

**Accessibility as the
starting point in the
Finnish Basic Education
in the Arts system**



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This ArtsEqual policy brief offers government bodies and local institutions responsible for the implementation of Basic Education in the Arts insights from recent research to inform discussions on accessibility, as well as offer concrete suggestions on how accessibility can be realized in all fields of arts education.

Basic Education in the Arts (BEA) should:

- Attend to concerns of accessibility in all decision-making processes, strategic work and pedagogical development
- Ensure that BEA institutions have up-to-date equality and accessibility strategies
- Ensure that accessibility assessments are carried out in all BEA institutions
- Enhance cooperation across administrative and organizational boundaries
- Offer sufficient in-service training for teachers on matters pertaining to accessibility in arts education

Basic Education in the Arts ought to be accessible for everyone

Opportunities to engage in studies through the Basic Education in the Arts system (BEA) varies between geographical region, art forms and educational institutions (Aluehallintovirasto/Regional State Administrative Agencies 2014, Tiainen et al. 2012, Koramo 2009). Participation in this system is restricted for a large number of people, due to e.g. physical, social, geographical or financial barriers (Helén 2016). This contrasts constitutional rights that states that everyone ought to be able to receive educational services in accordance with their ability and special needs, as well as opportunities to develop themselves without being prevented by economic hardship (Suomen Perustuslaki/Constitution of Finland 731/1991, Section 16). In order for all people to be able to realize their cultural and educational rights, it is necessary for arts and cultural services to guarantee equitable opportunities for cultural participation regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, language, disability, ethnic, religious or cultural background or income (Koivunen & Marsio 2006). It is the responsibility of all education providers to support the realization of these rights equitably, effectively and expediently (Yhdenvertaisuuslaki/Non-discrimination Act 1325/2014, Section 6). Expedience is achieved through the evaluation and

development of BEA in close relation with the needs in a changing society, with, for example, an increasingly aging and culturally diversifying population defining important focus groups for these efforts (Suomen Kuntaliitto/Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities 2015).

Accessibility in BEA has also been identified as a focal area to improve access to arts and culture in the Finnish Government Program for 2016-2018 (Valtioneuvosto/Finnish Government 2015). Structural and cultural factors in society, such as traditions, values and norms, manifest also in the sphere of BEA. Developing accessibility in this system requires opportunities to critically examine the choices that are made and test new practices, and many accessibility solutions can be implemented rapidly, easily and cost-efficiently. Larger challenges can be approached systematically, and by drawing upon various forms of support for enhancing accessibility. Actors in the field of BEA can also promote non-discrimination and accessibility through their own attitudes and communications¹.

Several development goals for the BEA system have already been proposed, including e.g. improving equal access to tuition, supporting diversified pedagogical interaction, supporting students' individualized development and collaborative learning, standardizing funding criteria of the BEA institutions and attending to both the shared and particular characteristics of different artistic fields (Tiainen et al. 2012). In order to make progress in each of these areas – especially now that the organization of education and cultural services is increasingly the responsibility of municipalities – each municipality should ensure that BEA is structured in ways that allow all residents to participate in these arts education services. Promoting accessibility is not only a question of the structure and organization of the teaching practice; it also requires active measures from the municipalities in, for example, where funding is directed, how support conditions are defined, and the development of accessibility assessment and reporting practices.

Educational institutions are obliged to devise strategies to ensure that students learn in environments of **gender equality** and **non-discrimination**. These equality and non-discrimination strategies are prepared collaboratively by staff and students on an annual to three-year basis, and can be integrated into the curriculum instead of a separate document. Complementing these forward-looking strategies, educational institutions can also prepare **accessibility assessments**². This policy brief is meant to be utilized in the preparation of both strategies and assessments, to support the institutional development.

