as providing opportunities for artistic innovation and the establishment of networks and meeting places across the Norwegian-Russian border. The programme was also seen as having contributed to an increased professionalization of the arts and culture field in the region, not least through the transfer of cultural capital from the Russian side.

The evaluation pointed to a possible conflict between some of the programme goals. One such example was the desire to contribute to predictable jobs in the culture sector, while at the same time promoting cultural ambition. The team also warned against a potential expectation for repeaters to continue receiving support without necessarily incorporating a sufficient degree of innovation in their projects. The team argued that an expected increase in the number of applications will help clarify this possible conflict between goals.

The FNI evaluation team also saw a tension between increased professionalization and the program's geographical catchment area. Based on increased artistic ambitions, some informants expressed a desire for a geographical expansion, so that the scheme also could include Moscow, and provide opportunities to collaborate with Sweden and Finland without having to include Russian partners. Against this background, the evaluation was foreseeing increased tensions between the program's focus on cultural professionalization and the regional delimitation defined in the program.

3. The Case Studies

CASE 1 PHOTO

County Finnmark	Indigenous No
Grant per year 200 000	Durability <i>Two-year</i>
Type of applicant Association	Repeater No
Focus area International collaboration	Russian partner's county/area St. Petersburg

The project brought together eight Russian and three Norwegian photographers from a small municipality. The recipient, which is a museum, has not received BarentsKult funding before, and BarentsKult support was essential for both the Norwegian and Russian partners. BarentsKult funding triggered further funding from the local museum, the municipality, and the county.

The project comprised exhibitions, posters, calendars and post cards. The topic was the 75-year anniversary of the liberation of Finnmark and the reconstruction of the village. A separate exhibition compiled archive footage and new photographs of current surroundings and individuals who experienced the war and the ensuing reconstruction. The aim was to contribute to learning, discussion and mutual exchange of knowledge with a particular focus on how history, art and culture can play a role in deeper mutual understanding. Finally, a permanent set of photo exhibitions was established. The Norwegian partner highlights that the project enabled improved people-to-people cooperation in Eastern Finnmark at a time when this is lacking.

While the Norwegian partner carried the brunt of the financial burden, transfer of competence has mainly flowed from the Russian to the Norwegian side, providing a deeper understanding of general living conditions in a neighbouring country. In turn, BarentsKult's requirements to documentation, planning and reporting has increased the quality of cooperation.

The project brought together Russian and Norwegian photographers who co-operated on exhibitions. The sustainability of these networks remains an open question. The networks built are characterized as «personal», and the cooperation is not likely to last beyond the funding period. While the exhibitions can be seen as

«meeting places», they are not of a permanent nature. That being said, the Russian partner would be happy to cooperate again in new projects.

BarentsKult funding has contributed to an increased flow of resources to the museum that has enabled it to establish an attractive site for visitors. The Norwegian partner points out that «great experiences in small places has the potential to stimulate tourism», and states that this encourages public and private actors to invest in more permanent and predictable employment and mitigates emigration and the effects of a negative demographic development.

Ideas and technical solutions discussed have, with their focus on nature and current affairs, not been innovative in themselves. The innovation in the project lies that no similar projects have been implemented in this particular location before.

CASE 2 DANCE

County Nordland	Indigenous Yes
Grant per year 550 000	Durability Two-year
Type of applicant Company	Repeater No
Focus area International collaboration	Russian partner's county/area Murmansk

The project aimed at exploring the dancing rituals of the Eastern Sami people («skoltesamer»), reaching out to children in particular. At the time the interview was conducted, a revised application was being elaborated mainly due to changes caused by Covid-19. Funds for production and a performance tour will be applied for when the script is completed. The project will feature yoik and a mix of language. The project owner expects the project to contribute to new forms of art.

The idea is to use the platform «Digital Sapmi», a DJ-group from Sápmi which plays Sami and indigenous music from all over the world, to reach out to participants in the project, and get feed-back from them. Through this platform, material will be collected. A digital form has been developed to be used in the communication with participants. It will be

translated to Russian and Sami languages. BarentsKult funds will enable local participation from companies, organizations and individuals and in that sense also contribute to business development.

The project has been affected by Covid-19 and practical complications. As it has not been possible to travel to Russia to meet with the local partner, and as other common forms of communication have not been expedient, another strategy has been devised to overcome the challenges, about which BarentsKult has been informed. Due to Covid-19, the project will presumably reach out to more groups than originally planned. The new skills acquired are seen as highly useful.

As the interview was conducted early in the project period, it was not possible to assess the technical and economic participation from the Russian partner. The Norwegian partner intends to develop more projects with Russia in the future.

CASE 3 MUSIC

County Nordland	Indigenous No
Grant per year 40 000	Durability Two-year
Type of applicant Association	Repeater No
Focus area International collaboration	Arkhangelsk/Moscow

The project participants conducted concerts in different places in Nordland in November 2018. Eight Russian participants met the Norwegian participants for joint concerts and exchange of experience and culture.

The project would not have been implemented without BarentsKult funding, which was seen as «essential» both for the project owner and the Russian partners. Cooperation with the Russian partner preceded the project period, but the project itself will not continue beyond the funding period. Cooperation has, however, continued. Norwegian-Russian networks have been strengthened as a result of the project. Among other things, young Norwegian musicians have been invited to Russia for further education.

Through the project, concerts were arranged with joint participation of Norwegian choirs and Russian musicians. This work enriched the experience of both parties and gave ideas for further development of their relationship.

As a result, Russian musicians began to look for works of Norwegian composers of the 20th Century, about which they knew very little before. This expanded their repertoire and increased the interest of Norwegian and Russian listeners to their concerts.

The Norwegian partner drew significant learning from working with Russian professional musicians, which now includes Russian songs in their repertoire. The professional contribution from the Russian side was significant by participation of highly qualified musicians. The financial contribution was limited as travel costs were covered by the grant. The Russian partner sees the value of the project in that it united musicians of all generations from the two countries, and that it acquainted the young generation with classical and folk music and the musical culture of different schools. The project owner does not, however, consider the project to be particularly innovative.

CASE 4 SCULPTURE/MEMORIAL

County Nordland	Indigenous No
Grant per year 175 000	Durability Two-year
Type of applicant Association	Repeater No
Focus area International collaboration	Arkhangelsk/Moscow

The project is part of a formalized Norwegian-Russian cooperation on environmental issues that was established with the Former Soviet Union in 1988 and that has since been expanded to include the protection of cultural and historical memorials. This is the second part of the project.

The project is part of the broader «Prosjekt Nordlandsbanen» program, which aims to map, document, protect and convey the history of Soviet Prisoners of War in camps during World War II. The purpose of this particular project is to honour the memory of Soviet war prisoners who participated as forced labour in building the national road between Fauske and Narvik during World War II by creating a new memorial at Bjørnelven. An important aspect of the project is to bring forth an important part of the history of WWII in the region. The memorial has been designed by one Russian and Norwegian architect respectively and will be situated close to one of the previous memorials that were destroyed. Through the project, contact has been established with

a Russian architect, and the Norwegian partner hopes to present an exhibition at the museum in Arkhangelsk about forced labour. Beyond that, there are no specific plans to continue the collaboration. The project is part of a broader programme that has generated a criss-cross of networks where BarentsKult funds has played a part, but it is difficult to say how decisive BarentsKult funding has been for this project.

The Russian contribution has been in terms of artistic and professional nature, whereas external financial contributions have been absent. Nevertheless, the contribution has been beneficial on both sides, also artistically. The project owner regards the project as innovative and that it has contributed to expand the perspectives on both sides.

The Norwegian partner expects that the building of the monument and visits to the memorial will have future local economic effects. The project is seen as having great local and regional value in terms of visitors and national consciousness in local societies.

Covid-19 has led to some delays in the implementation of the project, but, on the other hand, reduced the number of time-consuming meetings. New work forms may reduce the time needed for organization of work processes. The downside is that the digital work forms have reduced the number of participants. Nor can digital communication fully replace professional human contacts.

CASE 5 THEATRE

County Troms	Indigenous No
Grant per year 600 000	Durability One-year
Type of applicant Association	Repeater No
Focus area International collaboration	Karelia

The project consisted of a play performed and developed together with actors and musicians with Norwegian, Sami and Russian mother tongues. The performance will tour in Norway, Russia and Finland, and the Norwegian partner takes particular pride in their successful attempt at «creating the sound of The North Calotte, and the ability to «unite people through language».

The project would have been implemented without BarentsKult funding, but with less resources and less of a Russian component. The BarentsKult grant made it

possible to hire a team of twelve, including actors, local sound and light engineers. The Russian partner was identified through the personal network of a Russian staffer in the theatre. The Russian partner spent two weeks with the Norwegian team, during which two performances were staged. While the play will be staged in the future, the company does not envision a continued collaboration with the Russian partner.

There was no monetary contribution from the Russian side. The Norwegian partner has not been able to identify new collaboration partners in Russia. However, the Norwegian partner gained useful experience in ways of collaboration, how to deal with the tension between cooperation and hierarchy, and how to get acquainted with a different theatrical language. Also, practical skills, like working with an interpreter, turned out to be useful experience. The project has sparked a new interest for Norwegian-Russian collaboration on the Norwegian side.

Due to Covid-19, the Russian partner was only able to spend two weeks in Norway, during which two performances were staged. While the cooperation with the Russian side became limited, the delay provided time to involuntarily delve deeper into the project. The Norwegian partner successfully applied for a one-year extension. Working digitally has enabled new ways of conducting meetings and even performing from home. The possibility of digital meetings makes it easier to access bureaucrats and politicians. In addition, digital meetings are seen as maintaining and prolonging the lifetime of already established collaboration projects.

CASE 6 MUSIC

County Troms	Indigenous No
Grant per year 500 000	Durability One-year
Type of applicant Private company	Repeater No
Focus area International collaboration	St. Petersburg/Karelia

The project brought together two Norwegian and two Russian musicians that had made a connection personally as well as professionally. The project consisted of six workshops in the period of 2017-2018, targeting selected institutions and festivals in Tromsø, Mo i Rana, St. Petersburg, Arkhangelsk, Petrozavodsk and Murmansk. With their own band as a core element, local actors were brought in to compose music, play together and perform in front of an audience. The aim was to

create and convey music that combines the specific traits of Norwegian and Russian music in a message about the human aspects that unite Norwegian and Russians. The band also aimed to inspire other musicians to enter cross-border cooperation. It was a stated object to establish a constellation of musicians to cooperate beyond the project period.

The cooperation has so far resulted in a concert tour in Arkhangelsk and Murmansk, a CD and two music videos. The CD was reviewed in the Norwegian, German, Slovak, Russian, and US press. Concerts on both sides of the border have generally been fully booked, and the music has been played on radio. The band was also interviewed on a TV morning show in St. Petersburg.

BarentsKult funds are seen as crucial, and the grant from BarentsKult opened an opportunity to apply for grants from Kulturrådet (Arts Council Norway). The grant from BarentsKult was seen as an indication of quality that increased their opportunities for a successful application.

The Russian partner contributed musically by composing and performing, and administratively by planning and staging concerts in Russia. There was no Russian project funding, but the Russian partner contributed with man-hours, and concerts in Russia have generated income for the artists. The Norwegian partner estimates that about 10-20 percent of the band's income in the project period was generated by the project in the period.

The Norwegian partner describes the Russian contribution as «equal» in that everybody has been motivated and contributed in their own way to the project. Accounts and administrative details have been more difficult to share, but everybody has written songs, made bookings and established contacts. The process has been one of «mutual learning» and «professionalization» that has led to increased project competence on both sides. The project has enabled the Russian partner to strike up acquaintances with several other Norwegian musicians.

The artists see the project as innovative in that the band creates music across borders, and that the band has been used to work and compose together, rather than just touring and performing. The project was completed before Covid-19 became an issue, but follow-up has been negatively affected. Cooperation will continue beyond the project period but plans to record a second CD have been delayed due to the pandemic.

CASE 7 FILM/MUSIC/FESTIVAL

County Troms	Indigenous No
Grant per year 900 000	Durability One-year
Type of applicant Association	Repeater Yes
Focus area International collaboration/ arena development, cultural business development	Russian partner's county/area Murmansk

Through this project, professional musicians from the Barents region were invited to make new music for a film in the silent film era. The work premiered during the a film festival, whereas plans for a regional tour were cancelled due to Covid-19.

The project owner is a repeater that has worked with Norwegian-Russian collaboration since 2003, and continually seeks to nurture and expand their network and competence. Recurring funding has allowed the festival to develop their own genre over time. The projects are seen as a common denominator whereby Russians and Norwegians could contribute with their culture and skills and build a mutual cultural landscape and identity. As new contacts are developed, rumour spreads, and other opportunities emerge. With BarentsKult funding, new projects are possible.

The project owner sees the project as innovative in terms of its methodology that «ensures a good framework for artistic innovation». An artistic leader is selected to lay down some premises for the project. Then, a group of Norwegian and Russian musicians were selected to compose music together within a set amount of time. Due to the methodology, improvisation constitutes a good part of the performance. This methodology is seen as innovative.

The project depends on BarentsKult funding as the production is costly and there is no commercial potential to cover compositions and musicians in three countries. Possibilities are emerging for state and private funding from various sources in Russia, but no Russian funding was involved in this project. On the other hand, the Russian state lets the project owners use the archive material for free, or at a symbolic cost without charging the time it takes to provide copies. The project owner's sustainability as a festival has to do with the size and total number of projects and project partners – including in Russia – which makes for a robust economy. While the project funding is Norwegian, the Russian

in-kind contribution in form of venues and marketing resources is of great value. The Russian partner states that the Russian side has increased its share of responsibility as to the main tasks, including search for finance.

In terms of business development, the festival has gradually evolved into an important cultural actor in the Barents region. BarentsKult has enabled the festival to be physically present in Russia and make large events that generate massive media attention and further ticket sales. This also made a basis that enabled flexibility during Covid-19. As a result of Covid-19, the project participants learned how to screen movies digitally, and a Norwegian ticket system has been developed and can be used in Russia. As people are now used to digital meetings, there is more dialogue than previously.

According to the Russian partner, the implementation of the project has to a considerable extent influenced the development of a film industry in the North of Russia, in particular Murmansk and Arkhangelsk, and also the development and realization of interdisciplinary projects between music and film. The Russian partner has found several new partners in Norway, as well as in Finland and Sweden within a wide area of cultural fields.

Covid-19 drove an innovative approach in that everybody was sitting in their respective studios and played for the audience live on the internet. However, the project owner will not engage in future digital performances other than occasionally. Digital communication cannot replace the human meetings and seeing films in the company of others. Furthermore, digitalization has not contributed to lower costs than physical meetings.

CASE 8 ART BOOK FAIR

County Troms	Indigenous No
Grant per year 800 000	Durability Two-year
Type of applicant Public	Repeater No
Focus area International collaboration/ arena development	Russian partner's county/area Several

Through arts-in-residence programs, study trips, workshops and seminars, the project aimed to stimulate the development of competence and production of art criticism, artbooks and own publishing in the Barents Region. An important aim of the project was to establish

a nomadic book fair that would become a meeting place and exhibition venue for professionals and locals in the Barents region and the Arctic. Due to Covid-19, the fair went digital with events that were open to the public and some real-time events with limited participation. The project is still on-going, and there are plans to print a publication either in Norway or in Russia.

The book fair spans the entire circumpolar area and will live on beyond the cooperation with the Russian partners and the funding period. Pending funding, the fair is to take place every other year on various locations in the Arctic. As a spin-off of the project, the plan is to establish Backyard Residences to make art residencies available for artists in the region, to which various funding sources are being scoped. The project owner states that this particular project would not have taken place without BarentsKult funds.

The project owner emphasizes that the project has had ripple effects as result of a conscious strategy to establish and maintain cooperation in terms of content. New collaboration projects have emerged and lasted beyond their funding periods. For the Russian partner, working with artists from the whole Barents region has given experience which will be useful for future projects.

Through a string of cooperation projects, the county municipality has established an infrastructure whereby many artists have met each other in person and are able to identify partners. Continuity and flexibility combined makes it possible to maintain existing collaboration while continually bringing new partners to the mix. The collaboration has also made it possible for the Russian partner to find new partners in Norway.

BarentsKult funding is seen as essential for the county municipality, as other relevant funding mechanisms do not support activities abroad. According to the Russian partner, the project support gave a possibility to work in small groups in a close and informal way. This made it possible to be more open and critical with one another.

The Russian partner contributed financially by hosting artists in-residence and man-hours to arrange a seminar on the Russian side. The county municipality does not see it as realistic to expect a major financial contribution from the Russian side. Arkhangelsk and Murmansk administrations supported the project participants there administratively, but not with funding.

The art presented in the project is mainly traditional, but the virtual working methods applied in the project and the digital forms of presentation are seen by the artists as innovative.

An extension has been requested in order to hold the fair physically. Other than that, Covid-19 has stimulated further innovation in that it required the project participants to be «very creative». Due to Covid-19, activities were adapted to the digital arena, including several webinars and writing groups using video and social media platforms, and the project is still on-going. Digital platforms have allowed for gatherings that would have been too costly to conduct physically. In addition to the Russian partners, contributions were submitted from Finland, Sweden, Greenland and Canada, including indigenous artists. The project owner will continue arranging network meetings by video link as a time and cost consuming supplement to physical meetings. However, one of the participants underlined the importance of physical meetings which may contain a «magic» in themselves.

CASE 9 FESTIVAL

County Finnmark	Indigenous No
Grant per year 1 100 000	Durability One-year
Type of applicant Company	Repeater Yes
Focus area International collaboration/ arena development	Russian partner's county/area Several

For more than 20 years, the project owner has implemented large and small projects in the genre Border-Crossing Exercises that aim to provide new perspectives on the High North and initiate important discussions that are relevant to the Barents region. The latest in a series of annual festivals focused on The Russian Connection - a term that appears from time to time in both the media and research to explain Russia's large and small influences in world politics.

Contact between the partners preceded the project and will continue beyond the project. The Russian partner has also found new cooperation partners in Norway. Neither the cooperation with Russian partners in general, nor this project in particular, would have been implemented with this scope or quality without Barents-Kult support. In addition, BarentsKult funding made it possible to obtain other funding from the EU and Norwegian authorities. They cite significant ripple effects locally as well as regionally. The collaboration with the Russian partners continues and is constantly evolving.

4. Main findings to the main questions

In this chapter we will present the key findings to the six main evaluation questions based on the methodology presented in chapter 2. Question 6 has been divided in two separate parts.

4.1 Cooperation (Question 1)

To what degree does BarentsKult meet the goal of stimulating cooperation between Norwegian and Russian professional artists and cultural actors in the Barents region (including St. Petersburg and Leningrad oblast)?

Stimulation of cooperation

The document analysis shows that the degree of actual collaboration, cooperation and interaction is emphasized as a decisive factor in the Expert Committee's assessment of the project applications. Between 2014 and 2020, BarentsKult received 213 applications. Of these, 129 were approved, and 84 were rejected.

The Expert Committee uses various arguments to approve or reject the applications. Looking at the reasons given by the Expert Committee for approving the applications, see Figure 1 (p. 24), the collaboration profile between the Norwegian applicant and their Russian partner is the reason used the second most often to argue for why an application deserves approval.

The same can be seen the other way around, see Figure 2 (p. 24). The reason used most often to explain a rejection, is lack of solid collaboration between the Norwegian and Russian partners. When the Expert Committee found the collaboration to be weak, it was often due to the two partners not being equally engaged in developing the artistic or cultural process. Where, on the other hand, there was equality in the relationship and close collaboration through all stages of the development process of the project, very few applications were rejected.

When asked to what extent BarentsKult has contributed to the development of networks on the Russian side, 19 out of 30 respondents in the survey said that this has happened to a «large extent». 26 respondents stated that the project stimulates cooperation between professional artists and cultural actors in the Barents region.

21 out of 30 survey respondents stated that the cooperation with the Russian partner existed previously to

the grant. In 14 instances, the cooperation was initiated through the application process. 13 respondents stated that cooperation superseded the project.

28 respondents said that the project to «some» or a «large extent» had strengthened the cooperation with the Russian partner. 25 of the respondents also said that the project had led to an expansion of networks also on the Norwegian side to «some» or a «large extent».

Respondents with multiple experiences of working with Russian partners saw the experience as positive. Five respondents described how networks evolved organically as they tended to grow and multiply when existing projects generated networks that in turn generated new contacts and new projects. All this may not necessarily be related to BarentsKult. There is also an example of cooperation resulting from a research trip.

The findings in the survey are corroborated by the case studies, where eight informants say that the project has contributed to the establishment of new cultural networks. One recipient explicitly said that the project did not enable new partnerships, but left them with an appetite to identify potential partners in Russia in the future. A second interviewee said that the project was expected to bring about new networks in the future. Interviews with the Russian partners also indicate that Russian artists in several cases have established networks with new potential Norwegian partners beyond the project.

The case studies showed that five out of nine project owners had worked with at least one of their Russian partners previously, whereas in four cases, new partners were identified. In some cases, new partners were identified through personal networks of Russian staff, in other cases, partners were identified through previous projects with and without BarentsKult support.