1 See e.g. www.taidekasvatustalkoot.fi (In Finnish)

2 Culture for All Service (www.cultureforall.fi) offers information and tools for promoting accessibility and diversity in cultural services for people working in the field

Non-discrimination

Non-discrimination is a basic right protected by Finnish law (Suomen Perustuslaki/Constitution of Finland 731/1999, Section 6; Yhdenvertaisuuslaki/Non-discrimination Act 1325/2014). In education, non-discrimination means that all people, regardless of their background and personal characteristics should have equal and unrestricted opportunities to learn, study and work. The principle serves to prevent discrimination in all its forms, both direct and indirect. The prevention of discrimination requires **justified differential treatment** in order to ensure that all individuals have equitable opportunities, which may require particular support and arrangements agreed upon on a case-by-case basis. The requirement concerns employees and education organizers (local municipals), as well as service providers, such as educational institutions.

Gender equality

An amendment to the Finnish Act on Equality between Women and Men (Tasa-arvolaki/Finnish Act on Equality between Women and Men 609/1986) requires educational institutions to prepare a gender equality plan (Section 5). This requirement applies not only to providers of comprehensive education but also to extracurricular education providers such as BEA and non-formal education services. The objective of devising such gender equality plans is to safeguard equal educational opportunities for individuals of all, or no, genders. In addition to considerations of student selections, the organization of teaching, learning differences and assessments, gender equality plans also need to ensure the prevention and elimination of sexual and gender-based harassment (Section 5a 1329/2014).

Accessibility

In this policy brief, accessibility refers to learning environments that are barrier-free, with accessible communication in teaching, services, and information; that learning tools, equipment, and materials are usable; and that everyone has the opportunity to participate in interaction and decision-making concerning one's own life. Such accessibility takes into consideration the diversity of users and does not discriminate between them. In other words, an accessible learning environment is not only barrier-free, but also takes into account the individual characteristics of every student.

Increasing cooperation across administrative and organizational boundaries

Recent reports highlight the role of the education system in addressing growing inequalities in Finnish society through their responsibility to support disadvantaged students (Ristikari et al. 2016). Such responsibility extends beyond early and comprehensive schooling to BEA and other education systems outside of schools. Such extracurricular activities have been shown to hold the potentials to both produce and prevent inequalities, affecting social mobility (Putnam 2015, Saari 2015). Engaging in the arts has also been proven to play an important role in the prevention of social exclusion (Isola & Suominen 2016). Municipalities thus have the opportunity to not only promote the realization of cultural and educational rights, but also counter rising social inequality. Seeking collaborations between schools, other arts educational institutions, and units of early education can support low-threshold activities and thereby offer every child with an opportunity to engage in leisure activities (OKM/Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture 2017).

Organizers of BEA also hold the potential to promote social wellbeing by extending collaborations from the educational and cultural sector also to the social welfare sector. For instance, active cooperations between BEA institutions and municipalities that are responsible for social and health care services may play an important role in the future. Models for such work may be found in current youth outreach practices (Bamming 2017) that may help BEA to reach new student populations who might not otherwise seek arts education through this system. This kind of **low-threshold cultural outreach work** is cross-sectoral, positioned between the public sectors of cultural services, youth work, social services and the third sector, and can contribute towards the vitality of art and cultural activities in general (see Turpeinen & Buck 2016).

One example of such cross-sectoral cooperation is the Floora Project³. Awarded for outstanding achievement in arts education by the National Board of Education in 2017, the Floora Project aims to establish new pathways for children and young people from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds to participate in BEA services. A recent report commissioned by the City of Helsinki found that students from such backgrounds were significantly underrepresented within the current BEA system (Vismanen, Räsänen & Sariola 2016). Through establishing a collaboration between music schools and city authorities responsible for social, educational and cultural services, Floora promotes equal opportunities for all young people to access arts education.

Some liberal adult education (*vapaa sivistystyö*) institutions in Finland also offer BEA. The level of access especially to BEA directed at adults varies highly between the different art forms. BEA has been considered as more goal-oriented whereas liberal adult education is based on more recreational social participation. Recently, however, these systems have started to converge on the level of their institutional aims and values (Laes & Rautiainen 2018). Closer cooperation between liberal adult education and BEA would improve the opportunities of people of all ages to participate in teaching that supports engagement in the arts as a leisure activity, following the principle of lifelong learning, and advancing inter-generational activities.