A particular challenge seems to be establishing first contact when there is no existing network to begin with. Identifying a relevant partner on the Russian side is perceived as time consuming and expensive. Personal chemistry is seen as a point of departure for collaboration. Starting out with a specific project idea and then looking for a Russian partner who can fit the bill was described by one recipient as «gambling». Workshops, residency programs and travels are pointed out as useful

Figure 1: Reasons for approving applications to BarentsKult 2014-2020

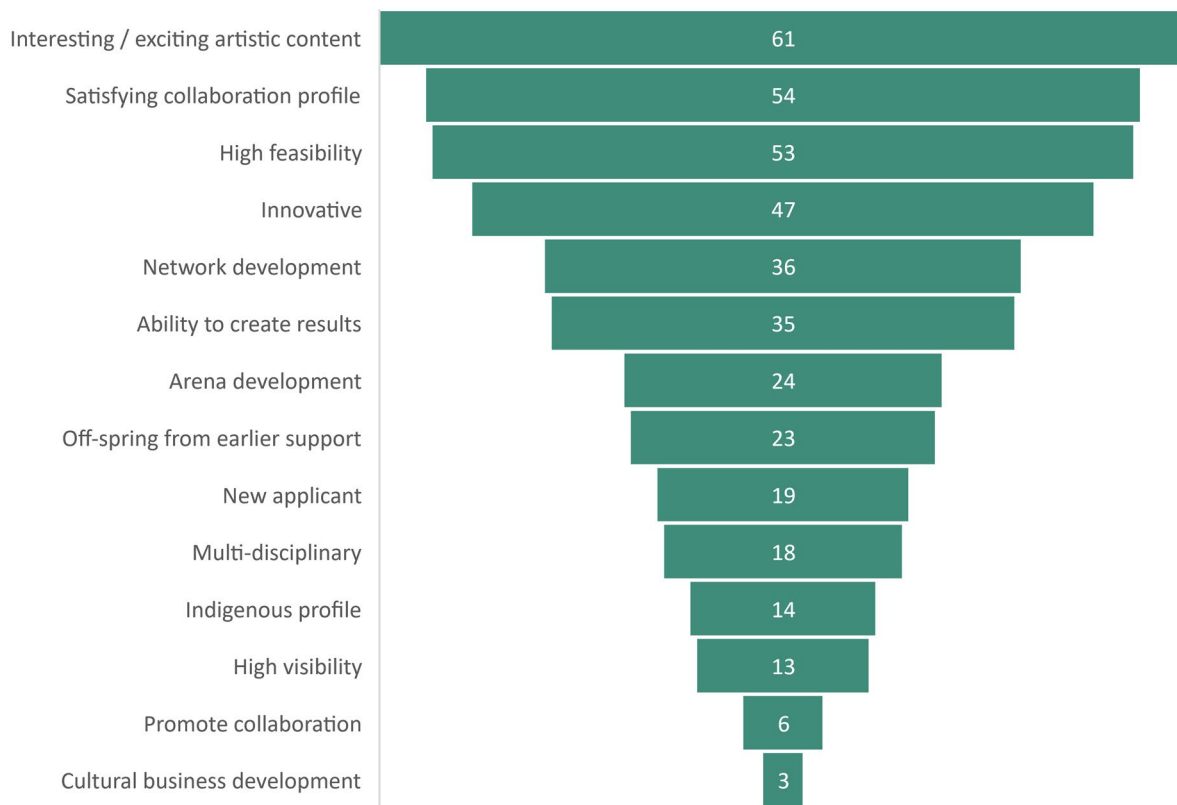
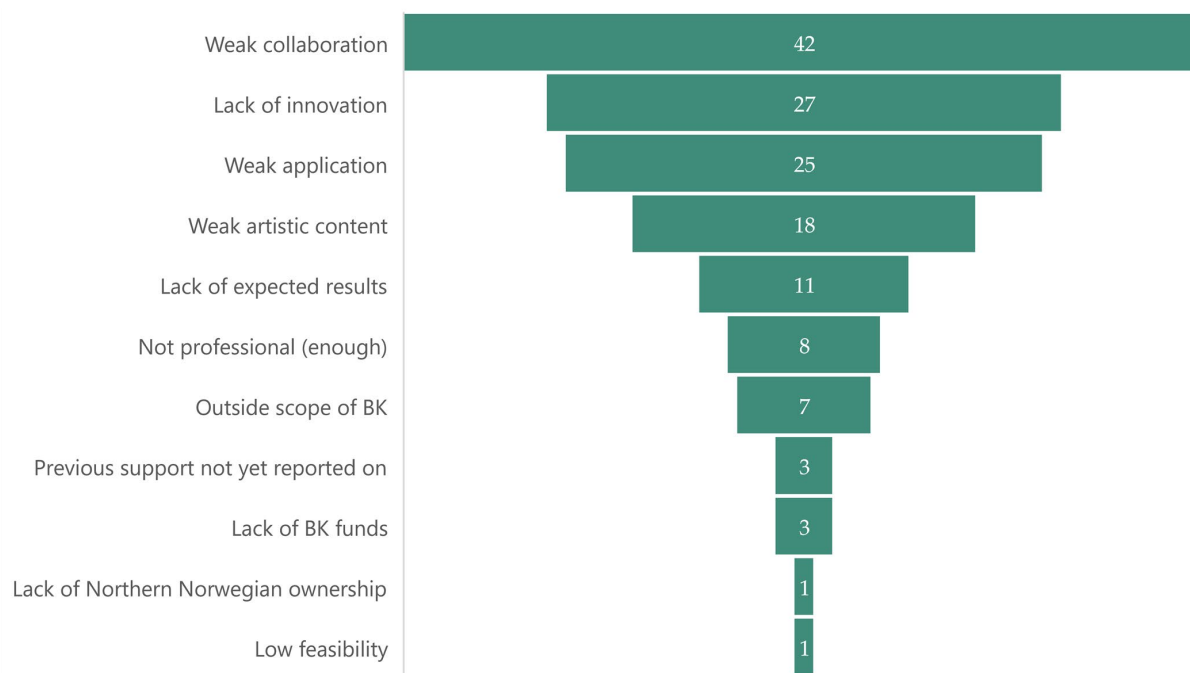


Figure 2: Reasons for rejecting applications to BarentsKult 2014-2020



in order to get to the stage where you identify a specific partner and a project.

Cultural differences can sometimes get in the way of identifying partners. Some pointed to the institutionalized and hierarchic aspect of Russian culture, whereby higher executives are often sent to participate in events, rather than performing artists lower down in the hierarchy. Some called for the opportunity to meet Russian artists in semi casual settings in order to make personal connections, have discussions on the artistic level (as opposed to the administrative), and play around with ideas at an early stage. It was suggested that this is something Barents Secretariat or a repeater such as Pikene på broen could facilitate. Another option pointed to was to draw on repeaters in a mentor capacity to facilitate contact. As shown in the case studies, this already happens in practice. The question is whether this could (or should) be pursued in a more systematic manner.

On professionalism and quality

The evaluation question specifically asks to what extent cooperation has been facilitated between «professional» artists. The concept of professionalism needs some consideration as it is not well defined in BarentsKult documents. Yet, in the webinar with BarentsKult owners, this criterion was described as «absolutely fundamental» to the success of BarentsKult. Professionalism was defined by one participant as being professional «by education» and able to «make a living by it».

The case study interviews offer some perspectives that highlight the advantage of maintaining a flexible attitude. Concerns were raised by some that a too narrow application of this requirement comes with a risk of excluding partners who for reasons unrelated to the quality of their art are not able to work as full-time artists. The argument was made that the level of professionalism could be derived from the intention of the artistic expression: «If you paint a picture, do you do it for recreation, or do you plan to exhibit it in a gallery? If the latter, it may fall within the boundaries of professional art, even if you do not make a living by it.»

The relation between professionalism and quality has been disputed and discussed in cultural circles for decades. The evaluation team notes that while professionalism is relevant in a discussion of job creation, it should not be seen neither as prerequisite to nor directly overlapping with quality. One recipient describes one of the benefits of BarentsKult is that it contributes to professionalism in itself as the funding can span several years.

A point repeatedly made in the case study interviews and survey has been the time-consuming nature of network building in Russia. BarentsKult funds offer Norwegian artists a possibility to offer salaries to potential partners, vastly increasing the chances to identify high-quality artists and partners to ensure the implementation of successful projects. It therefore makes sense to look at professionalism as the ability to «live by» your art. Quality, however, is a different – and also highly subjective – factor. There are ways of looking at professionalism whereby high-quality art performed by lower-income groups fall under the radar. This is a particularly salient point related to the expansion of BarentsKult to identify and include indigenous artists, who tend to support themselves in a variety of ways, including combining several part-time jobs. BarentsKult should exert itself to operationalize the concept of professionalism in a manner suited to capture a variety of ways of supporting oneself, combining part-time paid work with hunting, herding, fishing, and gathering activities.

Conclusion

BarentsKult has successfully contributed to stimulating cooperation between Norwegian and Russian professional artists and cultural actors in the Barents region, although with less weight on actors from the county of Nordland. BarentsKult is found to have a potential to play a greater role in facilitating first contact.

4.2 Arena development (Questions 2, 7, 8)

In what way, if any, does BarentsKult contribute to developing international arenas and meeting places for the development of art and culture?

The 2014 evaluation established an understanding of arena development whereby the projects contribute to the establishment of durable networks between professional cultural actors in the region. Sustainability is a key concept.³ To avoid confusion, Conow has chosen to apply the same understanding. Subsequently, the following discussion also sheds light one of the sub questions:

Is the cooperation limited to the funded projects (short-term), or do the projects contribute to establishing cooperation/relations/networks that are durable over time? (Question 7); and Did the cooperation exist before the project, or was it established as a result of the project? (Question 8).

The development of arenas and networks is a criterion that is actively used in the arguments for approving projects by the Expert Committee. For 36 of the 129

³Breit, Erik, Rowe, Lars og Wilter Skedsmo, Pål, «Evaluering av støtteordningen BarentsKult», FNI-rapport 11/2014, <https://www.fni.no/publications/evaluering-av-stotteordningen-barentskult-evaluation-of-the-funding-mechanism-barentskult>, p. 10

approved applications, network development was given as a reason for approving the project, and for 24 of the approved applications, arena development was especially mentioned by the Expert Committee as a reason for approval. The latter is also used as a reason for granting several of the large «repeaters» annual funds from BarentsKult. By prioritizing network and arena development, BarentsKult is contributing to the development of international networks and arenas.

Sustainability of the cooperation did not appear to be an issue assessed by the Expert Committee. Instead, in their justification for approval or rejection, the Expert Committee looked at the equality of the collaboration, not whether the relation was new or old. Many of the «repeaters» that receive support every year, do so because they include new actors in the project each time.

26 of 30 respondents to the survey stated that their project «to a large extent» has contributed to the creation of international meeting places for development of art and culture. 16 respondents stated that the cooperation with their partner will continue beyond the project period to a «large» or «some» extent. In the case interviews, only two project owners specifically excluded the possibility of cooperation with their Russian partners in the future.

In the case studies, informants had differing views on what constituted an arena. One understanding is the performance itself as an «arena» or «meeting place» is confirmed by an informant who responds that «our band is a cultural meeting place». In other words, an arena can be where artists meet other artists, or where artists get together with their audience. In both understandings, sustainability is a key concept.

Obstacles to durable cooperation

While project cooperation is seen as valuable, a number of obstacles are pointed to in the qualitative interviews that may serve to explain why cooperation in some cases do not last beyond the project period. These are language barriers as well as cultural and systemic differences. A mutual lack of understanding of bureaucratic systems and requirements on the other side can also prove challenging. One survey respondent embodied the view of the majority:

«Language barriers have been challenging in some project relationships, but it has been far more challenging to deal with system and cultural differences. For language barriers you can use interpretation, translators and a number of other methods of communication. The inherent preconditions we have in the »backbone« through cultures, systems, history and traditions are far

more challenging to deal with. Different assumptions and understandings have triggered a number of misunderstandings, which have further led to deviations from plans and project frameworks.»

We have already pointed out that cultural differences make it difficult to meet with performers on the right level. However – depending on the nature of the project – cultural differences can also permeate ways of working together. In one of the case studies, the more hierarchical approach of the Russian partner was pointed at: «We did not manage to break with the notion that the director comes up with the answer, while the others will perform [...] Instead of us becoming more of a team, I stepped up and took on directorial authority.» Finding ways to managing expectations and providing advice on how to communicate and overcome these specific cultural differences could be part of a capacity building/mentoring programme should the Barents Secretariat decide to take on such an initiative.

Conclusion

BarentsKult contributes to the establishment of arenas and meeting places to a relatively high degree. There is also a high degree of sustainability in the established networks. Obstacles pointed to for continued cooperation are language barriers to some extent and cultural differences to a larger extent.

4.3 Business development (Question 3)

In what way, if any, does BarentsKult contribute to cultural business development?

The concept of business development is not well developed in BarentsKult guiding documents and reports. In the webinar with BarentsKult owners, it was argued that BarentsKult stimulates business development by contributing to the income of project owners, who are often sole proprietorships. While it is possible to design funding mechanisms with job creation and business development as its purpose (such as seed money), this is not seen by BarentsKult owners as a primary objective of BarentsKult. The case study interviews, however, indicate that business development may have been an indirect effect in some cases.

BarentsKult targets Norwegian and Russian professional artists, institutions and other cultural actors. From the statistics generated from the applications received 2014-2020, the prioritized category «Cultural business development» is hardly present. Either this is something the Expert Committee has not emphasized while considering the applications, or there have been few relevant applications (except for three approved projects).



Art projects are seen as enhancing place attractiveness and mitigating migration. (Foto: Foto: Ksenia Novikova/Barents Secretariat)

Cultural business development is mentioned as a reason for approval for only three of the project applications. The question of cultural business development was referred to in the FNI evaluation, where it was pointed out that 362 new jobs had been created in the cultural sector from 2003 until 2014, it was however not possible to isolate the effect of BarentsKult in this regard.⁴ Nevertheless, BarentsKult was seen as a successful tool for promoting district policy goals. The challenges of measuring the effect of BarentsKult in terms of cultural business development was faced by this evaluation team as well.

Out of 30 participants to the survey, 26 respondents felt that their projects have contributed to cultural business development to «some» or a «large» extent. In the case studies, seven out of nine interviewees either found that their project has contributed to cultural business development or is expected to do so in the future. 24 respondents stated that the project has enhanced the visibility of Northern Norwegian cultural actors in Russia. Here, increased visibility was seen as directly affecting the capacity to stimulate increased income.

A mapping of the economy of the Norwegian cultural sector in 2018 estimated that the entire sector comprises 8.000 businesses, of which 80 percent were sole proprietorships.⁵ In that sense, interviewees from the cases pointed out that BarentsKult funds stimulate employment to the extent that it provides a steady income during the project period.

There is also a sense that BarentsKult projects have ripple effects such as additional job creation in provider services. A mapping of the Norwegian cultural sector's economy in 2018, Menon economics estimated a total of 35.600 employees in the entire Norwegian cultural sector. In addition, 15.000 additional jobs in provider services, such as accountants and canteen workers.⁶ We have not been able to find a similar mapping for the Barents Region. Nevertheless, we find it likely that these figures are applicable.

Cultural cooperation is seen as making the Northern parts of Norway more attractive to artists and people in general. In the words of one of the project owners: «International art is a very important part of human life.

⁴Breit et al., «Evaluering av støtteordningen BarentsKult», p. 10.

⁵Grünfeld, Leo, Bruvik, Nina Westberg, Guldvik, Maria Kjøber, Erraia, Jonas, Gaustad, Terje, and Gran, Anne-Britt, «Kultursektorens økonomi i Norge 2018,» Menon-publikasjon 55/2020 Menon Economics and BI Centre for Creative Industries, Microsoft Word- Menon-rapport 55-2020. Kultursektorens økonomi 2018-Endelig.docx (kulturradet.no). The mapping does not comprise film, and a number of these proprietorships have gone – or are on the verge of going – bankrupt due to Covid-19.

⁶Kultursektorens økonomi, p. 3

You want it to be exciting and fun, and therefore you carefully consider the area you want to live in.» Increased place attractiveness is in turn seen as stimulating business – both in the cultural sector and elsewhere: «Great experiences in small places have the potential to spur tourism. [Name of village] hosts 3.000 caravans a year. This makes public and private actors invest in more permanent jobs and contributes to people staying to live in places like [name of village].»

There is a broad agreement among project owners that BarentsKult increases the visibility of Norwegian arts and culture in the North-Western part of Russia. This claim is difficult to corroborate in a systematic manner. Nevertheless, it is a relatively safe assumption that the nature of the project will be decisive for the visibility that can be achieved in Russia. For instance, location-based projects in Norway will naturally attract less media attention and be less visible on the Russian side than in Norway. Projects that can be taken «on tour» will naturally contribute to enhanced visibility of Norwegian culture in terms of sales, public participation, media coverage and the possibility of receiving invitations to reappear on other venues and festivals beyond the project period. Examples are concerts, plays, travelling fairs, films or exhibitions that can draw an audience and/or provide access to a domestic PR apparatus. Similarly, artists' residencies for Norwegian artists in Russia have enabled Norwegian artists to spend time in Russia and stage a number of exhibitions with subsequent media coverage.

Larger actors with repetitive events and resources will also have the possibility of building a reputation in the region and attract audiences from across the borders as well as generate further collaboration with new partners. Says one of the project owners: «We have established ourselves as a festival for the entire Barents region. [...] This leads to more cooperation. [...] It is because of BarentsKult that we can be physically present in Russia. We stage really big events with a lot of media attention.»

Conclusion

The question of business development has been included in the evaluation mandate, but this aspect carries little weight in the processing of applications. BarentsKult stimulates cultural business development in the region in a variety of ways. BarentsKult contributes directly by providing income during the project period, and indirectly by increased visibility that in turn generates further income for the projects owners. BarentsKult funds also has a multiplier effect for repeaters who are able to offer permanent positions as part of their activities. Lastly, BarentsKult-funded projects are perceived to increase

place attractiveness and mitigating population loss. The exact effect is, however, difficult to measure beyond the subjective impressions of the project owners.

4.4 Goal achievement and development over time (Question 4)

How has the goal achievement of BarentsKult developed over a long-term perspective compared with the findings in the evaluation from 2014? What are the most important development characteristics during the period 2014-2020?

Follow up of previous evaluation

The FNI evaluation points out that the goals that form the basis of BarentsKult's activities have a striking range. At the same time as the contributors to the support scheme seek to stimulate the creation of cultural jobs in Northern Norwegian municipalities, the programme will support a desired political development in a large neighbouring country.

FNI divides the the goals in four main categories: (1) the cultural policy (which primarily focuses on the development of the cultural field), (2) the district policy (which touches on traditional goals such as increased employment in the counties), (3) the regional policy (which aims to develop the Barents region), and (4) the foreign policy (which is related to the overall goals of Norwegian policy towards Russia).»⁷

The FNI team concluded that:

- Projects generally correspond to the main focus areas of BarentsKult.
- Projects generally meet the requirement for innovation.
- Project generally meet the requirement for real Russian participation in the artistic process.
- In some cases, networks are not always sustainable.
- Russian cooperation partners do generally not contribute financially.
- The established practice which allows applicants to receive support on a repetitive basis so long as projects are innovative, balances the goals for cultural innovation with the goals of establishing stable jobs in the cultural sector.

During the webinar conducted 17th June 2021, representatives from the Barents Secretariat, the Board and

⁷Breit et al., «Evaluering av støtteordningen BarentsKult», p. 7.

BarentsKult Expert Committee indicated that the issues above are still salient. BarentsKult owners overall consider the projects to meet the overall goal of the programme. In the words of a participant: «BarentsKult is really important for us and our extended arm in achieving what we want across county borders. It creates an incentive to create activities and content in our bilateral cooperation agreements.» There was, however, a growing concern that the competition for BarentsKult funds is lower than ideal. During the evaluation webinar, questions were raised as to how BarentsKult can expand participation, particularly in Nordland and among the Saami population.

In the BarentsKult annual report for 2014, the evaluation's conclusions were quoted, but there was no mention on how – or if – the programme will implement the recommendations provided. Participants at the evaluation webinar however shared that they had dedicated ample time to discuss the findings and recommendations, and there appeared to be an agreement that these were valid. On the other hand, it was less clear as to what concrete measures had been taken to follow up the recommendations from the FNI evaluation.

Long-term development as presented in BarentsKult's annual reports

The annual reports are built over the same template, and between 2014 and 2019 the exact same content is repeated from year to year, with updated names and figures for the year in question. Regarding results achieved, all the annual reports reiterate the following passage: «BarentsKult has fulfilled the main objective of stimulating collaboration between artists and cultural actors in the Barents region. [X] mainly large cultural projects, which would have been difficult to realize without support from BarentsKult, have been initiated, implemented and completed since 2008. Some of the projects that have received support from BarentsKult are still ongoing, and the results they have given are therefore not yet known. In the report form for BarentsKult, project owners are asked to reflect on the results achieved through the project. All projects have mandatory participation from both Norwegian and Russian actors.

Of general results, which are difficult to measure in numbers and figures, the BarentsKult projects lead to:

- mutual competence transfer between Norwegian and Russian artists / cultural actors
- construction and strengthening of Norwegian-Russian cultural networks
- development of new project ideas

- development of new cultural meeting places, both permanent and temporary
- direct and indirect participation in the creation of cultural jobs in Northern Norway
- development of new art»

The annual reports do not state how these results have been identified. Similarly, every annual report ends with: «In conclusion, it can be pointed out that through support from BarentsKult, a number of larger and smaller professional cultural projects are being implemented that otherwise would have been difficult to initiate if BarentsKult had not existed. ...» The annual reports do not substantiate this statement.

In 2016, the Expert Committee invited some of the project owners to provide suggestions to their strategic meeting. The Expert Committee found the inputs useful, but the annual report for 2016 did not refer to any commitments, changes or decisions made. The rest of the annual report was a blue copy of the other annual reports.

Every year, the Barents Secretariat, in cooperation with the Northern Norwegian counties and the Ministry of Culture, is responsible for coordinating the Norwegian participation in the Norwegian-Russian Culture Days where between 30 to 50 Norwegian cultural actors participate. Meetings between these actors and their Russian colleagues could stimulate to new project ideas that could be presented for financing from BarentsKult. The degree to which this has happened has not been described in the annual reports, nor is it mentioned in the justification for rejection or approval of the applications.

The annual report for 2020 is slightly expanded compared with the earlier years. Firstly, there is a detailed account on how the Covid-19 pandemic has influenced the progress and implementation of the projects. A new chapter on enabling or hindering factors analyse to what extent there are factors that enable or constitute barriers to achieving the desired results. During 2020, the Barents Secretariat was externally evaluated, and although the evaluation was general, there were several findings that the secretariat found relevant for BarentsKult. The annual report 2020 mentions for the first time that the programme has some inherent challenges, beyond the obvious COVID-19 related issues. These are:

- poor geographical spread of project activity throughout the scope
- too little indigenous-related project activity
- too few new players and a small number of applications

Figure 3: Numbers of applications received and approved, 2014-2020

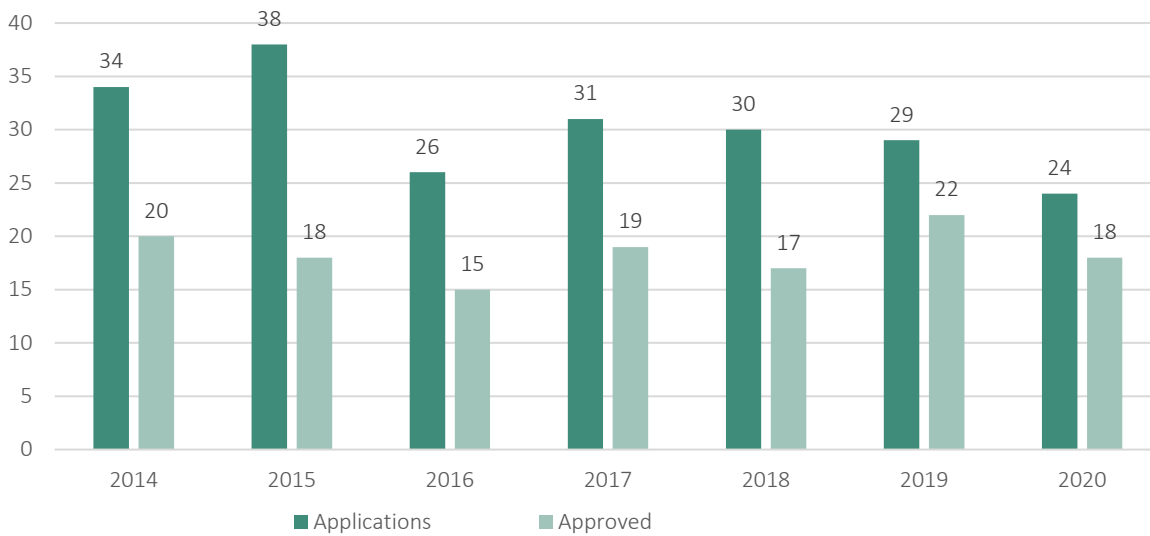
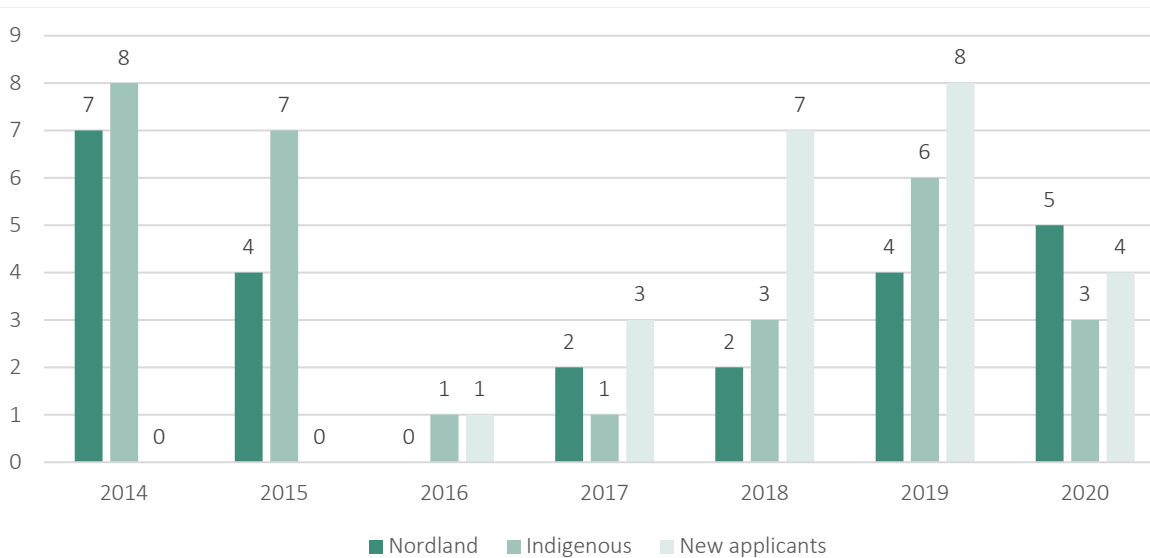


Figure 4: Approximate numbers of applications from Nordland, indigenous people, and new applicants 2014-2020



Trends in applications received

The number of applications received and approved by BarentsKult per year are presented in Figure 3 (above). While 2020 was an exceptional year due to Covid-19, there still seems to be a slight reduction of applications, year by year after a record high 38 received applications in 2015. Figure 4 (above) shows statistics generated from the Expert Committee’s justification of the approvals and rejections of the applications received. There might be applications from Nordland, indigenous people or new applicants where this was not commented on by the Expert Committee, and thus not noted by the evaluation team. Figure 4 should therefore not be considered as exact statistics, but rather as a presentation of possible

trends. With the exception of the COVID-19 year 2020, there may have been an upward-going trend of receiving applications from new applicants from 2016. As for the number of applicants from Nordland, there was a downward trend from seven in 2014, to zero in 2016 and up again towards five in 2020. For indigenous people, there were relatively high numbers in 2014 and 2015, but nearly disappeared in 2016 and slowly made it up again towards a new peak in 2019. The FNI evaluation of BarentsKult from 2014 pointed out that BarentsKult provided opportunities for artistic innovation and the establishment of networks and meeting places across the Norwegian-Russian border, and that the programme seemed to have contributed

to an increased professionalization of the arts and culture field in the region, not least through the transfer of cultural capital from the Russian side.