In-service teacher training and teacher recruitment

Efforts have been made in recent decades to promote inclusion in education settings. Inclusion in general refers to international and national regulations, agreements, and policy recommendations that facilitate the participation of marginalized groups, such as students with special educational needs or who represent non-majority cultural backgrounds. However, these regulations and policies can only achieve an impact upon

such students' lives through cultivating a positive attitude among teachers towards differentiated and adjusted teaching approaches. Research has found that there is considerable work to be done with regards to establishing inclusive operating cultures, resources, and teaching methods in the fields of youth culture and BEA institutions (Helén 2016). Music and visual arts teachers in Finland also report insecurities with regards to how they might engage with students with special educational needs (Björk 2016, Laes & Westerlund 2017, Salonen 2012). According to international studies, practical interactions with students with special educational needs as part of teacher education helps to develop the openness, courage and responsiveness required for teachers to work in inclusive ways (Pugach 2005).

Teachers already in the workforce require further training in student support. For example, such training may focus on how to adopt new tools and resources or work together with personal care assistants that accompany many students. Most importantly, in-service training should support teachers to develop pedagogical flexibility and critically reflect upon their own teaching goals. One opportunity to do this would be to provide possibilities for teachers to encounter student and population groups different from those they are already familiar with. Whilst such ongoing in-service training should be a part of every educational institutions' development plans, such work plays an especially important role in art forms where there are no opportunities for teachers to gain formal qualifications in Finland. Such in-service training ought to be financially supported by the Finnish state and responsible municipalities in order to ensure that students are offered high quality, inclusive, and equal arts education opportunities.

The Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture and Culture has proposed that cultural diversity needs to be promoted by taking special and minority groups into consideration as part of arts and cultural institution staff recruitment (OKM/Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture 2014). Teachers who are experienced with working with diverse student populations, for example students with special educational needs or non-majority cultural groups could be seen as an asset in the recruitment processes in BEA institutions, offering versatile pedagogical skills and thus contributing toward implementing the institutional accessibility strategies. BEA institutions should also seek to attract teachers and staff from a variety of cultural backgrounds and abilities, through diversifying their communications and institutional profiles. If BEA institutions reflect the diversity of Finnish society, they are better equipped to be inclusive and accessible for all.

Vision for the realization of accessibility in basic education in the arts

BEA is envisioned here as a system that is open to everyone, allowing for multiple and diverse forms of participation. Regular cooperation with different stakeholders, encouraging an active engagement with the diversity of Finnish society, supports the planning and implementation of education in a sustainable and equitable way.

For this vision to be realised, actors working in the field of BEA need to evaluate current policies and practices with regard to their accessibility for all, regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, language, disability, ethnic, religious or cultural background or income. These evaluations can be done through an accessibility assessment carried out by an external expert and/or as part of an educational institution's regular self-evaluations (for example, using the Finnish *Virva-tuli* institutional self-assessment model). Aside from institution leaders and staff members, students and their parents/guardians should participate in these acces-

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³ <http://www.amabilery.fi> (In Finnish and Swedish)

sibility assessments. In evaluating and developing accessibility in BEA, we also advise that educational institutions draw upon the expertise of various organizations in the field of disability and accessibility, as well as individuals with first-hand experiences of accessibility challenges and innovations⁴. In educational institutions different areas of accessibility can be developed step by step and for specific periods with different emphases.

BEA is envisioned as a system that is open to everyone, allowing for multiple and diverse forms of participation. Regular cooperation with accessibility professionals as well as diversity experts, organizations and initiatives support the planning and practical work of teaching in a sustainable and equitable way.

In the following sections we present concrete examples of how accessibility can be discussed and enhanced in BEA, focusing particularly on physical, economic and educational matters.