Looking at the applications received and approved between 2014 and 2020, the same conclusions seem to hold for that period. The evaluation pointed to a few potential conflicts between some of the programme goals, such as the ambition for cultural innovation versus the desire to contribute to predictable jobs in the culture sector, and an expectation that «repeaters» will receive support year after year despite low ability to show sufficient innovation in their projects. Looking at the reasons provided by the Expert Committee to approve projects 2014-2020, cultural innovation is held up very high, almost as an absolute criterion, and there is no mention of any ambition to contribute to predictable jobs in the culture sector. On the other side, all BarentsKult annual reports have the following sentence in its Introduction section: «...In this way, establishment of jobs in the cultural sector will be stimulated, directly and indirectly». This statement has not been further substantiated.

There are a few exceptions to the criterion of innovation, and this seems to a certain degree to be valid for some of the repeaters, where arena development seems to trump other arguments.

The 2014 evaluation also found a tension between increased professionalisation and the programme's geographical catchment area. The Expert Committee holds the absolute criterion of professionalism high for BarentsKult. The Expert Committee refers to other schemes within the Barents Secretariat for cultural projects with non-professional owners.

In the webinar, BarentsKult owners expressed a general impression that BarentsKult largely meets the various goals of the owners: «By and large, it works well. Then, of course, there might be some issues that can be addressed. But overall, there is no doubt that BarentsKult fosters contact across the border with Russia in the field of culture and contributes to strengthening cultural life in the North.» (Participant at evaluation webinar) This in turn points to another and higher objective, which is ensuring an open door between Norway and Russia and a favourable climate between the two countries.

There is also by and large consensus among owners that BarentsKult contributes to innovative projects – even though it is not entirely clear how innovation is defined and measured. In the end, this will be an individual and discretionary exercise, and BarentsKult owners seem to have embraced this recognition. The seemingly

established practice which allows applicants to receive support on a repetitive basis so long as projects are innovative, balances the goal for cultural innovation with the goal of job creation in the cultural sector

While the FNI team concluded that networks are not always sustainable, our impression based on the case study interviews is that networks have become somewhat more sustainable with time. This is, however, difficult to measure. Regarding Russian participation, the direct financial contribution remains low. New funding possibilities on the Russian side have emerged, but the effect of these mechanisms remains to be seen.

Conclusion

There seems to be an overall trend that BarentsKult receives fewer applications every year. This conclusion holds even if one disregards the exceptional Covid-19 year 2020. Other than that, it seems that the situation is very similar to the one in 2014, and the same conclusions may be made today as were made by the FNI evaluation in 2014: Projects correspond to the main focus areas of BarentsKult, they seem to meet requirements for innovation and equal cooperation between Russian and Norwegian partners, networks are there but not always sustainable, Russian cooperation partners do generally not contribute financially, and support to repeaters enable job creation. In addition to this, this evaluation found that professionalism and innovation were given important weight in the justification of approval or rejection of application. There is no evidence of this being a new trend, however. Judging by the annual reports that are surprisingly similar from year to another (with the exception of 2020), BarentsKult does not seem to have made any efforts to change anything in their structure, way of working, way of justifying projects, or way of communicating with potential applicants. Thus, structural difficulties such as finding Russian partners, or indigenous people fulfilling the criteria etc, will remain the same as before.

4.5 Project, local and regional value (Question 5)

What has been the direct and indirect usefulness of BarentsKult for project participants, and what has been the local and regional value?

In the webinar with BarentsKult's owners, BarentsKult was described as a «door opener» for cooperation. Participants highlighted the role of BarentsKult in expanding artists' networks in Northern Norway and contributing to «cultural exchange» and promoting

mutual understanding across the border. It was also pointed out that the granting process itself constitutes an arena for the departments and county municipalities to take part in discussions and listening to comments and assessments that give an important glimpse into the state of cultural affairs in Northern Norway and enables participants to follow up on the national policies on the region. The cultural cooperation with Russia was seen as enriching the cultural life of the region and stimulating new and exciting art and cultural expressions.

From interviews with project owners, it was evident that BarentsKult funds have great value for the recipients at project level. Some stated that the projects could have been carried out without BarentsKult funds, but then to a lesser extent and with lower quality. In some cases, one might have completed the project, but then without a Russian partner. BarentsKult funds have made it possible to invest more time on the Norwegian side, as well as to honour partners on the Russian side. Time and financial resources are also the answers to the question of what it takes to develop innovative, high-quality art.

According to project owners, the degree of competence transfer is high. Russian cultural practitioners were seen as highly qualified, and the learning value of working with people from another culture was perceived as very valuable in itself. In addition, several interviewees expressed that they had increased their administrative competence in connection with the project.

The cultural resource persons the team has consulted perceived BarentsKult to be a flexible form of financing that makes it possible to use the appropriation as salary funds. The perception is that BarentsKult has certainly contributed to cultural work with ripple effects where large projects have meant that others have completed smaller projects again.

The local value varies with the type of project. Where the project results in a permanent art expression, such as installations, exhibitions or memorials, or repetitive festivals, project owners argue that this contributes to increased site attractiveness and stimulates increased tourism and strengthened regional identity. Based on the qualitative interviews, the team concludes that BarentsKult has contributed to enriching the cultural life in the region. According to respondents to the survey, BarentsKult is seen as having contributed to more activities and a broader variety in art and cultural expressions in local communities as well as the development between artists cultural actors and professional networks and arenas.

The projects are seen to develop the local cultural society from a professional point of view in terms of developing

skills and networks. For the public it represents a possibility to be exposed to a unique artistic experience, and to learn more about culture and art on the other side of the border. As artists from Russia travel to Norway, media coverage draws attention to the positive cultural outcome of cooperation and provides a counterbalance to the otherwise negative political development between the two countries. Art that in various ways depicts and conveys stories and experiences from the border region contributes to a sense of community and understanding. BarentsKult is seen as a crucial mechanism for Northern Norway artists who cooperate with Russian counterparts.

The possibility to experiment across sectors has generated regional competence and stimulated a greater awareness of the importance of artistic cooperation in the region and increased the broader visibility of the region. Project owners pointed to broadened horizons and the ability to travel and meet new people which strengthened cooperation among cultural actors on both the performing and the organizational level. The local value is seen as considerable in that it contributes to increased knowledge among artists, partners and audiences alike. Increased place attractiveness draws professionals to the region. Events lead to increased income for bars, restaurants, hotels and taxis.

Development and popularisation of multilingualism was pointed to as a positive effect. In addition, projects were seen as a great contribution to the dismantling of myths and clichés about the other side.

Conclusion

Project owners use funds from BarentsKult to realise high quality projects that for most parts would otherwise not have found place, at least not with the same size and quality. The local and regional effects are plentiful. The projects lead to increased salaries for the local artists for a shorter or longer while. They increase place attractiveness, draw other professionals to the area and thereby increase income for restaurants and hotels etc. They also increase interest for and knowledge of Russian art which decreases myths and scepticism across the border.

4.6 Country national goals achievement (Question 6A)

To what extent does BarentsKult support the objectives of the Northern Norwegian counties and the ministries and their engagements in Norwegian-Russian cultural collaboration and other border crossing cooperation in the Barents region?

This discussion is based on a document analysis of the following documents:

- allocation letters from BarentsKult funders
- Norwegian Russian collaboration agreements
- county municipality policies and strategies
- political platform for the Labour Party, the Centre Party and the Socialist Left Party, Troms and Finnmark (2019 – 2023)
- international strategies for Finnmark

(Summaries of the above documents are found in Appendix 1)

The objectives outlined in these documents are not entirely overlapping, and BarentsKult is not the only instrument for reaching these objectives. With this in mind, four general objectives can be gleaned out that are relevant to BarentsKult:

- cultural preservation and promotion
- cultural cooperation
- gender equality
- promotion of indigenous cultures

Cultural preservation and promotion

There are examples of BarentsKult grants that have a preservation aspect, such as a memorial presented among the case studies in this evaluation. With its strong focus on innovation, BarentsKult may not be an obvious mechanism for financing conservation, although it is possible to find innovative ways of doing this. There is more evidence to BarentsKult as a cultural promoter. All projects promote Norwegian and/or Russian culture in one or both countries. As discussed in sub chapter 4.5 on local value, interviews from project owners provided anecdotal evidence that many projects funded by BarentsKult start a positive self-reinforcing circle where one activity attracts another, and one positive experience with Norwegian-Russian cultural cooperation spurs another.

Cultural cooperation

As established in sub chapter 4.1 under cooperation, BarentsKult appears to treat »equal cooperation« between the Russian and Norwegian partners as an absolute criterion for support. We have seen that BarentsKult contributes to establishing and maintaining cultural networks. While not all projects are sustained over time, this can also be related to the nature of the project itself and is not an inherent weakness of the BarentsKult programme. BarentsKult projects facilitate and implement guest performances across a wide spectre of art forms, including film-related activities and the exchange of film events.

The burden sharing in terms of money and man-hours in BarentsKult projects seems to be much in line with what is outlined in the Norwegian Russian cultural collaboration agreement.

Through funding BarentsKult, the counties together with the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs contribute to the stimulation of important cooperation between Norwegian and Russian artists within a number of cultural sectors and fields.

Gender equality and anti discrimination

Gender equality is referred to in various ways in the allocation letters from the two line ministries, the agreement between Troms and Archangelsk Oblast, and the International Strategy for Nordland. Gender equality is also a requirement in the allocation letter from the Ministry of Culture, as is anti-discrimination.

In the survey, respondents were asked to what extent they agreed in the following statement: «The project was designed with regard to gender equality.» 13 respondents agreed to a «large extent», nine to «some extent». Three stated that they agreed to little or no extent, and five respondents stated that this dimension was irrelevant to their project. In the case study interviews, only two respondents specifically referred to female participation as an objective or a result of their project. In the Expert Committee's justification for project approval, promotion of female artists was mentioned only once between 2014 and 2020.

While ability is not mentioned specifically in any of the governing documents, it naturally falls under anti discrimination. Of 30 respondents to the survey, seven respondents agreed that they to «some» or a «large extent» had designed their project with regard to inclusion of disabled people. 16 respondents agreed to «little» or no extent, whereas seven stated that this was not relevant to their project. In the case study interviews, regard of ability, gender and ethnicity in project designed were lumped into one question. In two cases, no thought had been given to inclusion beyond the risk analysis. In four instances, these issues were seen as an integrated part of all projects. For one actor, «the entire project is about emphasizing the multicultural in a non-hegemonic way». Another stated that while inclusion had not been a set goal, the overall impression was that there was gender equality among participants. One project included a disabled pianist, without inclusion being an explicit part of project design.

It is noteworthy that the document analysis did not indicate that weak inclusion has been part of the decision

basis when rejecting applications. That being said, these concerns play into other debates about the role and responsibility of art to promote political goals and the independence of artists and cultural institutions.

Promotion of indigenous cultures

Promotion of minority culture is referred to in various ways in the governing documents. The NMFA requires adherence to human rights, which in turn accommodates, recognizes and promotes cultural rights. The cultural agreement between Russia and Norway states that projects should include indigenous culture. The agreements between Archangelsk Oblast and Tromsø and Finnmark respectively commit the parties to promote the conservation of the Pomor culture. The agreement between the counties of Troms and Archangelsk Oblast underlines the importance of working with indigenous individuals and organizations. The Northern Norwegian Cultural Agreement refers to a «diverse» cultural life.

In the survey, respondents were asked to what extent they agreed to the following statement: «The project was designed with regard to indigenous participation». Out of 30 respondents, 15 respondents agreed to «some» or a «large extent». Seven respondents agreed to little or no extent, whereas eight respondents found this dimension to be irrelevant.

In the webinar, BarentsKult owners pointed out that they are working actively to promote BarentsKult among indigenous groups by seeking out relevant events and arenas. Still, the results are not quite what one might hope for. Part of the reason for this lies outside of BarentsKult’s control. For instance, the degree of institutionalization and political prioritization of indigenous culture varies between the two countries, making it demanding to identify Russian counterparts.

Conclusion

This evaluation has found evidence that BarentsKult funds projects that to a large extent promote culture and to some extent also promote cultural conservation. Similarly, BarentsKult promotes cultural cooperation between artists from Russia and Norway to a large extent, as equal participation in the cooperation appears to be an absolute criterion for support by the BarentsKult Expert Committee. There is little evidence that BarentsKult promotes gender equality or other forms of inclusion. BarentsKult is found to promote indigenous cultures to a larger extent, although there are structural barriers that make this a very complicated area.

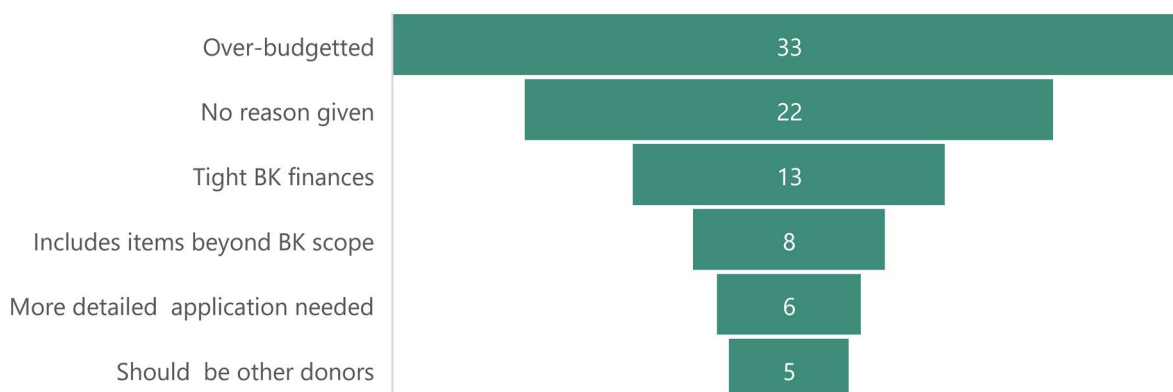
4.7 BarentsKult and other funding schemes (Question 6B)

Does BarentsKult complement, overlap, or create synergies with other relevant funding schemes?

A full donor mapping has not been possible to conduct within the parameter of this evaluation. However, the case interviews show that BarentsKult is seen by its project owners as unique and valuable. There is a comprehensive »patchwork« of funding schemes where BarentsKult is unique in the sense that it focuses on Norwegian-Russian cooperation.

In some cases, BarentsKult funds have qualified project owners to apply for other funds to expand activities beyond the confines of BarentsKult criteria, such as activities in other countries in the Barents Region. Other schemes (EU, Cultural Council, Sparebankstiftelsen, indigenous peoples’ programs) support other dimensions, and thereby significant synergies arise. Some project owners also describe BarentsKult as a «quality mark» that has the potential to unleash additional funding from

Figure 5: Reasons for granting less funds than applied for





Arts and culture are seen as promoting tourism, thereby creating ripple effects in the local economy. (Photo: Ksenia Novikova/Barents Secretariat)

other donors, such as Kulturrådet /Arts Council Norway). Some project owners point out that BarentsKult funds consist of relatively low amounts, and that these synergies are necessary to reach full funding: «We can never say that we work after hours or during holidays or exceed the budget, and all will be well. This is not our reality as artists. There is always a need for support from several sources. In that sense, all funding mechanisms are complementary». A perceived drawback is that the various schemes are not coordinated and have varying guidelines and administrative routines. This increases the workload for those who depend on several sources of funding for one and the same project.

27 out of 30 respondents in the survey saw BarentsKult as a useful supplement to other financing mechanisms. 13, however, also stated that BarentsKult overlaps other mechanisms to «some» or a «large extent». 25 respondents thought that the BarentsKult creates synergies with other mechanisms to a «large» or «some extent».

The document analysis showed that of the 129 approved applications, 86 received a reduced amount compared to what was applied for. The reasons for this are given in

Figure 5 (previous page). For five of the 86 projects that received reduced support, the Expert Committee gave as a reason for reduction that the project was of a kind that should receive funds from other financial schemes in addition to BarentsKult.

Conclusion

The findings show that BarentsKult complements and creates synergies with other funding schemes to some extent. The team found no significant overlap with other funding mechanisms.

5. Main findings to the sub questions

5.1 New Actors (Questions 9, 10)

To what extent does BarentsKult fulfil the objective of stimulating the growth of good, innovative art and cultural projects? What are the main criteria for success?

As reflected in the webinar, BarentsKult owners grapple with defining what is innovative, and how to measure it. BarentsKult owners see the concept of innovation as central as well as difficult to define. Innovation is described as «looking forward», thinking «outside the box» and creating projects that are interesting to both participants and the audience. «New content, new elements, and new ideas» are seen as very positive when applications are reviewed. Bringing in impulses from another country and merging two different cultural traditions is seen as facilitating just that.

One perspective is that bringing together artists with new projects and developing new arenas can be seen as innovation. In addition, even repeaters can reinvent themselves. On a different note, swapping old actors for new ones within the confines of a repetitive concept is not necessarily innovative. There is, however, a mutual recognition among BarentsKult owners that innovation is not a concept that is easily measured.

The idea that innovation is found in the cross-border aspect resounds with BarentsKult project owners. In the words of one project owner: «I have not heard of any other band that has done anything similar – that makes music in this way across borders.» Another interpretation offered in the case interviews is that the innovation aspect was found in the location of the project, and that nothing similar had been done in that particular village before. Yet another point of view is that innovation arises when focus is directed towards a type of art that has received little attention before. Certain methodologies are also seen as innovative. Finally, «innovation» is interpreted as combining classical and new art expressions or staging classical pieces in a new way.

From the perspective of the artists, the lack of a clearly defined notion of innovation may not be a bad thing: «All art has an element of innovation – even art expressions that are retrospective. In defining what is innovation, you risk pushing away types of art that cannot meet those specific criteria, or you get applications that are directly

designed only to meet those criteria. [...] It is hard to tell in advance which projects are innovative and which are not. In my experience, [the Barents Secretariat] is not very clear on this, and I think that is a good thing.» (Project owner)

Innovation is a high priority for the Expert Committee in the process of approving and rejecting applications. Likewise, lack of innovation is a frequent reason for rejecting applications. Innovation appears to be almost an absolute criterion, with the exception of some arena development projects where the degree of innovation seems to be less emphasized. Furthermore, the artistic quality of the projects is the one factor most frequently mentioned as an argument for approving an application (see Figure 1, p. 24). Also, ability to create results is a repeated reason for approval, while lack of professionalism in some instances has been used as a reason for rejection (see Figure 2, p. 24).

Between 2014 and 2020, BarentsKult has provided a total of 70 million NOK. Of these funds, the two large repeaters Pikene På Broen and Stiftelsen Tromsø Internasjonale Filmfestival have received 22.7 million, i.e. 32 per cent of the total. Both these project owners have received between one and two project grants per year during the entire period. Projects from these two applicants have received between 0.7 and 1.5 million NOK per project, which place them at the very high end of the scale. Only two other applicants have received funds of that scale: Hilde Merete Mehti received 1.8 million NOK for her *Dark Ecology* project in 2015, and Troms fylkeskultursenter received 1.9 million NOK for their *High North AiR network: AIR Barents 2016*, also granted in 2015. In parallel with this, tight finances were used as a reason for reducing the amounts granted to 13 project approvals and was used as a reason to reject otherwise fundable projects in three instances.

When asked about the conditions for innovation and good art, time, economy and planning were identified as the key enablers of success. The flexibility of BarentsKult funds, particularly the possibility of using funds as salaries to Russian counterparts were seen as essential. The possibility of applying for more than one year is also seen as important in that it allows for time to properly develop projects and ensure quality.

To what degree do «repeaters» contribute to achieve the objectives of BarentsKult, and to what degree do these projects prevent new actors/applicants?

Innovation and what it entails is particularly challenging when dealing with repeaters, such as festivals like TIFF and Pikene på Broen. Can innovation be brought simply by introducing new actors and new content into a set concept? The question is raised whether it should be expected that new actors necessarily represent innovation just by being new. Conversely, repeaters do not necessarily repeat the same cultural expression.

In the case study interviews, on the one hand, concerns were raised that providing funds to the same recipients several times may have a conservative effect. On the other hand, repeaters are seen as useful centres for competence that manage to create ripple effects and bring together new actors. There is an understanding that funds should not constitute part of the operating basis. On the other hand, that makes it difficult to discuss job creation.

The four unsuccessful applicants that participated in the survey to them, pointed to continuity and the possibility to build and maintain professional cross-border networks and develop projects that span over a longer time. Unintended ripple effects – when seized upon – were seen as a source of new project ideas. On the downside, new potential actors may be excluded. One respondent argued that it might feel safer for BarentsKult to fund repeaters rather than taking a risk on something new. That being said, interviews and respondents seemed to think that while this was something that Barents Secretariat should be conscious of avoiding, Barents Secretariat current practice does not constitute a real problem.