Physical accessibility

Physically accessible learning environments are those that are barrier-free and employ a diverse range of pedagogical tools and learning materials in order to ensure accessible learning for everyone. A barrier-free environment may be achieved through adapting structures and fixtures, lighting, acoustics and indoor air to student and staff needs. It is not enough to ensure accessible entry to the space itself, attention needs to also be paid to barrier-free routes within institution and classroom spaces as well as the functionality of equipment. Enhancing physical accessibility also relates to staff facilities, performing spaces, bathroom and locker rooms. Other ways to enhance physical accessibility include avoiding reflective surfaces, and visually contrasting vertical level differences with colors⁵. The teaching spaces should be easily altered and accommodated.

Both the physical environment and pedagogical tools should support every student's autonomy and possibilities to participate, regardless of his/her personal characteristics. The usability of pedagogical tools and learning materials needs to be evaluated also from the perspective of persons with mobility impairments. Usability can be enhanced by, for example, ensuring that the electronic learning environments are technically accessible and easy to use and electronic applications can be operated with the keyboard alone (switches) and include screen readers for people with visual impairments. User-adapted tools (e.g. customized musical instruments) and assistive technologies can furthermore be used to ensure accessibility.

A physically accessible environment can be achieved through regular accessibility assessments to identify accessibility challenges, and then making alterations and changes to improve the usability of facilities and equipment (see e.g. Anttalainen & Tapaninen 2007, 2009, Hansio 2011, Kaikkonen 2012). Accessibility requirements need to also be considered when teaching and learning takes place outside of the regular education facilities. If certain facilities or materials are not possible to make accessible for all, BEA organizers should explore options to relocate teaching and learning to more inclusive, accessible facilities.

Questions for discussion:

- How can the existing learning environment and other facilities be more accessible?
- Are entry routes to facilities as well as doorways and hallways wide enough for users of wheelchairs/walkers? Is an elevator, stair lift and/or ramp needed (depending on the differences in the vertical levels)? Are bathroom facilities accessible for all staff and students?

⁴ For example, Arts Promotion Centre Finland offers financial support for the development of accessibility. See <http://www.kulttuuriakaikille.info/rahoituslahteita> (In Finnish)

⁵ See <http://www.kulttuuriakaikille.fi/accessibility>

- Is the learning environment and/or teaching equipment mobile, replaceable or alterable?
- How can the teaching equipment and materials be diversified to meet the needs of all current or future staff and students?

Economic accessibility

Economic accessibility refers to the availability of arts education for all, regardless of individuals' socio-economic status (OKM/Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture 2016). Sufficient financial support for BEA is crucial if economic accessibility is to be realized. Current funding models relating to BEA vary to a large degree. Accordingly, student fees are often influenced by the amount of public funding available and how municipal decisions allocate financial resources to BEA institutions (see Renko & Ruusuvirta 2018).

One way in which the economic accessibility of BEA can be improved is through the free student place system. After a student receives a confirmed study place, the student or their parents/guardians may apply for a free study place. Free study places may be awarded according to certain criteria designed to enhance accessibility, for example, economic grounds. Free study place decisions are made by BEA institution boards or management. The degree to which the free places are made available in different educational institutions vary, as well as application procedures for such places. One proposed means to enhance accessibility is to develop a systematic payment commitment system or case management and service coordination system together with actors in the social service and third sectors (Vismanen, Räisänen and Sariola 2016).

It is important that municipalities also attend to the financial challenges or opportunities available for students to participate in arts education in the BEA system. In addition to free student places and sibling discounts, new policies and practices also need to be devised to make it financially possible for social groups that are now underrepresented in the BEA system for economic reasons.

Questions for discussion:

- How can the free student place system be further developed to enhance economic accessibility for all?
- Could more opportunities to receive free or affordable, low-threshold (group) education be made available?
- What other municipal and third-sector support systems could help to develop economic accessibility in the BEA system?
- Could BEA institutions collaborate with local stakeholders, associations or other actors in order to improve their economic accessibility?
- What kinds of new systems could be developed? For example, could different leisure and cultural participation vouchers, similar to the Finnish *Kaikukortti* card⁶, be used by students as payment for their BEA lessons?
- Would it be possible to develop a model of local support where businesses or NGOs support low-threshold teaching or studies among students who are financially hard-pressed?
- Could we innovate and experiment with entirely new models of enrolling and teaching students in order to enhance economic accessibility for all?

⁶ See <http://www.kulttuuriakaikille.fi/en.php>

⁷ Tempo - a multicultural children's orchestra, as an example: <http://www.sivistysvanta.fi/kytopuistonkoulu/artikkelit/orsuv4aku/tempo-orkesteri.html> (In Finnish)

Pedagogical accessibility

Pedagogical accessibility refers to teaching and learning in ways that students themselves can participate in and experience as meaningful. The keys to increasing pedagogical accessibility are a learner-centered approach, differentiation and accommodation in teaching and assessment, individualization of the basic syllabus and support for inclusive participation.

Learner-centered approach

BEA needs to identify and respond to the needs of increasingly diverse student groups and learners (Vismanen, Räisänen & Sariola 2016). Research has shown that participating in arts activities enhance the wellbeing of children

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and young people when the approach is learner-centered (Siivonen, Kotilainen & Suoninen 2011). A learner-centered approach attends to students' individual needs, strengths, capabilities, skills, backgrounds, interests and learning in other environments. Learner-centered teaching is based on encountering and

knowing the students and showing an interest in their lives.

A central consideration of promoting a learner-centered approach is to identify how the students' individual needs are identified in the planning of the teaching and learning environments. The students cannot be understood solely on the basis of any particular characteristic, such as ethnicity, gender, or (dis)ability, and the focus on the students as individuals is not limited to different ways of learning or their special educational needs (Kiuppi & Sarromaa Haustätter 2015). Categorizing students according to assumed characteristics or identities entails many problems, including the risk of stigmatization. In turn, this can shape teacher and student expectations and interactions between them (Hautamäki, Lahtinen, Moberg & Tuunainen 2001, Saloviita 1999). Teaching can be differentiated based on students' individual needs in everyday teaching practices without having to label anyone as "special" or "different". Pedagogical accessibility can be enhanced by building up teachers' special educational skills, but what matters the most is the will of teachers and organizers of education to support the inclusion of all students and pay attention to them as individuals. Cooperation between institutional leaders and staff and other important figures in the students' lives (such as parents, guardians or care assistants) should be fostered in order to dismantle prejudiced attitudes and beliefs and develop pedagogical thinking and practices (OKM/Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture 2012) through in-service training that takes place within or outside the work community.

Advancing a learner-centered approach also affects student selection criteria for arts education institutions. Diversity among students is not a challenge that teachers and staff must overcome, but also a resource which at best can help an educational institution to develop towards a more versatile and socially conscious direction. Questions for discussion in planning or implementing learner-centered approaches may include:

- What kinds of identities, learning experiences, wishes and needs do the students bring to BEA learning environments?
- In what kinds of individual ways do students approach learning in and beyond BEA? Can a student challenge or pursue alternative approaches to established views of learning processes and creativity?
- How does the teacher reflect upon the students' different ways of acting and learning in her own teaching practice? Is a teacher able to adjust her teaching methods accordingly? What kinds of learning processes do teachers regard as meaningful in teaching? For whom?

- How are students' life situations and relationships to art related to their learning in BEA? How are students' own goals considered as part of BEA teaching? How can teachers support individual students' motivations to foster a lifelong interest in the arts?
- How do the goals of curricula for BEA, the goals of an educational institution and the student's own goals and cultural background converge?

Accommodation and differentiation of teaching

The accommodation of teaching can center on the goals, contents, materials and methods, communication, work practices, assessment and allocation of time in teaching.⁸ Teaching can, for example, be differentiated for group teaching situations by giving a student exercises and challenges that are adapted from individual lesson formats without making them less motivational. This enables the students to enjoy experiences of success, while offering them possibilities to develop and learn based on their personal strengths. Through systematic accommodation and differentiation of teaching BEA can be made accessible for all students.