The FNI evaluation pointed to a possible tension between the goals of cultural innovation and generating stable jobs in the cultural sector. Their conclusion is that while the Expert Committee has managed to strike a good balance, the question requires a continuous awareness of the potential conflict between goals. Judging by the discussion conducted in the webinar, this awareness is acute among BarentsKult's owners. This is a healthy debate. At the same time, one should not be overly concerned. Over time, the repeaters have grown the muscle to attract new actors who in turn create new projects. Existing and new players complement each other in a good way. Nevertheless, there may be something to be gained from systematizing the role that repeaters have in utilizing their capacity and experience to inform and mentor new actors.

As noted, a potential drawback of repeaters is that it could have a conserving effect or prevent newcomers from applying. The team's findings, however, indicate that there are other factors who may pose more of an obstacle. These are discussed in chapter 5.2.

Conclusion

While there is no clear definition provided by the BarentsKult owners as to what «innovation» is, it is nevertheless actively used as a criterion by the BarentsKult Expert Committee for approval (or rejection). Project owners themselves strive to be innovative in their BarentsKult projects. As such, BarentsKult appears to stimulate to the growth of innovative art to a high degree. Case study interviews identify time and financial security that enables long-term planning as key success factors.

This evaluation has found that the repeaters to a large degree contribute to achieve the objective of BarentsKult. There is little evidence that they prevent new actors from entering the funding scheme. Only on rare occasions have newcomers been rejected on the basis of lack of funds, while repeaters have been granted large sums. Repeaters constitute an important backbone for BarentsKult. Instead of setting repeaters up against new actors, the question from BarentsKult may be rephrased to how BarentsKult can make more systematic use of the rich experiences of the repeaters to guide, mentor and motivate newcomers.

5.2 Relevance (Question 11)

To what extent is the program's approach relevant for the target groups? What will it take to expand the participation to new applicants, different sectors and a geographical spread?

Our findings show that BarentsKult is relevant to its target groups. The professional artists we have interviewed perceive BarentsKult funds as relevant, flexible, useful and unique. The previous evaluation of BarentsKult pointed to the lack of literary projects in the BarentsKult portfolio. This has now been rectified, but the team does not see a need for BarentsKult to spend energy on further diversification into different sectors.

A more significant challenge is that there has been little interest for BarentsKult in Nordland. There is also room for a larger proportion of indigenous participation, particularly on the Russian side. Our findings indicate that this has less to do with relevance than with other factors to be described below.

Based on interviews with non-applicants who were identified by the Barents Secretariat as potentially eligible for BarentsKult funds, cultural resource persons, and project owners, some obstacles for newcomers have been identified:

- lack of knowledge of BarentsKult and the Russian cultural scene among Norwegian actors
- cultural differences and language barriers
- lack of administrative capacity among would-be applicants
- risk aversion and the professionalism criteria
- communication and visibility of the Barents Secretariat

A recurring theme among interviewees was a lack of knowledge of the Russian cultural scene. We have already pointed out that making «first contact» can be a challenge. Performing artists simply don't know where to start. This particularly applies to interviewees in Nordland – also those who have well-functioning projects in Leningrad Oblast. It was pointed out that there is a long distance from Nordland to Kirkenes and North-Western Russia, both physically and culturally. Some also stated that they find it difficult to establish a dialogue with the Barents Secretariat on these issues. One suggestion that came up was for BarentsKult to arrange «speed dating» and other forms of presentations of relevant Russian actors that could spark interest among artists in Nordland.

Cultural differences were also pointed to as an obstacle. There is an asymmetry in the practical organization of the cultural sector on the two sides of the border. Norwegian cultural actors find it easier to get access to administrative leaders, bureaucrats, and politicians on the Russian side than to performing artists on a lower level. Several interviewees call for arenas where they can be matched with their Russian counterparts to exchange ideas, make acquaintances and experiment together prior to committing to the development of a defined project. That being said, cultural differences are also challenging to overcome once the first connections have been made, and some called for training/mentoring in cultural understanding. In addition, several interviewees pointed to the language barrier that sometimes makes it necessary to use professional interpreters. This, to some, is perceived as highly demotivating.

The Barents Secretariat secretariat is generally perceived as being helpful and forthcoming. A considerable effort is made by the secretariat to be present on relevant arenas in addition to providing one-on-one assistance and

guidance to applicants and project owners. Nevertheless, some interviewees pointed to the application portal as being overly complicated. This had to do with the level of detail required, particularly on previous funds received, and to what applicants saw as overlapping questions. Performing artists who run their business from the kitchen table, so to speak, have limited capacity for what they perceive as cumbersome application procedures. In addition, some pointed to the need to have the portal and related communication materials translated into relevant minority languages of the region. However, in the survey, the 30 respondents were all successful applicants. They found that the portal had been easy to use. 24 of these applicants also felt that the Barents Secretariat had been helpful during the application process. In addition, neither of the four unsuccessful respondents reported that they found the portal difficult to use.

The point was made that by going through the application process regularly, repeaters build administrative capacity and a rapport with the Barents Secretariat that can easily become institutionalized. The question was raised whether BarentsKult might be too risk averse in dealing with un-tested applicants. This is to a certain extent confirmed by the document study that showed that the Expert Committee emphasized previous experience by applicants and gave weight to whether or not the applicants had a proven ability to implement a project. This implicit requirement may represent a hurdle for newcomers.

Some point to the professionalism criterion as an obstacle and argue that the eligibility criteria should be expanded to comprehend semi professionals and amateurs. It seems highly unlikely that the Barents Secretariat would find it expedient to abandon a criterion that is seen as a defining feature of BarentsKult. However, as discussed on p. 25, there are good reasons to nuance the Barents Secretariat's understanding of what constitutes professionalism in order to facilitate the geographical and ethnical expansion of applicants.

One interviewee encouraged the Barents Secretariat to seek out artist groups in Nordland and discuss the possibilities of closer cooperation. This informant described the Barents Secretariat as «passive» and argued that the Barents Secretariat to a larger extent could seek out relevant arenas. This does not mean that the Barents Secretariat were in fact not there, but could maybe work more systematically to promote their visibility on the arenas where they are present, combined with considering if there are arenas that are currently underutilized.

Several informants pointed to the need for stronger awareness raising of BarentsKult and the artistic value

of collaboration with Russian counterparts. The strategic communication efforts of the Barents Secretariat fall outside of this evaluation. Nevertheless, this is something the Barents Secretariat could consider looking systematically at in the future. The Barents Secretariat communication strategy (2021-2024) is a fairly general two-pager that does not specifically mention BarentsKult. The team has not explored to what extent the strategy builds on a comprehensive analysis of the relevant target groups, and which channels are most effective in reaching them. It may be a good investment for the Barents Secretariat to identify ways of maximizing communication efforts based on the existing resources in the secretariat. Filling the currently vacant position as minority adviser might be useful in promoting the visibility and knowledge of BarentsKult among core target groups.

The document analysis showed that for 19 of the 129 approved projects, an argument for approving was that the applicant was new, and this is something the Expert Committee has prioritized, provided that the artistic quality and collaboration profile hold water. Between 2014 and 2020 there were seven new applicants whose applications were rejected. Reasons for this were weak application, making it difficult/impossible to judge if the criteria were met, weak collaboration profile, lack of innovation, and lack of expected results. For four projects that were approved, one reason mentioned by the Expert Committee was that the applicants were from Nordland, and that this was prioritized. However, there were seven applications from Nordland that were rejected during the same time period, and the reasons for this were weak collaboration, weak artistic content, low professionalism, and lack of expected results. With regard to indigenous people, the Expert Committee mentioned that the indigenous profile of the project was a reason for approving the application for 14 of the approved projects. During the same period, 10 applications with indigenous profile were rejected. The reasons for this were manifold, but all but two were perceived to have a weak collaboration profile with the Russian partner. The two exceptions had received BarentsKult grants previously but had not (yet) reported on the use of the funds.

Conclusion

The case interviews show that BarentsKult's approach is highly relevant to their target groups. The main challenge for BarentsKult is not lack of relevance, but a lack of knowledge and awareness of BarentsKult and the Russian cultural landscape, particularly in Nordland by potential applicants. The application process can, for some, be overwhelming. This, combined with cultural differences and language barriers present obstacles to expanding the

participation to new applicants and a geographical spread. The sectoral spread is seen as satisfactory.

5.3 Russian participation

How extensive is the Russian participation in the project? (Question 12)

The evaluation conducted by FNI showed that the BarentsKult generally met the requirements for real Russian participation. Common to all the projects is that the Russian partners contribute little or no money beyond the value of their own efforts, which in itself is often very valuable. This finding is partly corroborated in this evaluation.

Based on the document analysis, the quality and equality of the artistic collaboration between the Norwegian and Russian partner appears to be an absolute criterion for support. Of the 213 received applications between 2014 and 2020, satisfying collaboration profile is used as an argument to approve 54 of the projects, and weak collaboration has been used as an argument to reject 42 of the applications (see Figures 1 and 2, p. 24), hence the quality of the collaboration, i.e. the equality of the relation when it comes to developing and implementing the project, has been vital to whether or not 45 per cent of the applications have been approved or rejected. Where the quality of collaboration is not specifically mentioned, it is implicitly clear from the other arguments, such as artistic quality, the partners' ability to create results and the projects' degree of feasibility, that the collaboration profile is good. Thus, it can be concluded that from a technical and artistic participation point of view, the Russian participation seems to be as substantial as the Norwegian. The level of Russian economic participation is not mentioned in the arguments for approval or rejections by the Expert Committee.

Participants in the evaluation survey were asked to what extent the Russian partner contributed at the technical level. The technical cooperation is seen as highly valuable. 21 respondents said that the Russian partner had contributed «to a large extent», whereas eight said the partner had contributed to «some extent». When asked to what extent the Russian partner had contributed financially, 10 respondents said that the partner had contributed to «some extent», while 19 responded «little to none». Only one respondent referred to a considerable financial input from the Russian side, and one respondent reported plans to apply for a wider array of Russian funds for the next project. When asked about the overall Russian input over time, 16 respondents stated that it had increased. Only four explicitly stated that the Russian overall input had decreased.

Survey respondents described their Russian partners as highly motivated, committed and able to follow through on projects. One respondent pointed to increased Russian professionalism in cultural communication, which heightened the visibility and interest for collaboration on the Russian side. Again, time was underlined as a key success factor: «It takes time to establish cooperation in Russia. But once you have built up a collaboration with partners, they will introduce you to several relevant actors, both local and regional. The Russian partners possess a high level of professional competence and interest in cooperating with us. Collaboration strengthens the competence of both Russian and Norwegian participants and the cooperation is equal.»

According to some interviewees, new sources of funding have emerged on the Russian, such as the so-called President's Fund. While some Russian project partners referred to this mechanism, none of the Russian partners had applied for external Russian funding for the projects. One of the Russian partners stated that the degree of support from the authorities for project in the cultural field was increasing, most notably from 2020: «If earlier, support in the field of culture was limited to consultations and help with visa questions, now it is possible to obtain serious financial support, especially on federal level.»

The availability of Russian funding mechanisms for cooperation projects in the fields of art and culture may also help avoid the potential risk of Russian NGOs and private persons receiving funds from abroad may be labelled as foreign agents according to Russian legislation. Although no information has been received about this being the case in connection with BarentsKult projects, this legislation may at least theoretically pose a problem for such projects. As the competition for funds from the President's fund and similar Russian funds is reportedly very high, there appears to be a high need for a dedicated Russian financial mechanism for financing of BarentsKult projects, as was discussed between Norwegian and Russian authorities when BarentsKult was launched.

Conclusion

The evaluation team holds that the findings from the FNI evaluation are still valid. That being said, one should be careful not to underestimate the value of Russian in-kind contributions in terms of man-hours, free use of space, food, travel, accommodation, logistics, PR, booking and venues that are made available free of charge to the Norwegian partners. The visibility generated for Norwegian artists whose performances are made accessible to a wider Russian audience may in turn generate income for project owners. The establishment of the President's fund and other Russian funding mechanisms is too

recent to have presented itself as a real opportunity for the project partners that have participated in this evaluation. As foreign financial support to Russian partners appears to become increasingly problematic due to current Russian legislation, domestic Russian funding is increasingly required.

5.4 Covid-19 (Questions 13, 14)

How have restrictions due to Covid-19 affected project implementation and goal achievement? What alternative (digital) working methods and platforms have been used to compensate for closed borders and other obstacles? Have the projects reached a larger or smaller audience than planned?

In what way (if any) has the corona situation contributed to new / innovative solutions and working methods that can be useful in the future?

While some projects were completed before Covid-19 became an issue in Norway, the pandemic has had various consequences for project implementation. Travel restrictions made it difficult for artists to get together, and cooperation moved to digital platforms. The possibility of holding video-meetings are seen as a useful supplement to physical contact, but can in no way replace it.

Some projects were able to reach new audiences through streaming, but this should not be seen as a cost-saving tool for future projects. However, new systems have been put in place – for instance for ticket sales – that might prove useful in the future. Some projects have been put on hold indefinitely. This might put a strain on future collaboration, but so far sustainability of the established networks do not seem to have been significantly weakened.

Participants in the survey highlighted the technical divide between Norwegian and Russian partners. In order to be able to make full use of the technological innovation that has been stimulated by Covid-19, more sophisticated equipment might be needed on the Russian side.

Eight respondents to the survey stated that Covid-19 had affected the project positively to «some» or a «large extent». 15 stated that it had affected the project negatively to «some» or a «large extent». 15 respondents said that Covid-19 made them implement the project in new ways to «some» or a «large extent». 17 respondents said that the project prevented them from reaching their target groups to «some» or a «large extent». The same number of respondents stated that the project had given them insights into new work modalities that would prove useful in the future.



Talking Barents debate live from Ofelas Arena in Kirkenes: Arts and culture can play a more important role in deepening and preserving the connection between Norway and Russia. (Photo: Jonas Sjøkvist Karlsbakk/Barents Sekretariat)

Conclusion

The Covid-19 pandemic has made cooperation challenging as it has prevented traveling and physical meetings to a large extent. Many projects have been postponed; thus, it is unknown what the effects will be when the pandemic is over. Digital solutions have been unevenly distributed between Norwegian and Russian partners. Interviewees do not recommend that digital contact replace physical contact in the future. Some technological innovations, i.e. for ticket sales, appear to have come to stay.

6. Conclusions and recommendations

6.1 Main conclusions

BarentsKult stimulates cooperation between Norwegian professional artists and cultural actors to a large extent. With this in mind, our conclusion is that BarentsKult has successfully contributed to creating cultural networks across the Norwegian-Russian border. While not all networks survive projects, this is only to be expected. BarentsKult contributes to the creation of international meeting places to a large extent by having allowed some actors to grow exponentially over time. Repeaters have developed the muscle to serve as locomotives, so long as they strive to be creative and adhere to the criteria of being innovative.

BarentsKult is seen to contribute to business development, but the effect is difficult to measure. There is a direct contribution from the creation of income for artists during the project period, and an indirect contribution when projects lead to increased place attractiveness. This is seen as mitigating population decrease and attracting tourism. BarentsKult funds also have a multiplier effect for repeaters who are able to offer permanent positions as part of their activities. BarentsKult is found to achieving its goals.

With regards to requirements from the BarentsKult owners, BarentsKult is not found to focus on gender equality, but focuses to a larger extent on ethnic diversion, although here there are structural challenges, especially on the Russian side.

BarentsKult is seen as having high value for project participants. The local value lies in the cultural experiences that are made available to the public, which are seen as enhancing place attractiveness, as referred to above. On the regional level, we see that the projects facilitate the achievement of relevant policies and cooperation agreement. The handling process of project applications is in itself a valuable arena for BarentsKult owners to keep tabs on the cultural life in the region.

BarentsKult is seen as a unique funding mechanism, being the only one that allows for funds to be spent in Russia. It creates synergies with other funding mechanisms in that BarentsKult funding is seen as a quality mark that subsequently may unleash funds from other financial sources.

Case study interviews identify time and financial security to enable long-term planning as key success factors to stimulate the growth of good, innovative art and cultural projects. While BarentsKult does contribute to high quality and innovative art, the way professionalism is defined may narrow the possibilities for identifying relevant partners in Russia, particularly among indigenous people. The concepts of quality and innovation are of a subjective nature and do not easily lend themselves to strict measurement. This has been, and will continue to be, an on-going debate.

Lack of knowledge of Russian culture, language barriers, asymmetric relations and the professionalism criteria are among the hurdles pointed to as obstacles for attracting newcomers – be it from Nordland or among indigenous groups. Lack of awareness and visibility of BarentsKult is a more pressing challenge than lack of relevance per se. Russian participation is seen as equal and highly useful on the technical level.

The in-kind contribution of the Russian partners is highly valued by the Norwegian partners. The financial contribution, however, remains low. New funding possibilities emerging in Russia could mitigate this in the future, and it will be important for BarentsKult to ensure that Russian project partners explore and utilise national funding options as much as possible.

While Covid-19 definitely has had an adverse effect on the project implementation, it has not been devastating. The pandemic has inspired creativity and contributed to a higher technological competence. Some working tools will be useful in the future, and it is also not unlikely that video conferencing, social media and streaming will serve to include new groups. However, physical meetings will remain the most important form of collaboration.

6.2 Recommendations

Minorities and Russia:

1. In order to ensure that the objectives of broad minority participation are met, web pages, application portals and other relevant materials for applicants should be made available in minority languages.

2. Given that work with minorities requires special qualifications (such as cultural understanding, contexts analysis, language knowledge, etc.) it is recommended to fill the currently vacant position as adviser with the assignment of engaging minority communities.
3. In order to engage minority-focused projects, it should be considered to earmark some of BarentsKult's funds for these types of projects.
4. BarentsKult should consider expanding its existing communications strategy with a specific section on reaching indigenous groups and expanding participation in Nordland country.
5. Nuance the concept of professionalism in a way that captures minority culture, especially in Russia.
6. In order to increase the visibility of BarentsKult on the Russian side, and to develop BarentsKult's funding base, the Barents Secretariat or Ministry of Culture should continue talks with the Russian authorities on the aspiration to establish additional Russian funding sources for BarentsKult projects.

Increased number of applicants / new applicants:

1. BarentsKult should to a greater extent take advantage of the knowledge and experience of repeaters through formalizing their role in the recruitment and mentoring of new applicants.
2. Consider a further simplification of the application portal through some minor adjustments. It is important to include the applicants in this process.
3. BarentsKult could play a more important role in facilitating match-making and a first contact, particularly on an artist-to-artist-level. In order to ensure increased cooperation between institutions and organizations in Nordland and Russian cultural actors, consideration should be given to whether BarentsKult should proactively invite Russian actors to existing cultural arenas in Nordland and by this foster professional and personal relations that can be developed into joint projects.

4. In order to stimulate new applicants, BarentsKult should be less risk-averse and dare to include new artists who don't yet have proven record of project implementation ability. Funds may be set aside to provide first-time applicants with close follow-up and guidance.
5. Consider establishing a simplified application procedure for concept development, pilot projects, and projects under a certain value, specifically targeting first-time applicants.

Administration and funding:

1. The Expert Committee should handle the portfolio in a consistent way across applications. The Expert Committee should be more systematic with how the different criteria are used to approve or reject project applications. When the approval only funds parts of the budget, the cuts should be justified in a consistent way.
2. BarentsKult should develop a monitoring and evaluation framework with SMART indicators for along its various dimensions such as international project cooperation, arena development, cultural business development, communications/visibility, and ethnical and geographical expansion, and follow up by documenting the effect of the support in the annual reports.
3. BarentsKult's annual reports should to a greater extent measure the results of the various projects in such a way that they can be compared with previous years, and that, based on the annual report's conclusions, efficiency improvements can be made to the program.

Appendix 1

Guiding documents

In the following, the team has selected texts that were found relevant to BarentsKult from its various guiding documents. The text has been used as background where relevant to the analysis in the evaluation.

Allocation letters from funders of Barents-Kult

Ministry of Culture (3 million)

The Ministry assumes that the grant will be used in accordance with the purposes stated in the application. Financial management must follow the Ministry's guidelines. These refer to the Law procurement and the law on equality between the sexes and anti discrimination. It is assumed that recipients of grants from the Ministry of Culture have systems to ensure safety and preparedness and follow the rules and guidelines in force at any given time. The Ministry of Culture assumes that the Barents Secretariat works to prevent harassment and other inappropriate behaviour, in line with the requirements of the Working Environment Act. The institution shall have routines for internal notification of matters worthy of criticism, in accordance with the Working Environment Act § 2 A-3.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs for several Barents projects (3 million for several projects)

The programme shall finance projects between Norwegian and Russian partners and through that enhance mutual understanding on both sides of the border. The overarching goal for the regional projects is to contribute to confidence and people-to-people collaboration in Northern Russia. The projects shall further and develop and the regional collaboration with emphasis on mutual exchange of experiences and knowledge, increased competence and networking between public and private entities and civil society organisations. The people-to-people projects shall cover a wide spectrum of society, hereunder culture, sport, education, environment, civil society, health, indigenous people, and business. The objective is a continued, broad collaboration between Russian and Norwegian actors in the Barents region. The target group is Norwegian and Russian actors in the Barents region. MFA requires that four cross-cutting issues are respected: human rights, in particular related to membership, accountability and non-discrimination; women's rights and equality; climate and environment; and anti-corruption. The Barents Secretariat shall see to that the grantees identify material risk factors that can have negative effects on the cross-cutting issues, and

that these risks are analysed and handled throughout the project cycle. The Barents Secretariat shall see to that the grantees' risk analysis and risk management adequately ensures that unwanted negative effects are avoided.

The Norwegian Barents Secretariat shall practise zero-tolerance for corruption in its management of the grants. The zero-tolerance include all staff, consultants and non-employed personnel as well as collaboration partners, grantees and others who benefit from the grants. Thus, the Barents Secretariat must have an internal control system that prevents and discovers corrupt actions, do its best to prevent and handle corruption, and require that all recipients of grants practice zero-tolerance against all forms of corruption. The Barents Secretariat must immediately inform the MFA upon suspicion of economic anomalies. The Barents Secretariat shall send semi annual progress reports that emphasise the results achievement.

Troms and Finnmark Municipal County (2 million)

The allocation letter refers to the requirements provided by the Ministries of Culture and Foreign Affairs.

Nordland Municipal County (1 million)

Refers to the guidelines and requirements from the Ministry of Culture. The Municipal County wants its name and logo to be posted on communication material about the BarentsKult programme.

Norwegian Russian collaboration agreements

Agreement for cultural collaboration between Norway and Russia (2009)

Agreement to renew the agreement every three years. Agreement to install the Annual Norwegian-Russian Culture Days that will alternate to be held in the two countries, starting in Russia in 2010.

Agreement for cultural collaboration between Norway and Russia (2016-2018)

Based on the Kirkenes Declaration from 1994 and Action Plan for cultural collaboration from 2009. Emphasizes the important role of culture in the spiritual development of modern society, recognizes the need to preserve the cultural heritage of the peoples and nations of the two states and reaffirms the intention to promote the development and strengthening of the friendly relations

and trust between the peoples of the two states, and expresses its desire to give new impetus to the bilateral cooperation in the arts and culture. The parties shall facilitate the development of cooperation in music, theatre, film, visual arts, library and museum activities, cultural heritage, handicrafts and arts and crafts, as well as entertainment performing arts and circus arts and other forms of humanistic activities. The Parties shall contribute to the establishment of direct links and contacts between the responsible agencies and bodies covering issues relating to the arts and culture, as well as archival and film-related activities and tourism in the two countries. The parties will exchange information on the two states' priority areas in art and culture and facilitate the participation of representatives of the other Party in international seminars, symposia and forums on these topics organized in the first Party state. The Parties shall cooperate in the protection, preservation and restoration of cultural heritage monuments and objects in the territory of the two States. Forms of bilateral cooperation in the protection, preservation and restoration of cultural heritage monuments and objects. The Parties shall contribute to expanding the contacts within popular creative activities, to organizing exhibitions of the works of folk-art masters and creative seminars, and to ensembles of amateurs and professionals being able to participate in international folklore festivals held in the two countries. The parties shall contribute to the organizing and implementation of guest performances by music and theatre ensembles, art exhibitions, festivals, culture days and other cultural events in the two countries. Actors from the two states should be able to participate in creative seminars and roundtable events within the full range of culture-related issues. The parties shall encourage the exchange of museum exhibitions, contemporary art exhibitions, specialists, e.g., in restoration work, and information exchange on technological innovations in museum activities and the preservation of cultural-historical values. The parties shall carry out cooperation in film-related activities. In this connection, the Parties shall contribute to the exchange of film events with the participation of film workers, contribute to mutual participation in international film festivals arranged on the State territory of the Parties in accordance with their regulations. The parties shall contribute to the implementation of joint cultural projects, such as initiatives to strengthen and develop cooperation between festivals in the field of culture that are carried out on the State territory of the Parties, measures that contribute to the development of long-term cooperation, as well as expand access to culture and exchange of experience

between museums and other cultural conservation organizations, measures that contribute to increased knowledge about the cultural sector by stimulating the exchange of knowledge and information. Priority should be given to measures implemented Nordland, Troms and Finnmark counties in Norway and Murmansk and Archangelsk counties, the Republics of Karelia and Komi and the Nenets Autonomous Region in Russia. The cultural projects should include children and youth culture and indigenous culture. The cultural exchange between the Parties shall, if there is no special agreement, be carried out on these terms: The sending party shall cover the expenses of international delegations and artistic ensembles' international travel, insurance and transportation of props, theatre costumes and stage costumes, fees for its own performers, and provide medical insurance for members of the delegations and artistic ensembles throughout their stay in the receiving Party's country. The receiving party shall cover the expenses of the delegations and the artistic ensembles' accommodation (hotel, board, domestic transport, cultural program, interpreting and translation services, organization of performances / performances, rental of performances / shows, technical equipment and necessary staff for these, and emergency medical assistance). The conditions for conducting exhibitions within the framework of this programme and the Parties' associated mutual obligations (exhibition period, expenses for transport of exhibited objects and travel for companions, insurance, customs and storage, securing of exhibited objects and other topics) will be determined in and effected by own agreements.

Agreement between the country of Nordland and Archangelsk Oblast (2014)

Based on Declaration for collaboration between the two nations from 1996. Covers trade, entrepreneurship, industry, transport, investment, infrastructure development, agriculture, conservation of the environment, education, science, culture, local self-government, tourism and collaboration between youth. Indigenous people's interests shall be respected, and the national cultural heritage will be conserved.

Agreement between the country of Finnmark and Archangelsk Oblast (2013)

Based on Declaration for collaboration between the two nations from 1996. Collaboration on trade, economics, culture and exchanges within education, conservation of the environment, sport, local democracy, tourism and

youth. The parties support initiatives that contribute to conferences and seminars within culture in the Barents regions, and support exchanges of experience within the cultural field. The parties will contribute to strengthening the partnership between cultural institutions and facilitate exchange of art exhibitions and artists. The parties will promote the conservation of the Pomor culture and the national cultural heritage.

Agreement between the country of Troms and Archangelsk Oblast (2013)

Based on Declaration for collaboration between the two nations from 1996. Covers trade, culture, exchanges in education, health, and social security, agriculture, environmental protection, municipal collaboration, transport, youth, sport and tourism. The parties contribute to increase the contact to exchange experiences within increased female participation in social life, politics and economy and all levels of public administration. The parties will contribute development and strengthening of cultural cooperation and will support initiatives to cultural conference and seminars within the Barents cooperation, in addition to exchange of technical experiences. The parties will contribute to strengthening and developing partnerships between cultural institutions and to the exchange of expositions and ensembles. Common traditional culture contributes to the parties ' protection of the Pomor culture and the national heritage.

Agreement between the country of Troms and Murmansk Oblast (2017-2019)

Covers business development, transport and logistics, education and research, health, sport, youth, environment and climate, culture, municipal collaboration, indigenous people. The parties will carry out meetings between representatives of the committee for culture and art in Murmansk and Troms. The parties will continue the development of the High North A-I-R network's artist-in-residence and network programmes for professional actors within visual art. The parties are positive to the collaboration within movies through TIFF as an arena and through different festival projects such as movie tours, pitching forums, trainee programmes and cooperation on distribution. The parties underline the importance of cooperation between museums in Murmansk and Troms. The parties are positive to the cooperation within music between the two counties. The parties underline the importance of the collaboration between the international indigenous people festival Riddu Riddu in Troms and the indigenous people's organisations and individuals working with indigenous people's issues in Murmansk, hereunder Barents

Indigenous Peoples Office in Murmansk, in relation to networking and participation in common forums.

Plan for cultural collaboration between the country of Finnmark and Murmansk Oblast (2017-2019)

The plan lists 41 concrete projects where the two counties will collaborate between 2017 and 2019. The project is sorted under the categories music, theatre/dance, visual art, literature, museum, festivals. Several projects are on the BarentsKult list.

BarentsKult supports projects within all the genres listed above.

Municipal counties' policies and strategies

The Northern Norwegian Cultural Agreement (2018-2021)

The first Northern Norwegian cultural agreement between the three Municipal counties Nordland, Troms and Finnmark was signed in 1991.

Vision 2018-2021: The Northern Norwegian cultural cooperation shall contribute to a professional cultural life that is diverse, inclusive and of high quality. Cultural life must be a driving force for development and growth in the region and have an international perspective.

The collaboration aims to develop a cultural policy for Northern Norway which:

- ensures high quality art and culture
- contributes to the participation and experience of a rich and diverse cultural life
- make visible and further develop our cultural, international and diverse region
- makes it attractive for art and culture practitioners to operate and establish themselves in the region
- is the driving force and premise for policy-making at national level
- develops robust cultural infrastructure in the region
- strengthens dialogue with art and cultural life in the region
- contributes to creative nourishment

International cooperation is important for all three Northern Norwegian county municipalities. The Regional Council for Culture has a special focus on cultural cooperation in Russia and the Barents region. It is important that cultural cooperation continues to be developed on the basis of local and regional initiatives, and that regional participation helps to ensure strong connections

with the population in the North. The regional council plays an active role in this work. The work will also be based on the bilateral agreements between the counties in the North.

The Regional Council for Culture in Northern Norway was established in 2010 and consists of the politically responsible for culture in Nordland, Troms and Finnmark and will coordinate the cultural policy cooperation between the county municipalities.

The following institutions are included in the agreement (in Norwegian):

- Landsdelsmusikerne i Nord-Norge (LINN)
- Nordnorsk Jazzsenter (NNJS)
- Rytmask kompetansenettverk i Nord (RYK)
- Nordnorsk Opera- og Symfoniorkester AS (NOSO)
- Nordnorsk kunstnersenter (NNKS)
- Nordnorsk Filmsenter AS (NNFS)
- Festspillene i Nord-Norge (FINN)
- Håogaland Amatørteaterselskap (HATS)
- Pikene på Broen
- Dansearena nord
- Det Samiske Nasjonalteatret Beaivváš / Beaivváš Sámi Našunálateáhter
- Filmfond Nord AS
- Nordnorsk litteraturstrategi

The following institutions receive support from the Northern Norwegian cultural agreement:

- Nordnorsk forfatterlag (Nnf)
- Norske Kunsthåndverkere Nord-Norge (NKNN)
- Nord-Norske Bildende Kunstnere (NNBK)
- Forum for nordnorske Dansekunstnere (FnnD)

Political platform for the Labour Party, the Centre Party and the Socialist Left Party, Troms and Finnmark (2019 – 2023)

The regional perspective in the development of international Arctic policy must be strengthened. Tromsø plays an important role as the Arctic capital, Vadsø through the transfer of the secretariat for the regional High

North forum, and Kirkenes through its role as host of the Barents Secretariat. Troms and Finnmark will take advantage of the opportunities our status as an Arctic region gives us. The cooperation parties want to contribute to the development of the Arctic Frontiers conference. The cooperation parties recognize and support the important role of actors such as the Northern Norway Festival, Riddu Riddu and Tromsø International Film Festival in the development of people-to-people cooperation across national borders in the High North. It is important to continue and develop the relationship with our neighbours in the Barents region. The cooperation parties will help to set the agenda in the High North by creating knowledge, activity, increased value creation and an increased presence in the North. Our regional relationship with Russia must continue to be based on clarity, dialogue and predictability. The regional and local relationship between people will be more important than before, and we will contribute to promoting and further developing this. The cooperation parties will continue the international collaborations to Troms and Finnmark municipal county, including people-to-people cooperation, continue the work with the international programs that have been in Troms county municipality and Finnmark county municipality, further develop the Barents Secretariat as a tool for Barents cooperation.

International strategies for Finnmark (2015-2019)

The goals for the cultural collaboration are:

- To strengthen and make visible the importance of cultural cooperation for growth and development in Finnmark
- To further develop cultural infrastructure that can create a long-term and predictable international cultural cooperation in the North
- To strengthen international cultural heritage cooperation
- To facilitate contact and cooperation between churches and denominations in the Barents region
- To stimulate town twinning in Finnmark

Cultural cooperation in the North contributes to social, economic and cultural development and has national significance. People-to-people collaboration is, and will be, a mainstay.

There are bilateral cooperation agreements in culture and sports between Finnmark County Municipality and Murmansk Oblast. The county municipality participates in Barents cooperation through the working group for culture, the Joint Working Group on Culture

(JWGC), which is a joint working group for culture with representatives from the regional and national level. Norwegian-Russian cultural forum, a collaboration between the Norwegian and Russian cultural ministries, the Northern Norwegian county municipalities and the oblasts in North-Western Russia and was established in 2010. This has become an important arena for cultural workers in the regions. As part of the international work, it is important to promote understanding of our common cross-border past, in order to further strengthen our common identity. Through continued development of the collaboration, a broader knowledge of each other's language and culture is achieved. Increased presence with each other will further create greater understanding and insight into each other's challenges and opportunities and thus strengthen the regional development work in the region. Ensuring stable support schemes will also be important. The following areas will therefore be prioritized:

- **Art:** The funding programme BarentsKult, a collaboration between the three Northern Norwegian county municipalities, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Culture and the Barents Secretariat, has become an important tool for the professional arts and culture collaboration between Northern Norway and North-West Russia. There is great activity in genres such as performing arts and visual arts. The A-i-R scheme (guest studio) facilitates cross-border cooperation in the Barents region.
- **Cultural heritage:** Dissemination of our common cultural heritage in the High North is an important task for museums and other cultural heritage institutions. The museum collaboration with Murmansk and Arkhangelsk has a long tradition with joint exhibition productions, conferences and seminars. Cooperation has also been established between Finnmark County Municipality and actors in both Russia and Finland with regard to cultural monuments. The museums in Finnmark are important partners as communicators of knowledge and cultural history between Norway and Russia.
- **Library:** The library collaboration with Murmansk and Arkhangelsk is well established and has i.a. resulted in the construction of a Russian literature collection in Sør-Varanger and a Norwegian literature collection in Murmansk and Arkhangelsk. Finnmark County Library has national responsibility for Finnish literature. Strategies will be to use the bilateral cooperation agreements purposefully to initiate concrete international collaborative projects artists, cultural institutions organizations in Finnmark, emphasize the cultural dimension and people to people cooperation, prioritize children and young people in all international cultural work,

further develop cultural heritage cooperation with Metsähallitus in Finland and Pasvik State Reserve in Russia.

International strategy for Nordland (2016-2020)

One of the strategy's goals is to profile Nordland through culture and strengthen the collaboration between cultural institutions in the county and participation in international projects. Nordland county municipality will facilitate development within music, theatre, film, art, library and museums, handicraft, cultural heritage protection, amateur art, entertainment and circus, and other humanistic projects. Nordland will prioritize cooperation projects that contribute to awareness of protection of cultural heritage. In the presentation of cultural heritage, art and culture, international cooperation shall be used to facilitate popular participation for all groups and create awareness about the importance of culture. Cooperation and international partnership shall be actively used to visualise the social values of cultural heritage, the competence of climatic change for cultural heritage and cultural heritage importance for tourism. International cooperation will be used to profile cultural actors from Nordland and will promote establishment of excellent competence milieus. International work shall be used as a tool to promote the development of cultural business and business based on tradition and environment. Nordland shall be a society for all, regardless of age, gender, ethnicity and functional ability. Increased participation of all groups in social processes and decisions strengthens our democracy. Nordland County Municipality's international work will contribute to the exchange of ideas and experiences that strengthen the entire population's opportunities for participation and participation. Knowledge about and understanding of gender equality and inclusion will be strengthened through contact and cooperation with institutions and organisations both nationally and internationally.

Appendix 2

Terms of reference

1. INTRODUKSJON

Finansieringsprogrammet BarentsKult ble lansert i april 2008. Programmet har som målsetting å bidra til realiseringen av større kunst- og kulturprosjekter i norsk og russisk del av Barentsregionen. Målgruppen for BarentsKult er norske profesjonelle kunst- og kulturaktører som samarbeider med russiske partnere.

Programmet skal stimulere til økningen av gode, nyskapende kunst- og kulturfaglige prosjekter. Prosjektene skal involvere både russiske og norske aktører. Fokus for prosjektene skal være Barentsregionen og nordområdene.

Følgende satsingsområder er vedtatt:

- internasjonale samarbeidsprosjekter innenfor kunst og kultur, med fokus på nordområdene
- arenavikling
- kulturell næringsutvikling

Midlene til programmet tildeles fra fylkeskommunene Nordland og Troms og Finnmark, Kulturdepartementet og Utenriksdepartementet. Midler tildeles på bakgrunn av mottatte søknader. Forvaltningen av programmet er lagt til Barentssekretariatet. Institusjonene som bidrar med midler i BarentsKult deltar i et rådgivende organ i forbindelse med søknadsbehandling; BarentsKults faglige råd. Kulturdepartementet og Utenriksdepartementet er observatører i det faglige rådet.

I 2020 forvaltet Barentssekretariatet til sammen kr. 9 millioner til BarentsKult.

2. BAKGRUNN, MÅL OG SENTRALE SPØRSMÅL FOR EVALUERINGEN

BarentsKult har siden programmet ble lansert bidratt til realiseringen av over 250 norsk-russiske prosjekter som har involvert profesjonelle kunstnere og kulturaktører. Det er nyttig for aktørene som er ansvarlige for BarentsKult å foreta eksterne evalueringer av programmet for å kartlegge graden av måloppnåelse og belyse sentrale utviklingstrekk over tid. Det ble gjennomført en evaluering av BarentsKult i 2014, og Barentssekretariatets styre vedtok 12.01.2021 å få gjennomført en ny evaluering av programmet i 2021.

Det ønskes en generell vurdering av programmets resultater og måloppnåelse sett i forhold til de målsetninger og kriterier som er nedfelt i programmets overordnede program, vilkår og retningslinjer. Det skal også reflekteres i evalueringen hvilken effekt og nytte BarentsKult har hatt på og for deltakere i prosjekter, og om prosjektene har hatt verdi lokalt og regionalt.

Det skal gjennomføres en mer inngående gjennomgang av et begrenset antall enkeltprosjekter som har mottatt støtte fra BarentsKult. Utvalget av prosjekter skal være fra perioden 2014-2020, og være representativt når det gjelder geografisk spredning, ulike kultursektorer, målgrupper, prosjektets varighet (ett-/flerårig), type søker (institusjon, organisasjon, enkeltutøver, offentlig/privat), og satsingsområde. I utvalget må urfolkstiltak være inkludert. Evalueringsrapporten skal inneholde begrunnede anbefalinger og forslag til forbedringer.

Evalueringen skal svare på følgende hovedspørsmål:

- I hvilken grad oppfyller BarentsKult målsettingen om å stimulere til samarbeid mellom norske og russiske profesjonelle kunstnere og kulturaktører i Barentsregionen (inkludert St. Petersburg og Leningrad oblast)?

- På hvilken måte (om noen) bidrar BarentsKult til å skape internasjonale møteplasser og nettverk for utvikling av kunst og kultur?

- På hvilken måte (om noen) bidrar BarentsKult til kulturell næringsutvikling?

- Hvordan har måloppnåelsen i ordningen utviklet seg i et lengre perspektiv sammenlignet med funnene i forrige evalueringsrapport fra 2014? Hva er de viktigste utviklingstrekkene i perioden 2014-2020?

- Hvilken direkte og indirekte nytte har BarentsKult-programmet hatt for prosjektdeltakere, og hva har vært den lokale og regionale verdien?

- I hvilken grad understøtter BarentsKult de nordnorske fylkenes og departementenes målsettinger og engasjementer i norsk-russisk kultursamarbeid og annet grensekryssende samarbeid i Barentsregionen? Utfyller, overlapper eller skaper BarentsKult synergier med andre relevante finansieringsprogrammer?

Problemstillinger som ønskes belyst:

En viktig del av BarentsKults formål er ønsket om å bidra til realisering av gode, nyskapende kunst – og kulturfaglige prosjekter, som gir grobunn for langvarige samarbeid og nettverk mellom kunstnere i Barents.

BarentsKult-programmet har flere aktører som har fått tilskudd over mange år, og som har bygd seg faglige nettverk både på norsk og russisk side. I evalueringsrapporten fra 2014 ble det drøftet hvorvidt prosjekter som mottar støtte gjentatte ganger var problematisk, sett ut ifra målsetting og regelverk. Overordnet var konklusjonen den gang at det ikke var problematisk, men at faglig råd ble oppfordret til å være oppmerksom på en mulig målkonflikt med tanke på at prosjekter som mottar støtte gjentatte ganger ikke måtte være til hinder for nye prosjekter. En relevant problemstilling vil være å vurdere hvorvidt de har en verdi for generering av nye prosjekter, eller hvorvidt deres relativt sett store tildelingsandel over år faktisk er til hinder for at nye aktører slipper til.

- Er samarbeidet avgrenset til prosjektene som mottar støtte (kortvarig), eller bidrar prosjektene til å skape samarbeid/relasjoner/nettverk som er bærekraftige over tid?

- Eksisterte samarbeidet mellom norsk og russisk partner før prosjektene, eller ble det etablert som følge av prosjektene?

- I hvilken grad oppfyller BarentsKult målsettingen om å stimulere til økning av gode, nyskapende kunst- og kulturfaglige prosjekter? Hva er de viktigste kriteriene for å lykkes?

- I hvilken grad bidrar prosjekter som mottar støtte gjentatte ganger til å oppfylle målsettingene til BarentsKult, og i hvilken grad er slike prosjekter til hinder for nye aktører/søkere til ordningen?

Det arbeides kontinuerlig med å gjøre BarentsKult og mulighetene som finnes for finansiering kjent for alle relevante aktører i nord. Programmet er åpent for alle profesjonelle aktører i Nord-Norge; fra enkeltkunstnere og små organisasjoner til store nøkkelinstitusjoner. Det er et ønske at BarentsKult favner bredt, både hva gjelder hvilket kulturfelt/kunstgenre prosjektene dekker og geografisk spredning av prosjekteiere. For å imøtekomme behov og ønsker knyttet særlig til aktører i Nordland inkluderer programmet St. Petersburg og Leningrad oblast som virkeområde. Det mottas allikevel mindre søknader fra aktører i Nordland. Urfolkprosjekter gis spesiell prioritet, men erfaringsmessig er det få urfolkaktører som søker finansiering.

- I hvilken grad er programmet utformet slik at det er relevant for

målgruppene? Hva skal til for å utvide prosjektdeltakelsen (nye søkere, ulike kultursektorer, innsatsområder og geografisk spredning)?

I evalueringsrapporten fra 2014 pekes det på flere positive resultater når det gjelder betydningen av den russiske deltakelsen i prosjektarbeidet. I vurderingen av søknader legger faglig råd vekt på om det er reell russisk deltakelse i prosjektene.

- Hvor omfattende er den russiske deltakelsen i prosjektet (faglig og økonomisk)? Har dette endret seg over tid, i så fall hvorfor og på hvilken måte?

Det er ønskelig å belyse hvordan koronapandemien har påvirket BarentsKult, både når det gjelder tilfanget av søknader og gjennomføring av prosjekter som har mottatt støtte.

- Hvordan har restriksjoner på grunn av covid-19 påvirket gjennomføring av prosjekter og måloppnåelse? Hvilke alternative (digitale) arbeidsformer og plattformer er benyttet for å kompensere for stengte grenser og andre hindringer? Har prosjektene nådd ut til færre eller flere enn planlagt?

- På hvilken måte (om noen) har koronasituasjonen bidratt til nye/innovative løsninger og arbeidsformer som kan komme til nytte i fremtiden?

3. TIDSRAMME

Rapporten skal være ferdigstilt senest 01.12.2021.

4. TILDELINGSKRITERIER OG KVALIFIKASJONSKRAV

Tildeling av oppdrag vil skje på bakgrunn av hvilket tilbud som er det mest fordelaktige. Ved valg av tilbyder vil det bli lagt vekt på følgende:

- Kompetanse og erfaring innen evaluering og/eller forskning
- Kunnskap om Russland og Barentsregionen/nordområdene
- Kompetanse innen kunst- og kulturfeltet, prosjektsamarbeid og offentlige tilskuddsordninger

Tildelingskriteriene vektet som følger:

- Formell kompetanse og erfaring: 50 %
- Pristilbud: 30 %
- Kompetanse innen kunst- og kulturfelter: 10 %
- Russlandskunnskap: 10 %

METODE

Vi ber om at anbudet som leveres inneholder et detaljert forslag til metodikk. Vi legger til grunn at dette blant annet inkluderer kvalitative intervjuer med relevante kilder. Dette omfatter tilskuddsmottakere/prosjektledere, finansieringsinstitusjonene for BarentsKult- inkludert eiersiden av Barentssekretariatet IKS, medlemmene i faglig råd for BarentsKult, og andre relevante aktører. Intervjuene bør inkludere kilder fra begge nordnorske fylker, og russiske kilder kan også være relevante. Behov for ytterligere skriftlige kilder og dokumenter utover det som er vedlagt her avtales i forbindelse med oppstarten av evalueringsarbeidet.

6. ANSVARLIGE PARTER

Barentssekretariatet IKS er den som bestiller evalueringen. Alle dokumenter relatert til oppdraget skal sendes per e-post til info@barents.no

7. TIDSPLAN

Alle datoer er i 2021.