Individualization of the basic and advanced syllabi

The National Core Curricula for BEA at basic and advanced levels (TPOPS 2017) are intended to be implemented through personalized syllabi based on individual teaching plans. Individualized teaching plans serve to define the extent, goals and contents of studies, the teaching and evaluation practices as well as the study time with consideration to the students' personal characteristics, for example related to the accessibility requirements or the need for learning support.

It is important that educational institutions communicate extensively about the possibility of an individualized syllabus and adjusted teaching with different stakeholders, parents and NGOs, such as organizations working in the fields of cultural work, youth work, and disability.

Supporting an inclusive community

A core principle of BEA is to provide all members of the Finnish community with opportunities to participate in arts education, through working together and including everyone (TPOPS 2017). Social inclusion within and beyond the BEA system can be enhanced by developing accessible learning environments, services and communication. Promoting inclusion requires an ongoing evaluation and development of institutional policies and practices that relate to facilitating participation of all, regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, language, disability, ethnic, religious or cultural background or income (see Isola et al. 2017). A commitment to inclusion can produce innovations and develop existing practices in ways that benefit the entire educational institution. Special attention needs to be paid to differences in learning and in how students are enrolled, taught, and assessed, and how staff are recruited and trained.

For BEA to be inclusive, also requires accessible communication strategies in sharing information, which can be achieved in many ways. Information on activities can be offered not only in different languages (including sign language and plain language, and digital formats suitable for screen readers, whenever possible) but also with consideration to what kind of a profile is constructed through communication in regards to whom it is seen to be directed. It is also useful to extend the communications available to wider populations and plan them together with instances that promote cultural diversity, such as organizations working in the fields of disability and non-majority languages. The layout of publicly

⁸ For example, the Special Music Centre Resonaari in Helsinki offers music teaching based on an adjusted advanced learning syllabus for students who need special support (www.resonaari.fi)

shared information should be designed based on principles of accessible information, using, for example, large enough fonts and strong enough color contrasts between the text and the background. BEA institutions will benefit from seeking external accessibility assessments of printed materials and websites. Information on the accessibility of the institution should be presented on websites and in brochures as clearly as possible. The guidelines in the new National Core Curriculum for BEA (TPOPS 2017) address pedagogical accessibility and inclusion. They also guide us to discuss questions such as:

- What kinds of forms of cooperation can support accessibility and inclusion?
- What are your institutions' accessibility development goals? How might these goals be artform specific, or reach across the teaching and learning of different artforms?
- How can different fields of art join forces to develop teaching in BEA in a way that integrates different arts and disciplines and supports holistic learning?

What is Basic Education in the Arts

- Basic Education in the Arts (BEA) is part of basic education regulated in Finland by law (Laki taiteen perusopetuksesta/ Act and Government Decree on Basic Education in the Arts 633/1998 and Government Decree 813/1998). Teaching in BEA is guided by the National Core Curricula prepared by the National Board of Education⁹.
- The task of BEA is to offer goal-oriented, continuous teaching in different artforms that progressively guides students from one level to the next.
- BEA offers extracurricular lessons in music, performing arts (circus and theatre), visual arts (architecture, audiovisual art, arts and crafts) and literary arts.
- BEA is offered primarily for children and young people. Approximately 12% of 2-19 year olds in Finland receive arts education through the BEA system (Aluehallintovirasto/ Regional State Administrative Agencies 2014).
- Educational institutions licensed to offer BEA can receive public funding for their operations. The amount of funding and student fees varies between different regions and art forms.

⁹ <http://www.artseu.fi/fi/etusivu> (In Finnish and Swedish)

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Sanna Kivijärvi (M.Ed.) is a doctoral researcher at the University of the Arts Helsinki and currently works in the ArtsEqual's *Arts Education for All* research group. Her dissertation examines the BEA system by analyzing an innovation for inclusive pedagogy: Figurenotes (*Kuvionuotit*), from both pedagogical and educational policy perspectives. She is also researching the concert audiences of the Helsinki-based Special Music Centre *Resonaari* and embodiment in music education with diverse learners. Kivijärvi has published several peer-reviewed articles and book chapters.