09.04: Frist for innlevering av anbud

Uke 17: Oppstartsmøte med Barentssekretariatet

01.09: Statusrapport for fremdrift sendes Barentssekretariatet

15.11: Førsteutkast til rapport

01.12: Endelig rapport ferdig

8. RAPPORTER OG DOKUMENTER

Dette forventes levert:

- Detaljert plan for gjennomgangen/evalueringen
- Utkast til rapport
- Ferdig rapport i PDF med sammendrag; sammendraget skal være både på norsk og engelsk.

Evalueringsrapporten kan skrives på norsk eller engelsk. Ferdig rapport bør ikke overstige 50 sider, eksklusiv vedlegg.

Alle dokumenter kan bli offentlig tilgjengelig, jf. offentleglova.

9. BUDSJETT

Totalt budsjett for denne evalueringen er inntil NOK 400 000 (inkludert mva.).

10. TILBUDSFRIST OG INNLEVERING

Tilbudet skal være innlevert innen 09.04.21.

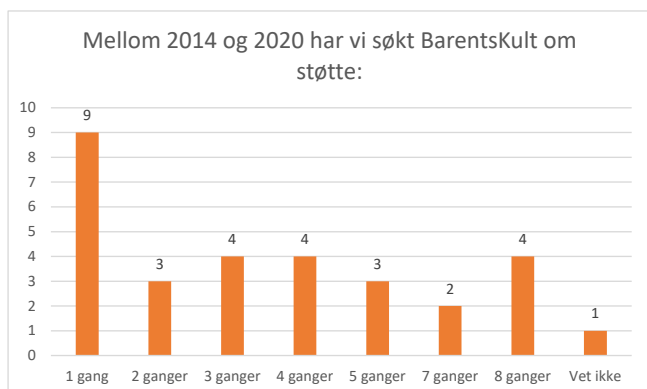
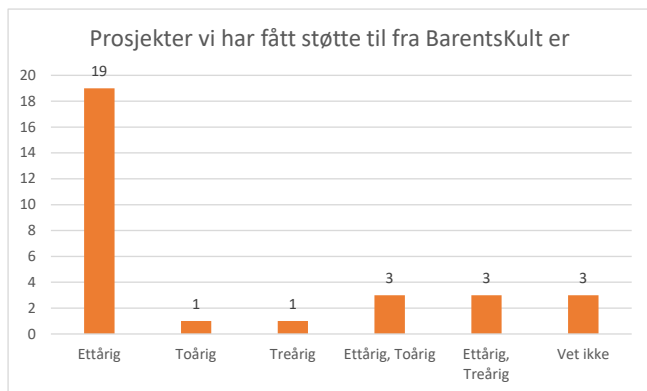
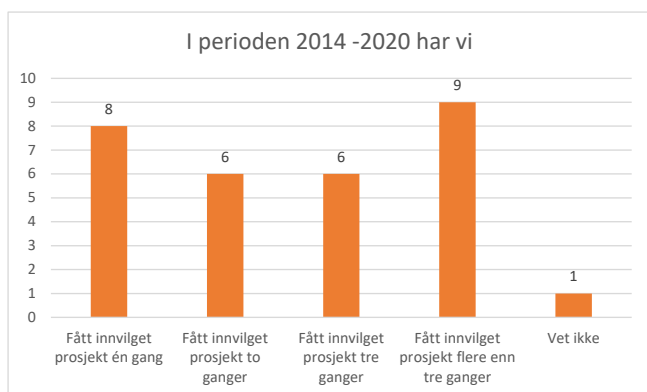
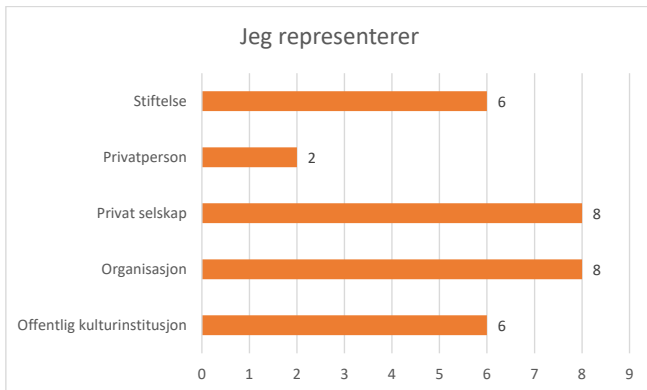
Tilbudet skal leveres til Barentssekretariatet per e-post: info@barents.no

Vedlegg

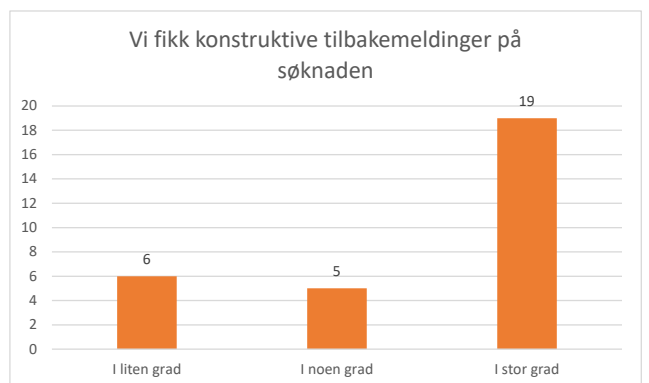
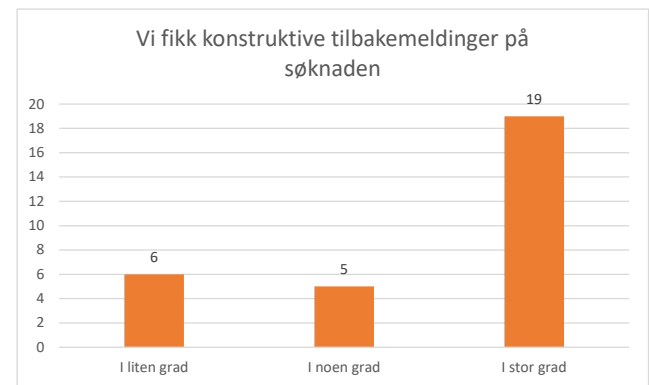
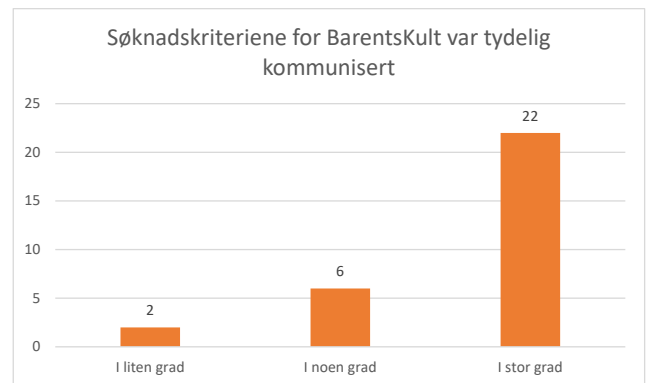
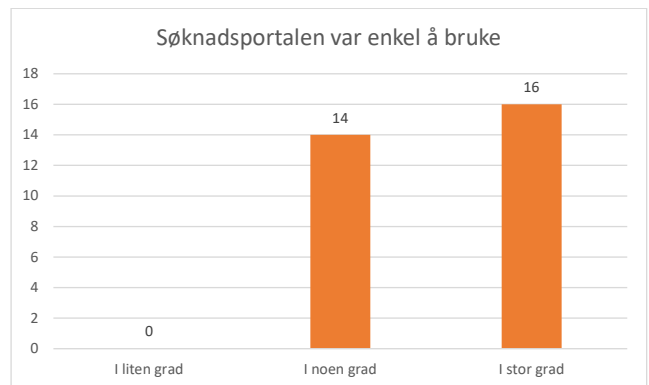
1. Retningslinjer og kriterier for støtte
2. Overordnet programme for BarentsKult
3. FNI-rapport 11/2014: Evaluering av støtteordningen BarentsKult
4. NIBR-rapport 202024: Still building neighbourhood: Mid-term evaluation of the Norwegian Barents Secretariat's grant programme

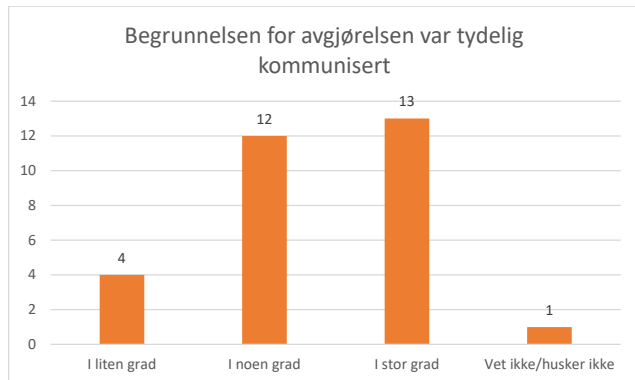
Resultater fra spørreundersøkelsen

1. Om støttemottagerne

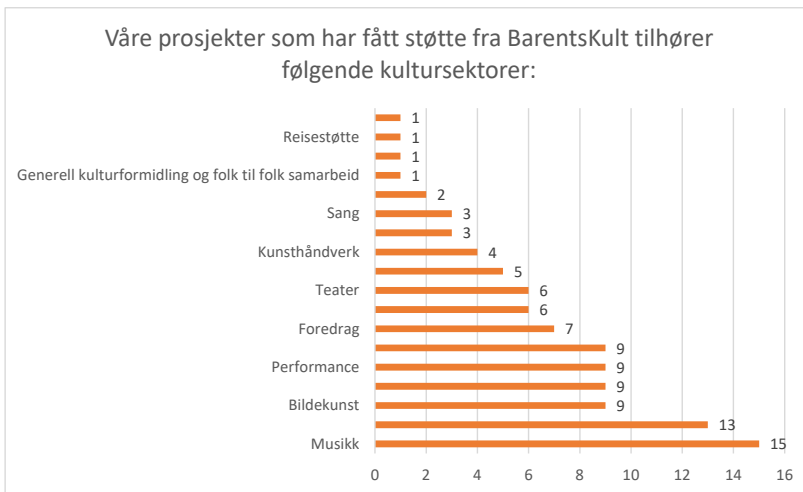


2. Hvordan opplevde du søknadsprosessen?



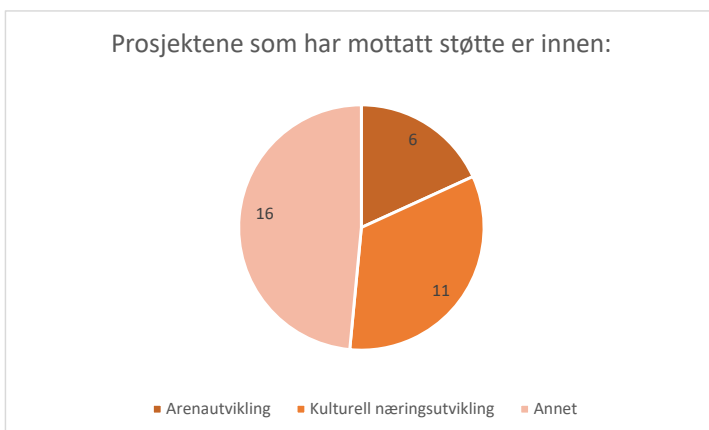


3. Om prosjektene



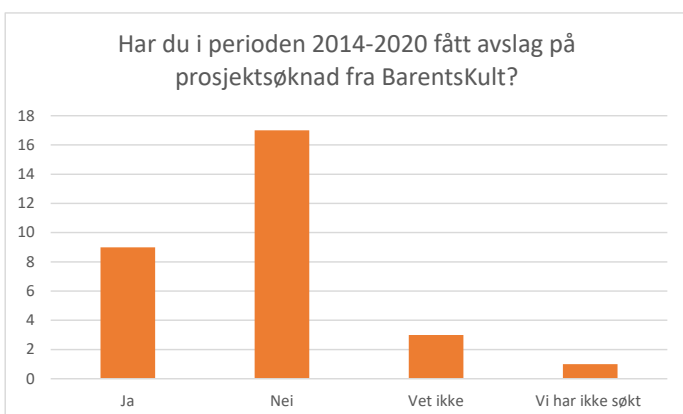
Flere prosjekter har vært tverrfaglige, både mellom ulike kunst- og kulturformer, og fagområder som elektro/lyssettinger og byggfag/forskalinger etc. for kunstinstallasjoner.

Det er dette jeg jobber med i prosjektene, altså å finne fram en type symbiose av disse type kunst.



Under «Annet»

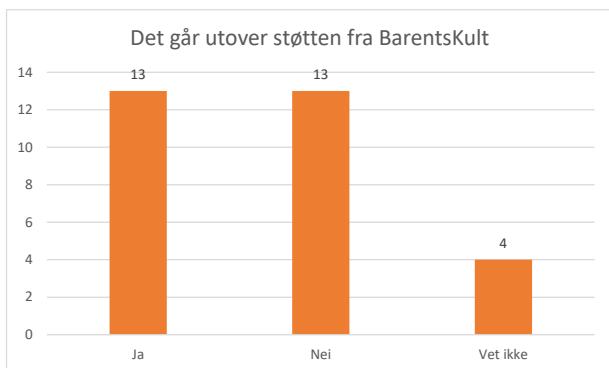
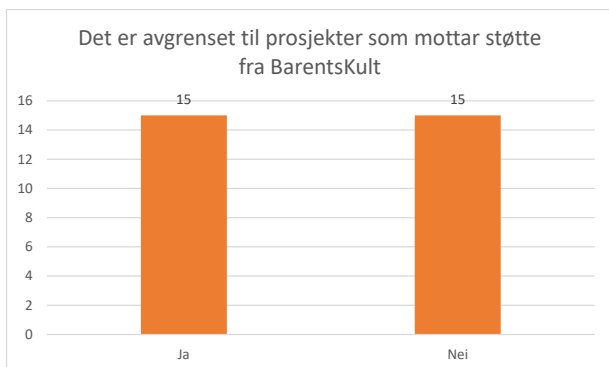
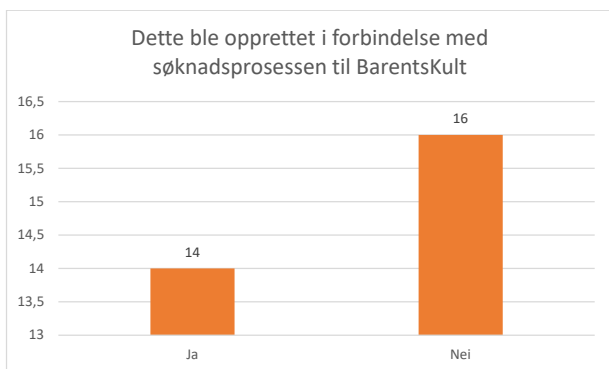
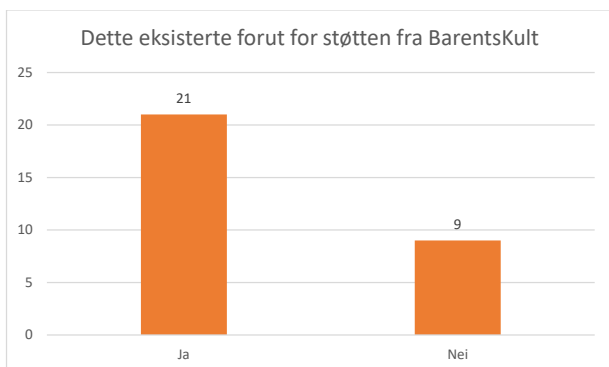
Teaterforestillinger	1
Visuell kunst	1
Kulturutveksling	2
Kunsthøst	1
Utstilling og diskursive program	1
Kompetanseutvikling	1
Festivalutvikling	1
Kunstnerutveksling	1



Samarbeid med Russland

Med utgangspunkt i det siste prosjektet som ble støttet av BarentsKult, beskriv samarbeidet med russisk samarbeidspartner

Hvis dere har fått støtte flere ganger med ulike russiske partnere, beskriv gjerne de andre samarbeidsrelasjonene her:



Bra

Det har vært kjempebra samarbeid, men på begynnelsen når vi søktet midler til BarentsKult prosjekt var det bare reise og opphold som dekket, og det er ikke nok. Vi trenger også midler for å betale honorar og andre utgifter i forhold til organisasjon og produksjon av kulturelle arrangementer med russiske partnere.

Jeg har hatt en "fast kjerne" russiske partnere, men den har blitt utvidet ved behov.

Vi har russiske partnere, som vi har allerede en langt partnerskap med, med andre tar vi kontakt for første gang, når dette passer til prosjektet. Oftest fortsetter partnerskapet i etterkant. Samarbeidet kan være alt fra felles programmering og kuratering, arrangør, teknisk leverandør, hjelp med logistikkarbeid, lokal ekspert til kunstnere (kunnskapsoverføring), nettverksarbeid, markedsføring, koordinering av frivillige etc

Enkeltkunstnere, institusjoner og organisasjoner med ulike, mer avgrensede roller. En partner har samarbeidet med oss i alle nevnte prosjekter siden vi først møttes i 2012. (sammen med ulike andre). Vi møttes på en research reise som også var støttet av Barentssekretariatet.

Vi samarbeider med flere kulturformidlere, festivaler og kinoer i den russiske delen av Barents regionen. Samarbeid går ofte på felles interesse om å formidle regionale film- og kulturprodukter, samt med å utvikle den regionale kulturbransjen.

Det er flere russiske partnere, noen hadde vi relasjon til tidligere, mens en ble opprettet i forbindelse med søknad.

Festivaler og andre kunstnere/kunstsammenslutninger.

Noen ganger var det samarbeidspartnere som jeg ble kjent med fra før av. Jeg har et stort og godt nettverk i Russland i Barents region, og det hjelper veldig med å komme igang med prosjekter. Prosjektene som, for eksempel, "RuNoLab Teaterplattform" og "Pasternak-Hamsun.Zhivago-Victoria". Samarbeidspartner var Teater Monplaisir, et privat klassisk russisk teater som jeg har kjent i mange år før det første samarbeidet. Men noen tråd ble etablert kun i forbindelse med et konkret prosjekt. Prosjekt "Kjærlighet Whatever" ble laget av et nyetablert team. Samtidig ville jeg notere at det er flere prosjekter som jeg har ikke søkt om men har initiert/ledet/startet/funnet samarbeidspartnere og deltakere osv. Da samarbeidspartnere kom både fra det eksisterende nettverket og fra de nye kontakter. Dette var for eks: To gode naboer forprosjekt (Sadio Nor Teater), To gode naboer hovedprosjekt (Sadio Nor Teater), Finding the balance - changing the world (Haugen produksjoner), Foto seminar Signal (Photografer Raymond Næss Berg).

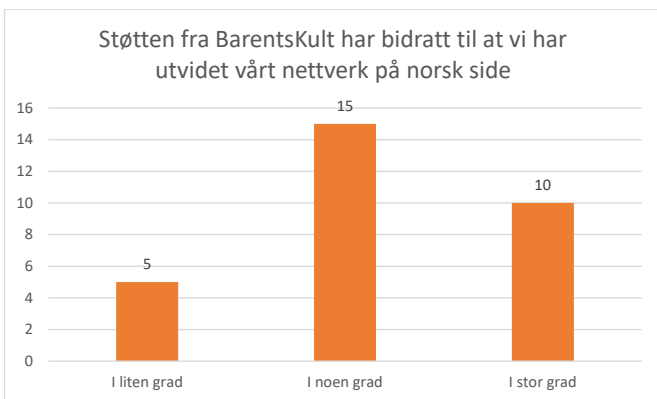
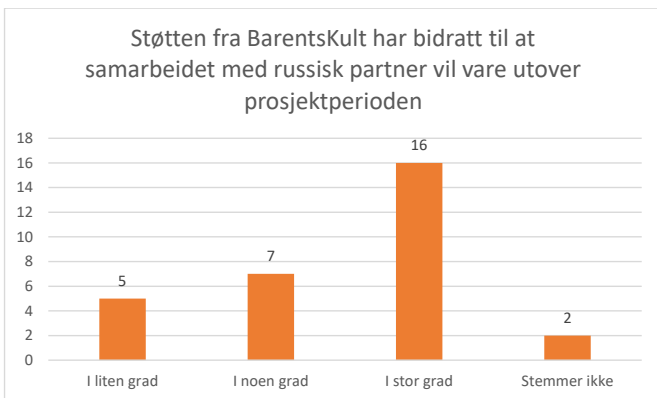
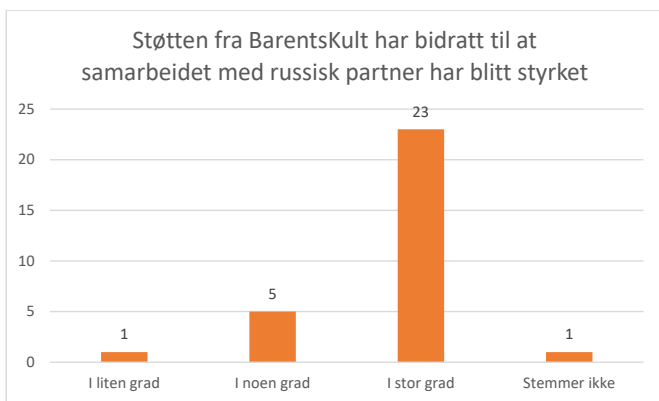
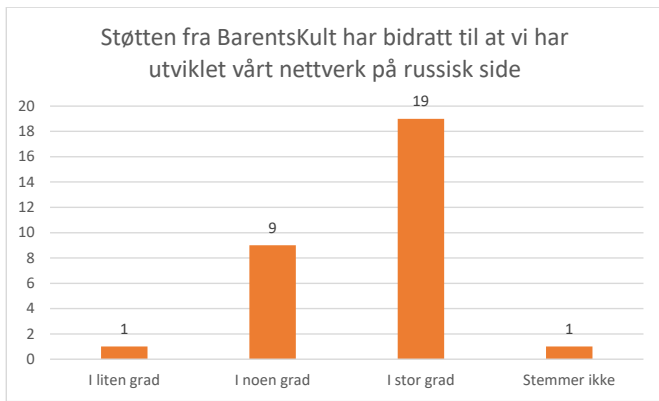
Vi har jobbet med Grieg selskap som her et hovedkontor i Moskva, men vi har invitert forskjellige musikere. Vi har planlagt å arrangere en tur av skoleelever fra Bodø kulturskole til Moskva for de kunne besøke forskjellige plasser slik den Moskva konservatoria, Gnesin akademiet, musikkoler De kunne ta mesterklasser ved disse skolene og møte russiske musikkoleelever. Men korona stoppet dette prosjektet.

Kulturrådet, Fritt Ord, OCA

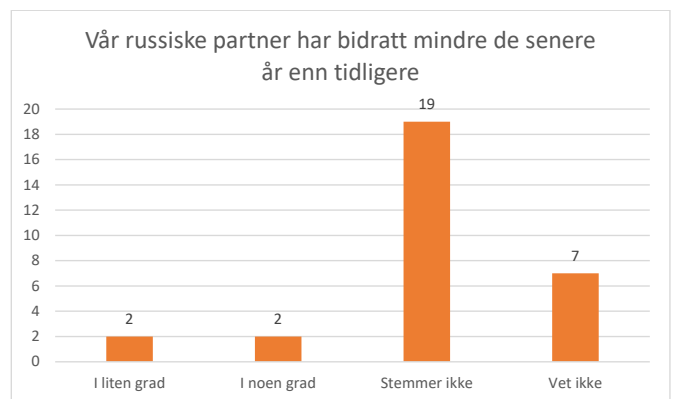
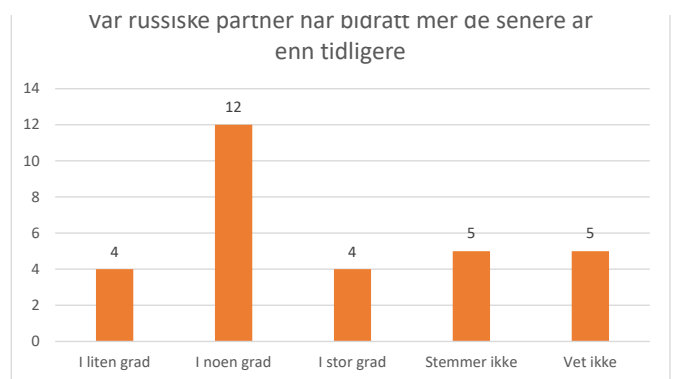
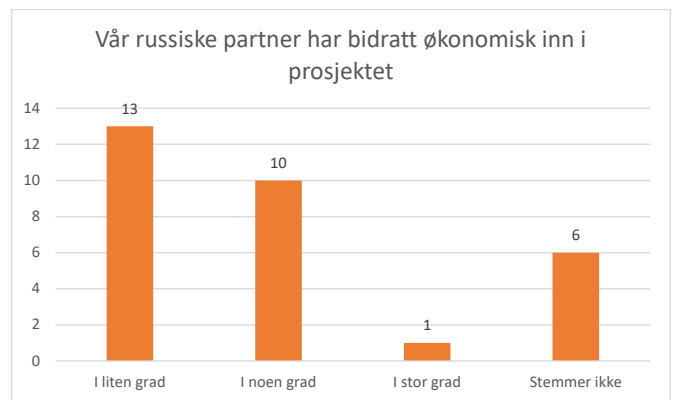
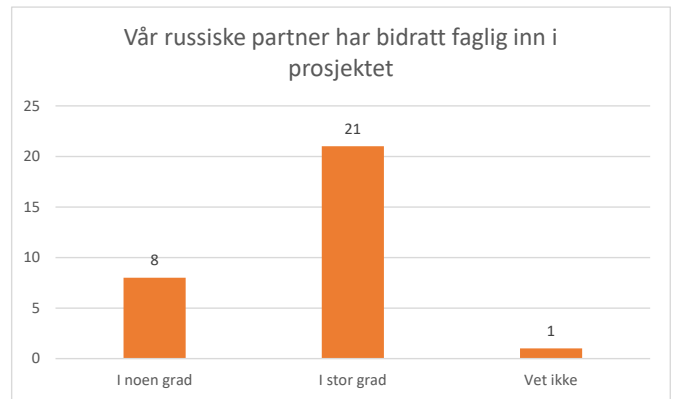
flere kunstskoler i Nord-Russland, byen Kotlas, Universitetet i Syktyvkar, Nasjonalmuseet i Komi republikk

Nettverkssamarbeid med ulike aktører i Barentsregionen

Støtten fra Barentskult har bidratt til at:



Med utgangspunkt i siste prosjekt:



12. Beskriv graden av russisk samarbeid i det siste prosjektet som har mottatt støtte, og hvordan og hvorfor dette eventuelt har endret seg over tid:

Mye mer ideer, fikk mange flere på laget.

Jeg vet at de russiske kontaktene har fortsatt sin faglige utvikling, og at dette har vært givende for dem. De ønsker å invitere oss til keramikfestival og samarbeid i Russland.

Vi organiserte det meste

Altså vårt siste prosjekt er vel Barents Spektakel 2021, som ble arrangert som et hybrid (digital & fysisk) festival i både Kirkenes og Russland. Vi kunne ikke reise til Russland for å jobbe med våre russiske festivalsatellittene, men våre partnere måtte organisere og gjennomføre uten oss fysisk tilstede. Så våre partnere hadde mye mer for ansvar organisasjons, logistikk, markedsføring og gjennomføring. Og det gikk veldig fint.

I det siste prosjektet var vi i større grad likeverdige partnere, både ved at de var invitert inn til våre arrangementer på norsk side og skapte egne workshops her samt på russisk side. I tillegg viste vi verk som vi hadde produsert i relasjon til deres arrangement i Russland. Det var en jevnere geografisk og ressursmessig spredning / fordeling. Dette skjedde pga at vi har arbeidet sammen over såpass lang tid, og vi har lært hverandre å kjenne, og utviklet oss faglig i en viss takt med hverandre. Jeg synes den faglige kvaliteten til den russiske partneren har økt, fra de startet som et ny-journalistisk prosjekt til at de i dag har tydeligere agens og kunstneriske/kuratoriske ambisjoner.

Den utøvende russisk arkitekt/kunstpartner har bidratt med sentrale deler av prosjektet og vi har hatt tett dialog med gjennom hele prosessen. Det er i tillegg endel institusjonelle partnere som i denne fasen er mer i referansegruppe. På grunn av corona har fysiske møter ikke vært mulige, noe som har gjort at det har vært mindre dialog med disse i denne perioden.

Veldig bra samarbeide, da prosjektet var tydelig, gjennomførbart via digitale plattformer, samt at det var engasjerende for allmennheten og involverte mange forskjellige aldersgrupper. Alle institusjonene var profesjonelle og godt forberedt.

Russisk engasjement i våre prosjekter er historisk sett ganske stort og stabilt. Mesteparten av prosjektaktivitet foregår på den russiske siden, og krever derfor et stort nettverk. Det er vanskelig å sammenligne siste årene med det som var før pga pandemien. Fokuset i det siste ligger ofte på å bevare eksisterende relasjoner og finne i lag nye arbeidsmodeller.

Covid 19 begrenset samarbeidet i stor grad

Opprinnelig kunstnerisk prosjektidé ble i stor grad utformet på russisk side, der det var planlagt å arrangere en felles "Art-Lab" i Russland for russiske og norske kunstnere, organisert og ledet av russisk partner. Som følge av Covid-19 restriksjoner ble innhold i prosjektet omstilt til digitalt baserte aktiviteter, fortsatt med russisk lederansvar for organisering av kunstfaglig arbeid. Gjennom prosjekterfaringer og relasjonsutvikling har russisk side etter hvert tatt et større ansvar i prosjekter. Fra russisk side har det generelt vært en stor interesse for prosjektsamarbeid, utfordringer for "likevekt" og aktivt samarbeid mellom norsk og russisk side har vært knyttet til finansieringer og ulike kulturer for planlegging og organisering. Med å vektlegge tidlige og tydelige avklaringer mellom partnere og deltakere for rammer, forventninger, ansvar og funksjoner har vi funnet arbeidsmetoder for et mer balansert og aktivt samarbeid i prosjekter - ikke bare for praktisk arbeid, men også for overordnet organisering og ledelse.

Det siste prosjektet jeg har fått støtte til (Never look under your bed at night) er veldig spesiell, og dette bidrar til at kompetanser og kunstnerskap av de russiske samarbeidspartnere brukes i stor grad til å skape ett nytt og unik produkt på tvers av grensen. Graden av russisk samarbeid har økt i de siste årene, synes jeg. Dette skjer fordi at det er flere som er interessert i å utveksle med den russiske siden.

Endringer har stort sett med koronasituasjon å gjøre fordi det ikke var mulig med fysiske møter og reise i fbm faglig utveksling på tvers av landegrensene.

Russiske musikere hjulpet oss mye. De har laget et interessant og uvanlig program med musikk av G.Tveitt og G. Sviridov, som var store norsk og russisk musiker på XX hundretallet. De har hatt kontakt med dattera til G.Tveit, og hun har gitt dem noter av fars musikkstykker. Vi har planlagt å invitere henne til våre konserter for hun kunne fortelle til våre tilskuere om sin far, men hun kunne dessverre ikke komme. Hun hadde hatt en avtale. Vi har fortalt om russiske folkeinstrumenter og kunne vise at det er mulig å spille en moderne musikk med folkeinstrumenter. De jobbet sammen men det Domkirke ungdomskoret. Det var en utfordring både for musikere og koret. Det var den første erfaring for ungdomskoret for å synge russiske sanger, og Tveitts musikkstykker ble også inkludert i deres syngesplan. De fleste ungdommene hørte ingenting om G.Tveitt før. Det var en veldig interessant erfaring og vi har ønsket å utvide den med et voksne kor også. Vi tenker at disse konsertene var den beste vei for begge sider for å forstå mye bedre hverandre, for å utvide kulturelle relasjoner og å forsterke fred mellom våre land.

Siste prosjektet var en bokturne/lansering. Ca. 40% deltakelse - ble holdt foredrag i Murmansk av både russiske og norske aktører i prosjektet.

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Man kan heller snakke om en stabil relasjon. Når man først har etablert et forhold til myndighetene i Russland får man nesten aldri avslag om nye prosjekter. For meg gjelder det årlig forelesing ved universitetet i Syktyvkar, master class ved kunsthøgskolen, utsmykninger og utstillinger, og ikke minst utvekslinger med kolleger mellom landene.

Samarbeidet hadde et begrenset fokus på dette prosjektets målsetting, noe som førte til etablering av nye faglige kontakter mellom norske og russiske fotografer.

I det siste prosjektet har vi hatt norske og russiske aktører sammen på scenen. De russiske aktørene er mer delaktig i planlegging og tar mer ansvar i prosjektene. I tillegg bruker vi deres kompetansen og lokalkunnskap i planlegging av aktivitet i Russland.

Gjennom et utvekslingssamarbeid mellom LIAF og det Murmanske mediekollektivet Fridaymilk var det flere prosjekter som foregikk både i Murmansk og i Lofoten gjennom et helt år. Både norske og russiske kunstnere var deltagende i prosjektet

Stor grad av samarbeid og likeverdighet. Musikalsk samspill og komposisjon.

Pga russisk partner har vært med BarentsKult prosjekt før, var forberedelse og innøving av forestilling- konsert mer effektiv, gode relasjoner mellom norske og russiske utøvere bidratt til god atmosfære under turne, og det påvirket stor positiv opplevelse som publikum har fått

13. Beskriv hvilken lokal og regional nytte dere opplever at prosjektene deres har hatt

Utvidet horisonter, fikk oppleve nye steder, reist mye og truffet nye mennesker

Det forsterket samarbeid på Helgeland mellom både musikere og konsert arrangører.

BarentsKult er en veldig viktig tilskudd for oss i Nord Norge som samarbeider mye med russiske kunstnere.

Vi arrangerte "Norsk/ russisk keramikksymposium" i 2016, og vet at de russiske deltakerne har fortsatt/ videreutviklet det de lærte på symposiet. De har også hatt kontakt med vår lærer, og selv arrangert workshops, bygd nye store anagamaovner og utviklet sin kompetanse på sine egne hjemsteder. Vi oppdaterer hverandre via facebook. Her i Tromsø har vi ikke vært fullt så flinke som de i Russland, men vi er igang nå! Vi ønsker også å møtes igjen til nye fagtreff, der vi deler kunnskap og erfaringer.

Den lokale nytten var stor, med den gripende konsert som resultat.

Prosjektet har bidratt til kunnskapsheving & kunnskapsutveksling både hos kunstnere, partnere og publikum. Nettverksbygging til kunstnere. Festivalen er også viktig for identitetsbygging og bolyst. Festivalen bidrar også til høyere omsetning for hotellene, restauranter, bars, drosjene, butikkene etc

Mange nye enkeltpersoner på prosjektenes nedslagssteder har fått presentert ny kunst og nye ideer. Nye stedssensitive kunstverk responderer på stedlige fakta eller fenomener, og dette er nye betraktninger på steder. Prosjekter gir også tilgang til nye, mer usynlige eller lukkede rom, i et samfunn. En stimulering av yngre, kreative miljøer i lokalsamfunn. Nye bekjentskaper og nettverk er skapt, som også har ført til nye prosjektsamarbeid utover de Barentskult-støttede prosjekter. Samarbeid med lokale kulturinstitusjoner og myndigheter har gitt nye erfaringer for mange medvirkende. Uprøving av samarbeid på tvers av sektorer har gitt nye kompetanser for videre regionale samarbeid. Prosjekter har gitt en ny energi og større bevissthet hos flere om viktigheten av kunstnerisk samarbeid i regionen, og regionens særpreg har fått en større synlighet utenfor regionen. Kunstprosjektene bidrar også til lokalt næringsliv.

stor, vi har fått bred oppslutning hos fylkeskommunen, vertskommune og en rekke andre institusjonelle partnere.

Alle aldersgrupper lokalt og i hele Barents regionen. Ee involverte både på norsk og russisk side. Også den samiske befolkningen.

Prosjektene har bidratt til utvikling av film- og kulturbransje, samt publikumsutvikling i regionen. Vi jobber for å sikre kulturell mangfold, og bringer positive eksempler av norsk-russisk samarbeid til kulturlanskapet i Barentsregionen.

Synliggjøring av kulturelt og språklig mangfold.

- Økt presentasjon og større variasjon av kunst og kultur i lokalsamfunn. - Relasjonsutvikling mellom kunstnere og kulturaktører. - Utvikling av kunst- og kulturfaglige nettverk og arenaer. - Flere aktiviteter i lokalsamfunn og regioner, positivt for stedsutvikling, trivsel og bolyst. - Økt engasjement, inspirasjon, kunnskap- og kompetanseheving for kunstnere og kulturaktører. - Flere mulighet for tverrfaglig samarbeid, mellom ulike kunst- og kulturformer, samt andre fagområder. - Inspirasjon, nettverksutvikling og økt aktivitet for kulturnæringer; profesjonelle kunst- og kulturarbeidere, kulturarrangementer, festivaler og lignende. - Involveringer og aktivitetsskapende for lokalbefolkning. - Økt kontakt, kjennskap, kunnskap og relasjonsutviklende mellom land, regioner og lokalsamfunn.

1. Det synliggjøres kunstnerisk samarbeid mellom Russland og Norge. Det lyses over at det er interessant, inspirerende og mega potensial i å skape kunst sammen med de russiske kunstnere. Det er mer og mer som er interessert i å finne på noe samarbeid i denne retningen. Det utvikles og populariseres flerspråkighet. Mer og mer norsk (i Russland) og russisk (i Norge) språk som kommer i bruk, og man blir vant til dette. 2. Dette samarbeidet er et stort bidrag til å fjerne klisjé og myter. Dette går ekstremt sakte, så klart, men det går framover allikevel. 3. Muligheter til å søke BarentsKult bidrar mye til å skape kunst i nord, altså Barents region. 4. Internasjonal samarbeid i Barents region gjør nord området mer og mer attraktivt til både nyutdannet kunstnere, de som er etablert her og de som vurderer hvor dem skal bo i. Fordi at kunst, internasjonal kunst, er en kjempe viktig del av menneskets liv. Man vil ha det spennendes og artig, og derfor vurderer man nøye området man vil bo i. Alt dette opplever både arrangører swlv og gir mulighet til dette til de andre involverte, samarbeidspartnere, deltakere, utøvere, frivillige, publikum osv... Det er både kunstnerisk og sosial verdi i slik samarbeid, og det viser seg både lokalt og regionalt.

Støtte til kunstnerøkonomi i koronasituasjon, synliggjøring av kunstmiljøet, kunstformidling til lokalt og regional publikum, styrking av kunstnerisk ytringsfrihet,

Vi viser at Russland er en interessant partner for nordmenn og slike prosjekter gjør begge land rikere. Vi ser på hverandre som på partnere og venner, men ikke som på fiender.

Vi har opplevd stor interesse for prosjektet både fra norsk og russiske samarbeidspartnere.

Over årene har kunstnere fra Nord-Russland kommet til Lofoten og ellers i Nord-Norge, og norske har reist til Nord-Russland. Gjennom mediedekning av utstillinger og seminarer, blir oppmerksomhet fokusert på det positive kulturelle utbyttet av et samarbeid, som motvekt til den svært negative politiske utviklingen mellom landene.

Prosjektet har styrket vårt lokalsamfunns internasjonale nettverk og gitt oss nytting erfaring for framtidig samarbeid med russiske kunstnere.

Relevant for det konkrete prosjektet - som i utgangspunkt var knyttet til norsk-russiske forhold

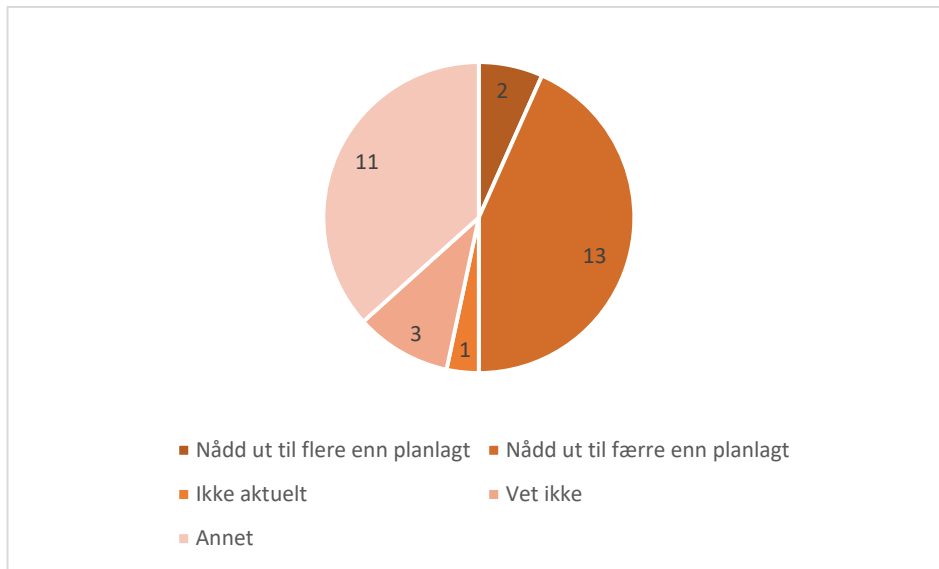
Vi lager forestillinger fra vårt felles grenseområde. Vi opplever at publikum på begge sider av grensen, kjenner seg igjen i historiene. Dette gir et fellesskap og forståelse i folk til folk samarbeide.

Russiske kunstnere har blitt kjent med Lofoten og LIAF, og norsk kunstnere har blitt kjent med Inversia og Murmansk

Stor nytte for begge parter. Lærerikt å oppleve andre kulturers tradisjon og situasjon. Musikals døråpner der norsk musikk oppleves i Russland og vise versa.

Produksjonene som var skapt av dette samarbeidet ble sett av bred publikum både i hjemmekommune, og andre steder der produksjonen var framført. På alle steder var det hverts organisasjon som hadde ansvar for å arrangere og promotere konsert, organisere mediadekning, avis omtaler. Politikererne var invitert for å takke for dette samarbeidet.

Covid-19



Har måtte avlyse to turneer i Russland og Norge. Vi har ikke hatt fysisk samarbeide siden mars 2020. Men vi er blitt flink på digitalt samarbeide.

gjennom de digitale tiltak, har vi nådd ut til en større internasjonal publikum

Avsluttet før Covid 19

Vi har oppnådd færre enn planlagt, men når vi byttet planer så blir det plutselig nok å gjøre.

Men vi har ikke kunnet møtes fysisk og dermed har vi måttet spørre mere hjelp på begge sidene

har ikke søkt 2020

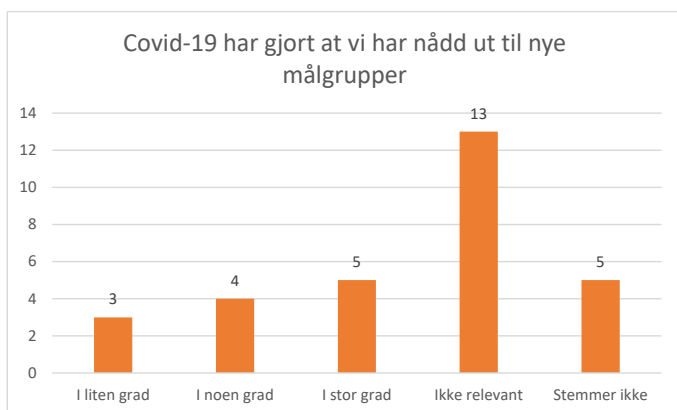
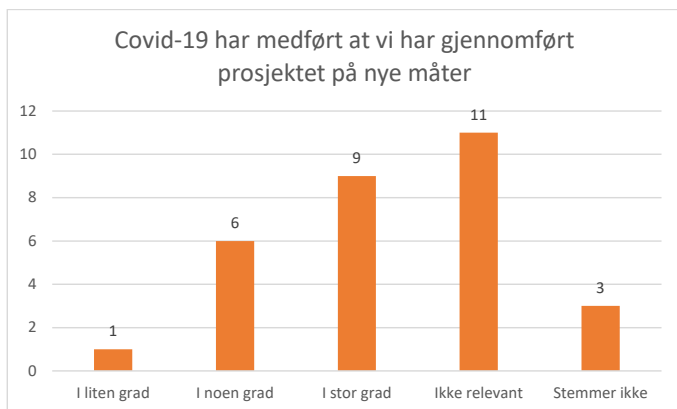
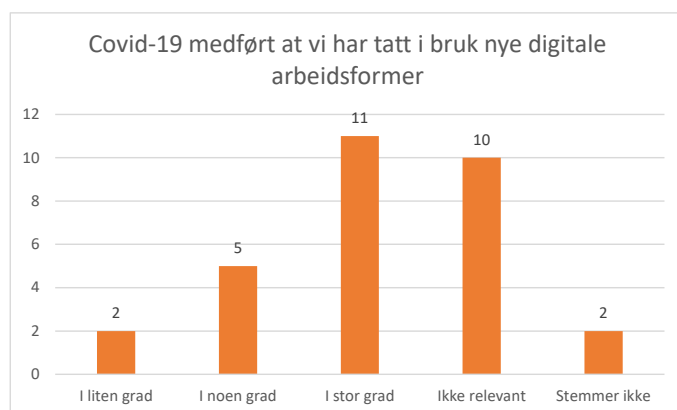
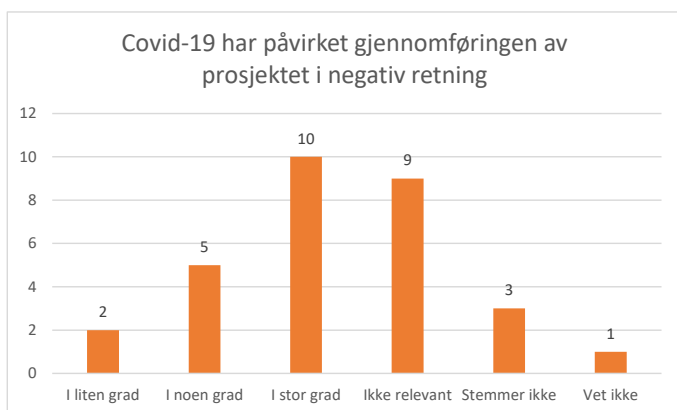
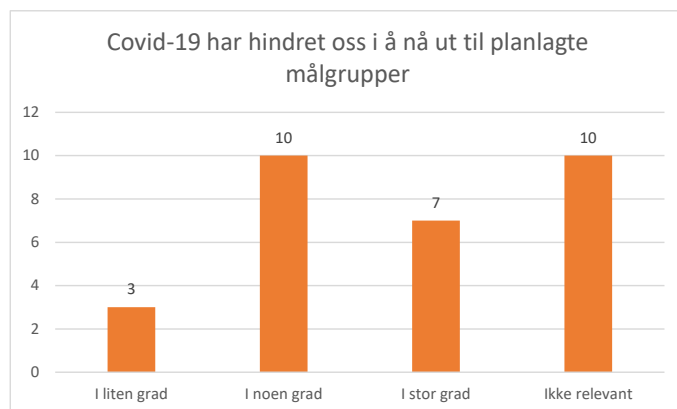
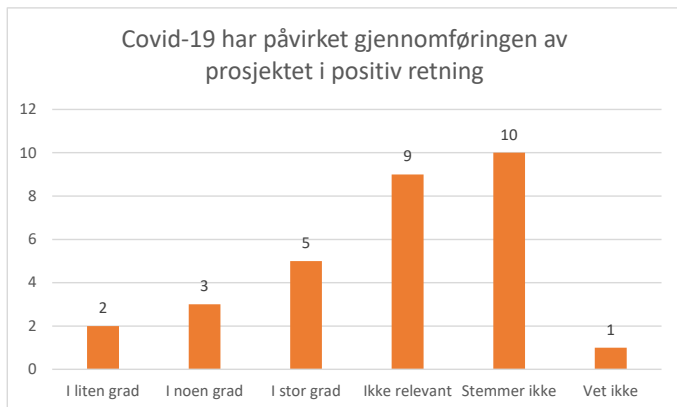
Det var ikke noen prosjekt siden 2017 pga jeg jobber i annen felt, og søker ikke for samarbeidet fra Barentskult.