Kati Nieminen (M.Mus.) is the principal of the *Demo* and *Jamkids* music schools and a doctoral researcher at the University of the Arts Helsinki. In ArtsEqual, she works in the *Basic Education in the Arts for All* research group. Her dissertation reviews and analyzes the role of business in the BEA and reflects on what kind of operating environment it offers for entrepreneurship.



Tuulia Tuovinen (M.Mus.) is a clarinet teacher at a BEA music institute and a doctoral researcher at the University of the Arts Helsinki. Her dissertation investigates student-centered teaching approaches in Finnish music institutes. She has particularly focused on matters of educational accessibility in instrumental learning and alongside her work as a researcher, she has launched a number of developmental projects on learning environments in the arts (e.g. the government key project, PopUpSipoo 2016-2019).



Isto Turpeinen (D.A. Dance) is a visiting postdoctoral researcher at the Performing Arts Research Centre TUTKE of the Theatre Academy, University of the Arts Helsinki. As a practitioner he gives father-son dance workshops based on his "raw board" method and teaches boy groups in the BEA as a visiting dance teacher. In ArtsEqual, he works in the *Basic Education in the Arts for All* and the *Arts@School* research groups.



Heidi Elmgren (M.Soc.Sci) is a doctoral researcher in the University of Jyväskylä. In ArtsEqual, she is part of the *Basic Education in the Arts for All* research group. In her doctoral dissertation she examines meritocracy and merit based exclusion, and studies the students' experiences of exclusion and inclusion in Finnish music schools. She has published several articles and book chapters in international and Finnish scientific journals and publications.



Aura Linnapuomi (M.Mus.) is an accessibility specialist for the association Culture for All Service (*Yhdenvertaisen kulttuurin puolesta ry*) and the project leader of the culture voucher (*Kaikukortti kaikuu*) project. Her work centers on training, assessment and development projects that aim to enhance the accessibility of cultural services. She is engaged in, for example, the Accessible Art Hobby project (*SATA2-Saavutettava taideharrastus*) of the City of Tampere which promotes better opportunities for children and young people with special needs to practice arts and participate in cultural life.



Outi Korhonen (M.A.) is an arts educator and a cultural worker who aims to bring attention to multilingualism and diversity in the fields of arts and culture. She presently works as the coordinator of the Multilingualism and Diversity project at the Culture for All Service and has previously worked e.g. as a regional artist specialized in cultural diversity. In addition to her art education and coordination work she produces multilingual sound installations in the Sonia-adores team. Korhonen has contributed to this policy brief from the perspective of a visual arts teacher.

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Contacts and Planning Assistance

Assistance with the development of accessibility in Basic Education in the Arts can be found from several sources. It is useful to collaborate with different organizations and actors. Many of the organizations also have municipal branches through which local communities can be reached. There are also a number of Swedish-language or foreign-language organizations operating in different fields. These organizations are a good resource that may assist in planning and implementing inclusive and accessible Basic Education in the Arts services.

F = In Finnish, S = In Swedish, E = In English

Culture for All Service FSE

www.kulttuuriakaikille.fi

The Culture for All Service promotes cultural services that are inclusive and take diversity into account. It offers information and tools for the cultural field. The service is run by an association called Yhdenvertaisen kulttuurin puolesta ry.