Digitalt har vi nådd ut til flere - men ikke kvalitetsmessig

Prosjektet ble gjennomført før Covid-19

Vårt prosjekt ble avsluttet i 2018, så ikke påvirket av Covid-19.

Har måtte utsette siste konsertturné grunnet Covid-19



18. Beskriv hvordan Covid-19 har medført endringer i arbeidsformer og eller plattformer:

Vi har ikke hatt noen projekter undet Covid-19- pandemi.

Vi har ikkebrukt Barentskult. Men andre prosjekt ble gjort i digital form.

Vi har ikke hatt noe samarbeidsprosjekt under Covid 19, vi har kun fulgt hverandre via Facebook.

Levende blir digitalt.

Festivalen ble omgjort til en hybrid festival, med både fysiske og digitale arrangement både i Kirkenes og Russland, siden det russiske publikum, russiske kunstnere, partnere og frivillige ikke kunne reise hit. Det ble opprettet festival-satellitter i Murmansk, Nikel, Petrozavodsk og Arkhangelsk. Våre russiske partnere var ansvarlig for gjennomføring og markedsføring av satellittene. Innholdet og programmet av satellittene utviklet vi i felleskap. Vi har hatt veldig mange møter i forkant, underveis og i etterkant, som førte til en mye tettere og hyppigere dialog enn før. Planlegging og programmering av alle prosjekter under corona var pga lite forutsigbarhet et fortløpende arbeid, man var/ er aldri ferdig med planlegging, prosjektene må hele tiden tilpasses. Årene 2020 og 2021 var/ er vesentlig mer arbeidsintensive, prosjektene var vesentlig mer tidskrevende, pga bla mer kommunikasjon/ møter mellom alle involverte. For Residency programmet BAR International gjorde vi følgende endringer: når alt måtte stenges ned i mars-mai 2020 endret vi til digitale visninger av prosjekter, samtaler som var tilknyttet residency programmet, dette økte synligheta, økte kunstner sin økonomi (honorarer for visning av verk eller for deltakelse av samtaler) og hold vårt drift aktiv. Vi måtte ikke permittere noen, men hadde full aktivitet. Siden de russiske kunstnere kunne ikke reise hit, jobbet vi med digitale workshops, som varte (varer - noen er pågående) over lengre periode, for å bringe kunstnere fra Norge/ Russland/ andre nordiske land sammen, til å utveksle mellom erfaringer, tanker, kunnskap, nettverk med hverandre, til å bli kjent med hverandre gjennom et felles prosjekt. En annen metode er at vi har i samarbeid med russiske partnere utviklet "remote residencier", hvor den russiske kunstner reiser fysisk til våre russiske partnere som legger tilrette for field trips og research og møte med de norske kunstnere og partnere foregår da digitalt.

Covid-19 har ikke vært relevant i våre prosjekter, men det har til en viss grad hindret oss i å skape nye samarbeid og aktivitet. Kontakt opprettholdes på et mer personlig plan.

Mer videokonferanser

Alle møter har vært via zoom og det har også vært vårt instrument for å utføre en del av fasen i prosjektet. Vi vet ikke hva utfallet og hvordan vi kan fremstille det vil bli i fremtiden, det vil tiden vise.

Vi har begynt å se på digital filmvisning som en reel alternativ og/elle supplement til det tradisjonelle kinoopplevelse. Vi har begynt å definere mer tydelig det sosiale aspektet i våre prosjekter, som lar seg ikke å digitalisere like enkelt. Nye plattformer for filmformidling ble utviklet og tatt i bruk. Kommunikasjon med russiske partnere har blitt mer regelmessig takke være digitale møteplasser.

Digitale møter og øvinger som har fungert overraskende bra.

- Flere i partnerskapet og deltakere virker å ha vært mer bevisst og aktive for informasjonsformidling på digitale plattformer, enn "normalt" når fokuset gjerne er mer konsentrert om fysiske møter og aktiviteter. - Flere både kjente og nye kommunikasjonsplattformer og verktøy for informasjonsformidling er benyttet og testet, med både gode og dårlige erfaringer; sosiale medier, web-side, digitale verktøy for møter og dokumentdelinger. De mest brukte plattformer og verktøy har vært Messenger, Zoom, Google disk, E-mail, Facebook, VKontakte, Instagram og egen web-side for prosjektet. - Arbeidsformen har vært langt mer digitalt basert enn "normalt" både grensekryssende og lokalt.

Det kom store endringer med Covid-19 i våres arbeidsformer. Vi har overført alt arbeidet i eksisterende prosjekter i digitalt form. Samtidig rettet oss mot å finne ut på hvilken måte vi kan bruke disse mulighetene, altså digital form i kunst. Forprosjektet "Pasternak-Hamsun.Zhivago-Victoria" ble gjennomført helt digitalt. Hovedprosjektet blir gjennomført delvis digitalt, men premieren kommer til å bli fysisk gjennomført. Vi måtte forandre selve konseptet til monoforestilling. Dette prosjektet vi jobber med nå er "Never look under your bed at night". Dette er helt digitalt prosjekt, med både måte å jobbe på og realisering og gjennomføring. Det vil si at vi er uavhengig av alle mulige begrensninger og det eneste vi trenger er det skjerm, kontor, noe utstyr og Internett.

Vi har tatt i bruk digitale plattformer og arrangert flere webinarer, som åpne for alle, gjennomført en serie verksteder og møter som skal resultere i både digitale og papirpublikasjoner, som skal distribueres digitalt og med vanlig post. Det ble også gjennomført et fysisk arrangement med russisk deltakelse via Zoom og tilsendt materiale som var tilgjengelig for publikum på arrangementet.

Vi kan ikke realisere dette prosjektet digitalt.

Situasjonen har medført til at vi har klart å forsette vårt samarbeid med hjelp av digital hjelpemidler (som Zoom og virtuelle gallerier): foredrag, samtaler med kolleger, og en planlagt felles utstilling

Vi har i større grad brukt digitale medier - samt montert deler av utstillingene på arenaer som var mer offentlig tilgjengelige (nærbutikk etc)

Vi gjennomfører kontakt og møter via nettmøter og skype. Vi opprettholder samarbeide ved at deler til en produksjon lages i Russland og overføres digitalt til oss. Det kan være musikk, film og animasjoner.

På generelt grunnlag ser vi nå på hvordan gjennomføre prosjekter på en måte som ikke er avhengig av reisevirksomhet i like stort omfang som tidligere.

Har ikke vært naturlig å jobbe digitalt i vårt prosjekt

Det ble forandring fra live arrangementer og møter over til digitale.

19. Beskriv hvilke lærdommer fra Covid-19 dere ser for dere at kan komme til nytte i fremtiden

Ingen

Kombinasjon av live og digital kommunikasjon vil brukes i framtid.

At vi må styrke samarbeid mellom land i stedet for å stenge grensene, og at kulturell initiativer mellom Europa og Russland er betydelig - det har vært veldig synt å måtte avlyse aktiviteter eller å ikke kunne møte fysisk, siden det er ikke lett å bli kjent med partnere og skape ny nettverk muligheter kun digitalt.

For oss som jobber med kunst og håndverk, kunne det være flott om vi kunne søke støtte til samarbeidsprosjekter selv om pandemier herjer land og strand. Vi kunne da få midlene utbetalt direkte der vi er, for å kunne gjøre nødvendige innkjøp, til materialer, til honorar osv, f.eks til tilrettelegging av workshops og utstillinger i begge land. Dette kunne foregå parallelt i Norge/ Russland, og dokumentasjon/ digital utstilling kunne være et felles sluttresultat som begge parter kunne ta del i og skape sammen. Jeg tenker at de digitale verktøyene kan benyttes mer og bedre, selv om vi ikke kan møtes. Men etter min erfaring, trenger de russiske keramikere økonomisk mer/ større støtte til innkjøp av maskiner/ materialer/ reiseutgifter osv hvis de skal klare å gjennomføre hjemme hos seg selv. Kanskje Barentskult kunne bidra til å bygge kunstnerverksteder i Russland? De har ikke så mange steder å søke i Russland..

Selv om det digitale kunne ikke erstatte det fysiske møter, så har vi hatt mange positive erfaring, en utrolig løft på våre digitale og tekniske kompetanser for å lede digitale workshops, ta opp podcasts, digitale kunstnersamtale, 3D filming av utstillinger etc. Vi skal fortsette med å ha hyppigere digital dialog med våre russiske partnere også når grense er åpent igjen. Vårt tidligere erfaring har vært å arrangere festival-satellitter i Russland samtidig med Barents Spektakel i Kirkenes er for tids- og ressurskrevende for våre ansatte, slik at vi utsatt de russiske satellitter til etter festivalen. Under corona har vi lært, at vi trenger ikke å være fysisk tilstede i Russland, vi har en god nettverk og ressurser i Russland, som kan i samarbeid med oss arrangere de satellitter uten at vi er fysisk tilstede. Dett er noe vi tar med videre, siden det er interessant å arrangere slike satellitter for eksempel i Petrozavodsk eller Arkhangelsk for vårt russisk publikum, også når grense er åpent igjen, siden det er oftest for kostbart og langt å reise fra disse to byene til Kirkenes.

Møter digitalt var allerede før Covid en utbredt form i samarbeidsprosjekter. Enkelte offentlige webinarer vil trolig gjennomføres, dersom møter i virkeligheten ikke er så relevant for det en spesifikt vil oppnå.

Større bruk av digitale løsninger

Tillit- alt baserer seg på tillit og ønske om å klare å opprettholde de gode og de nye samarbeidsforholdene.

Hyppiere brukk av digitale møteplasser Erfaringer med å kombinere digitale og off-line eventer Ferdig utviklet plattformer for digital filmformidling Bedre forståelse for bruk av Sosiale medier i kommunikasjon med publikum

Den opparbeidede digitale kompetansen vil komme til nytte.

Vi har fått testet ut en del nye verktøy, som det er positivt for prosjektdeltakere å ha kjennskap til og erfaring med. Samtidig har erfaringen og konklusjonen vært at digitale verktøy og plattformer ikke kan erstatte fysiske menneskelige møter og aktiviteter.

Under Covid restriksjoner var vi nøyd til tenke breiere, større og nytt. Digital formatt er veldig god måte å administrere prosjekter på. - man utvider geografiske grenser; - det er lettere å arrangere digitale møter; - spares mye tid på å komme til arbeidsted; - der er mulig å leve digitalt og. Det kan

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At vi kan være flinkere til å benytte oss av digitale løsninger, samtidig er det blitt tydelig hvor viktig det er å møtes fysisk - så i fremtiden vil vi nok kombinere begge deler.

Tilskuere trenger en levende musikk, og musikere trenger en vanlig konserthall med tilskuere. Digitalisering kan ikke erstatte det.

Improvisjon er nøkkelordet. Covid-19 har lært å å være oppfinnsome og meget tålmodige!

Vi har erfart at vi bør utvikle vår kompetanse på digital formidling - og tilpasse dette til ulike SoMe-plattformer.

Å være mer nøye med å velge hvilke prosjekter man går i samarbeid om

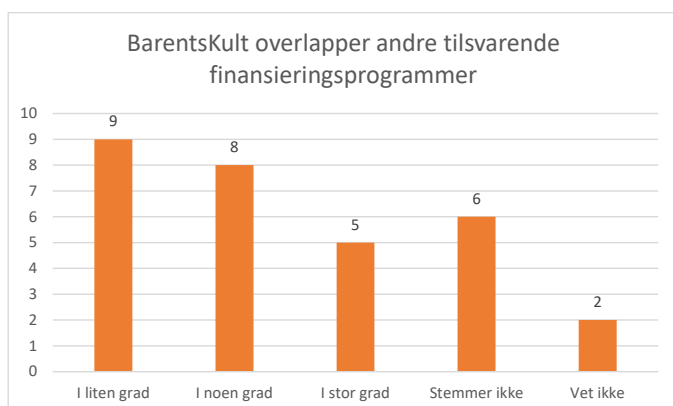
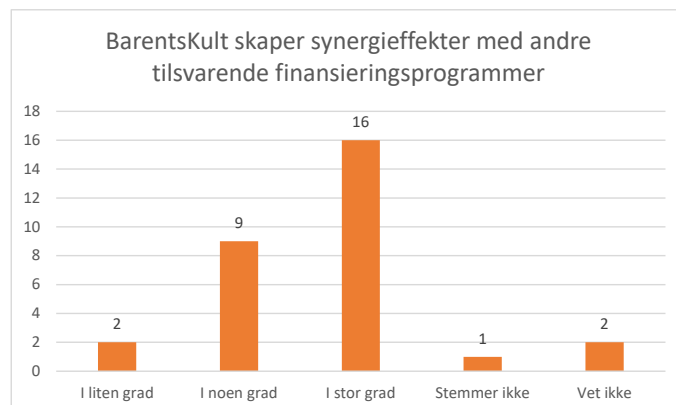
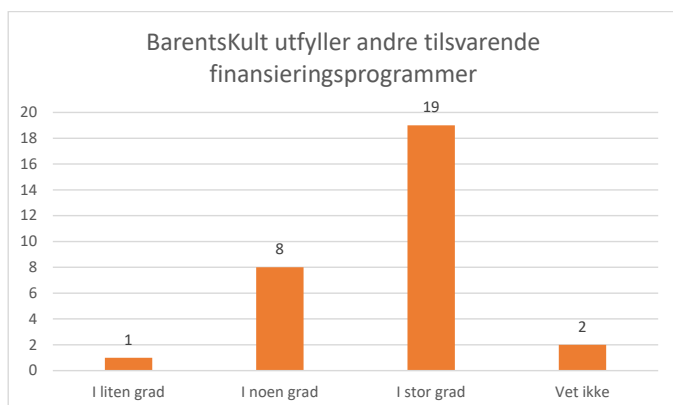
Vi ser vi kan samarbeide mye digitalt. Men digitale møter kan aldri helt erstatte fysiske møter. Vi må møtes og kunne snakke sammen i samme rom.

Bredere bruk av online kommunikasjon og strømming av prosjekter

Den nye formen av digital kommunikasjon og produksjon kan bli brukt framover i tillegg til vanlige besøk. Den erfaringen beriker og intensifiserer muligheter for samarbeid.

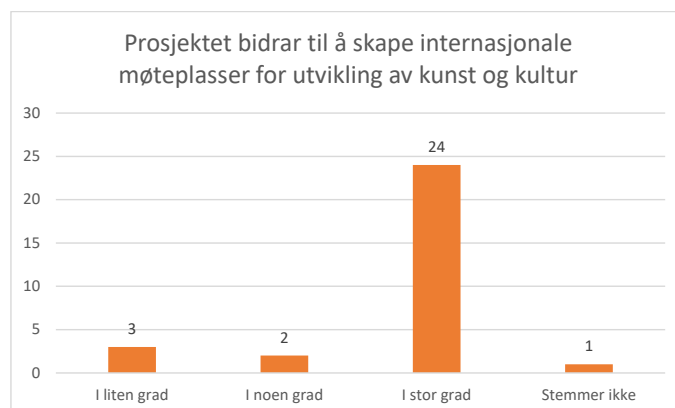
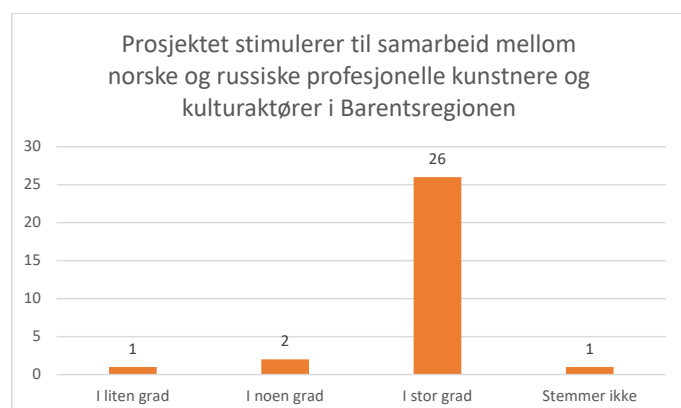
Samarbeid med Russland

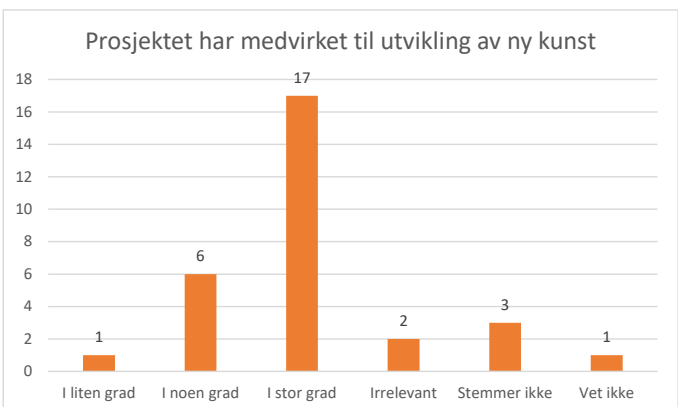
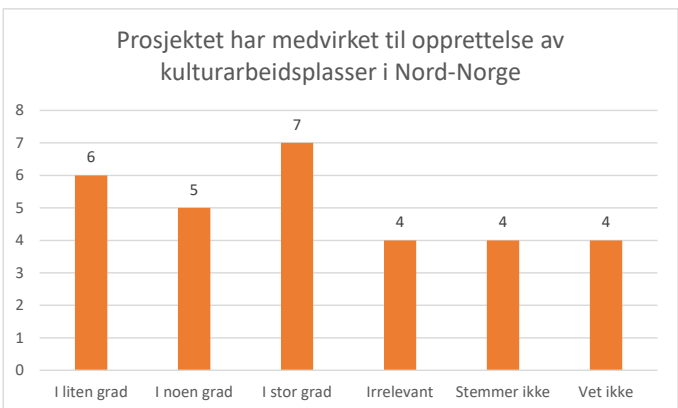
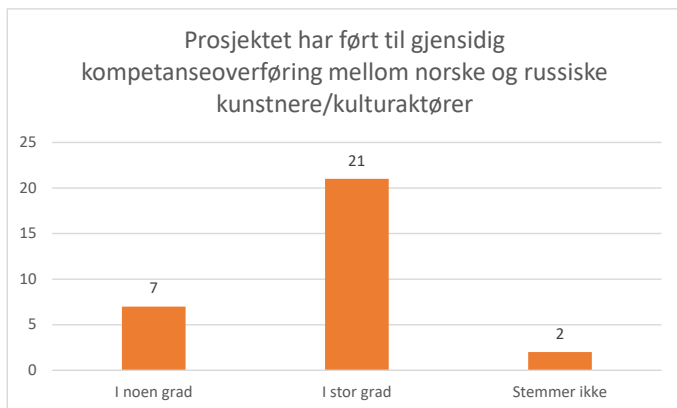
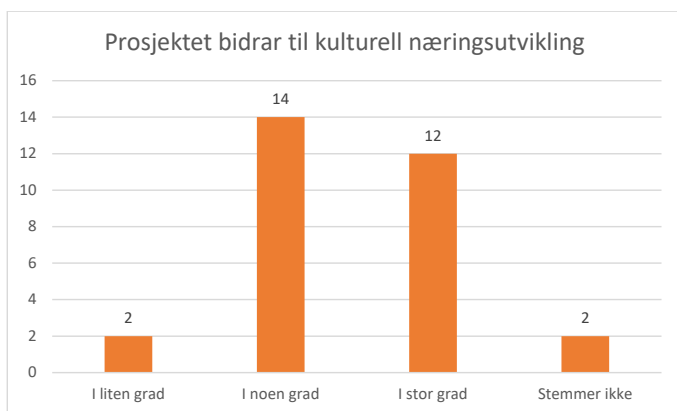
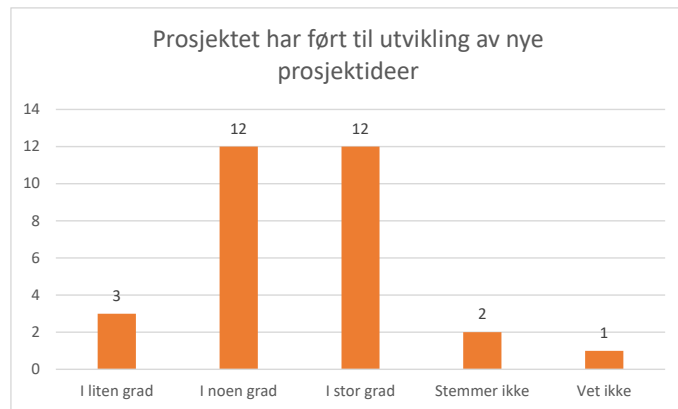
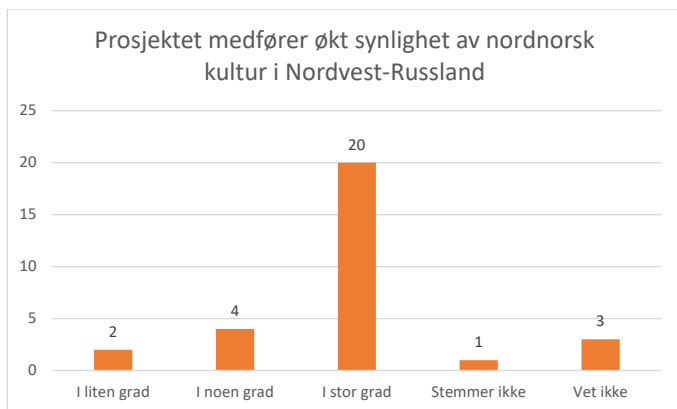
20. Hvordan opplever du BarentsKult i forhold til andre finanseringsmekanismer



21. I hvilken grad opplever du at påstandene i tabellen passer for deres prosjekt

Hvis flere, ta utgangspunkt i det siste prosjektet. Sett et kryss for hver rad





Generelt om prosjektet

22. I hvilken grad opplever du at påstandene i tabellen nedenfor stemmer for forberedelsen og gjennomføringen av deres prosjekt/er

Hvis flere, ta utgangspunkt i det siste prosjektet. Sett ett kryss for hver rad