ADHD-liitto (ADHD Association in Finland) F

<http://www.adhd-liitto.fi/>

Allergia- ,iho- ja astmaliitto (Allergy, Skin and Asthma Federation) SFE

www.allergia.fi

Autismi- ja Aspergerliitto (The Finnish Association for Autism and Asperger's Syndrome) F

www.autismiliitto.fi

Erialaisten oppijoiden liitto (The Finnish Diverse Learners' Association) F

www.erilaistenoppijoidenliitto.fi

Etnisten suhteiden neuvottelukunta ETNO (Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations) FSE

<http://oikeusministerio.fi/etno>

Finlandssvenska teckenspråkiga rf (Association for Finnish-Swedish Sign Language S

www.dova.fi

Förbundet De Utvecklingsstördas Väl rf (Inclusion Finland FDUV) SFE

www.fduv.fi

Förbundet Finlands Svenska Synskadade (The Federation of Swedish Speaking Visually Impaired in Finland S

www.fss.fi/

Infopankki (Finland in your language) FSE et al.

www.infopankki.fi

Invalidiliitto (The Finnish Association of People with Physical Disabilities) FSE

www.invalidiliitto.fi

Kehitysvammaliitto (The Finnish Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities) FE

www.kehitysvammaliitto.fi

Kulttuuriyhdistys Suomen EUCREA ry (EUCREA Finland) F

<http://suomeneurea.blogspot.com>

Kuuloliitto (The Finnish Federation of Hard of Hearing) F

www.kuuloliitto.fi

Kuurojen liitto (Finnish Association of the Deaf) FSE

www.kuurojenliitto.fi

Kynnys ry (The Threshold Association) FSE

www.kynnys.fi

LL-center (Swedish-speaking centre for Easy to Read in Finland) SFE

www.ll-center.fi/svenska/start/

Me itse ry (Me itse Association of Inclusion Finland KVTL) F

www.tukiliitto.fi/toiminta/me-itse-ry/

Mielenterveyden keskusliitto (Finnish Central Association for Mental Health) FSE

www.mtkl.fi

Moniheli ry (Network of Multicultural Associations) FE

www.moniheli.fi

Näkövammaisten liitto (Finnish Federation of the Visually Impaired (FFVI) FSE

www.nkl.fi

Näkövammaisten Kulttuuripalvelu (Cultural Service for the Visually Impaired) FE

www.kulttuuripalvelu.fi

Papunet-verkkopalvelu (Papunet Web Service) FSE

<http://papunet.net>

Regnbågsankan rf (Swedish-speaking LGBTQ organization in Finland) S

www.regnbagsankan.fi

Samarbetsförbundet kring funktionshinder rf SAMS

www.samsnet.fi

Sateenkaariperheet ry (Rainbow Families) F

www.sateenkaariperheet.fi

Selkokeskus (Finnish Centre for Easy to Read) FSE

www.papunet.net/selkokeskus

Seta ry (Seta - LGBTI Rights in Finland) FSE

www.seta.fi

Suomen Mielenterveysseura (The Finnish Association for Mental Health) FSE

www.mielenterveysseura.fi

Suomen pakolaisapu (The Finnish Refugee Council) FSE

www.pakolaisapu.fi

Tasa-arvovaltuutettu (The Ombudsman for Equality) F

<https://www.tasa-arvo.fi/fi/etusivu>

Transtukipiste (Transgender Support Center) FSE

www.transtukipiste.fi

Vammaisten henkilöiden oikeuksien neuvottelukunta VANE (Advisory Board for the Rights of Persons Disabilities VANE) FSE

www.vane.to

Vanhustyön keskusliitto (VTKL - The Finnish Association for the Welfare of Older People) FSE

www.vtkl.fi

Yhdenvertaisuusvaltuutettu (Non-Discrimination Ombudsman) FSE

www.syrjinta.fi/etusivu

The ArtsEqual policy briefs present to policy makers latest research and research-based discussion produced by the ArtsEqual initiative. The Arts Equal research initiative, coordinated by the University of the Arts Helsinki, examines, in collaboration and interaction with more than 50 partners, how the arts as public service can increase equality and wellbeing in Finland and meet the social challenges of the 2020s.



Arts as Public Service: Strategic Steps towards Equality

Cross-disciplinary research project (2015–2020) coordinated by the University of the Arts Helsinki. Project leader: professor Heidi Westerlund, Sibelius Academy, University of the Arts Helsinki www.artsequal.fi

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