



Participation in Small Cultural Institutions

Can participatory projects be recommended to small cultural institutions based on the case study of the Kunst Rijk Emmen participatory project?

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INTRODUCTION

“Cultuur mobiliseert de creatieve verbeeldingskracht van mensen en biedt nieuwe handelingsperspectieven. Cohesie ontstaat als de sociale binding tussen individuen en groepen sterker wordt bijvoorbeeld door nieuwe vormen van interactie.”

(Stichting DOEN, 2013)

Stichting DOEN is a fund set up and supported by several Dutch lotteries: the *Nationale Postcodeloterij*, the *VriendenLoterij* and the *BankGiroLoterij* (*Stichting DOEN*, 2013). The fund was set up to support initiatives regarding climate change, culture and entrepreneurship. ‘Culture & Cohesion’ is one of the themes which *Stichting DOEN* uses to identify the different kinds of innovative initiatives they fund. Within this theme, the sub-division ‘Social Role of Culture’ can be found. Within this subsection of ‘Culture & Cohesion’ projects are supported which strengthen the interaction between art and cultural institutions on the one hand, and visitors and societal partners on the other hand. *DOEN* intends for cultural organizations “ [om samen te werken met] het publiek, communities en maatschappelijk georiënteerde organisaties om sociale vernieuwing te bereiken en daadwerkelijke verandering tot stand te brengen.” (*Stichting DOEN*, 2013).

It is within this sub-division that the Kunst Rijk Emmen project can be found. Kunst Rijk Emmen (KRE) was a participatory project which was partially funded by *Stichting DOEN*. It is regarded as a pilot project in which different groups from the Emmen community select works of art from the Dutch state’s collection to be put on show in the Grote Kerk in Emmen. Public participation in the arts can be seen as a way of “reaching those who at present rarely or never attend or take part in the arts” (Arts Council England, 2010, p. 5). This is closely related to the intention of the working group of the *Stichting Grote Kerk Cultureel* (SGKC) who worked on the KRE project: “betrokkenheid van de inwoners van Emmen en omgeving bij beeldende kunst te versterken door hen actief te betrekken bij de ontwikkeling en totstandkoming van tentoonstellingen” (*Stichting Grote Kerk Cultureel*, 2012). Statistics from the *Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek* (CBS), the Dutch statistics agency, show that the total amount of paid visits to museums in the Netherlands has dropped from over 14 million visits in 2001, to a little over 13 million visits in 2009 (*Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek*, 2011); between 2001 and 2009 the number of paid visits to visual arts museums dropped by 85 thousand visits (*Centraal Bureau voor de Statistiek*, 2011). Nevertheless, the percentage of visitors who frequently (once or more per quarter) visit a museum actually rose from 6 per cent to 7 per cent between 2003 and 2007 (van den Broek, de Haan, & Huysmans, 2009). The *Vereniging Rijksge subsidieerde Musea* delved deeper into the reasons why or why not people visited museums. Among other things the results showed that some of the most popular reasons for visiting a museum

were wanting to enjoy art (50 per cent), to experience a different period in time (46 per cent), to learn something (47 per cent) and to be touched by what they saw (43 per cent) (Besseling & Klooster, 2005). As mentioned, reasons for not visiting a museum were also investigated. The top four reasons for not visiting a museum which were listed by the respondents were cost (61 per cent), accessibility (41 per cent), boring (33 per cent) and crowdedness in the museum (32 per cent) (Besseling & Klooster, 2005).

Nina Simon, the author of the book *The Participatory Museum* (2010), believes that cultural institutions can “reconnect with the public and demonstrate their value and relevance in contemporary life (...) by inviting people to actively engage as cultural participants, not passive consumers” (Simon, 2010, pp. I-II). Participating in culture is also of great importance to UNESCO; “the United Nations’ Universal Declaration of Human Rights [...] states that “*Everyone has the right freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.*”” (UNESCO, 2012). This, however, raises the question as to why cultural participation is of such importance. This has been researched by many different scholars. For example, in his dissertation *Performing Arts and the City*, Quirijn van den Hoogen (2010) identifies five effects which participating in cultural activities may have, based on a 1992 policy document by the Dutch ministry of Welfare, Health and Culture. Firstly, participation “stimulates personal development”. Secondly, it has a binding effect in the sense that it brings people together. Thirdly, participating in cultural activities “gives an opportunity to relate oneself to history”. Fourthly, participation gives participants an opportunity to “express ideas and views in an authentic manner”, and fifthly, participating gives participants the chance to share the aforementioned ideas and views “with other, or make them into shared experiences” (Hoogen, 2010, p. 49). A different policy document, the policy plan of the *Fonds voor Cultuurparticipatie*, a fund which focuses on cultural participation, finds that “actief bezig zijn met cultuur draagt bij aan cultureel burgerschap: aan individueel geluk maar ook aan onderlinge binding in dorp, wijk of stad” (Fonds voor Cultuurparticipatie, 2009, p. 5).

The author was closely involved in the organizing of the KRE project due to several internships, and found the experience very educational. Nevertheless, being involved with the project did raise some questions. For example, what does it take for a small cultural institution such as the SGKC to organize a participatory project? Due to the fact that KRE was a pilot project, there were multiple research elements included in the project. Those research elements were supposed to give insight into several aspects of the project, which will be explained further on in this paper. The main research question which will be answered in this paper is: can participatory projects such as KRE be recommended to other small cultural institutions based on the case study of the KRE project? Small cultural institutions are defined in this paper as is done by the Emmen municipality: a small

cultural institution is an “instelling die enkel uit vrijwilligers bestaat en zich richt op de organisatie van culturele activiteiten” (Gemeente Emmen, 2012, p. 1). Although the primary focus of this paper will be the organizing process of a participatory project, the social influence which participatory projects may have on a community will be incorporated.

The research question is relevant due to the changing atmosphere in the Dutch cultural scene. As previously mentioned statistics show that visitor numbers to museums have been dropping. Furthermore due to funding difficulties cultural institutions find that they need to justify their existence; are they relevant within their community? What do they offer to the general public, etc.? In order to stay relevant and to reach audiences cultural institutions may opt for new ways, such as public participation, to achieve this. The research question in this paper is limited to small cultural institutions mostly due to the fact that the SGKC is a small cultural institution and their experiences would be most relevant for similar institutions.

The research question in this paper is rather broad, and to answer it different aspects of the KRE project will be analyzed. The first chapter will delve deeper into the concept of participation. Questions which will be answered in this chapter include: what is participation? What are different forms of participation? Why is it applied in cultural institutions? The second chapter of this paper will look closely at the KRE project. Topics in this chapter include: who was involved in the project, the origin of the idea for KRE, the goals of the project, the project set-up, and the results of the project. This section will be purely descriptive; the analysis of the project will take place in the third chapter. The analysis of KRE is based upon interviews with both organizing staff and project participants. The conclusions from the interviews will be supplemented with a theoretical analysis of the different parts of the project and with results from a survey done among participants. Sub-sections within this chapter will include the goals of the project, the set-up of the project, the roles of staff members and the participation aspect of the project. The participation sub-section will delve deeper into the selection of the participants, the actual participation process, and the output and outcome of the project. In the conclusion the main research question, whether or not a participatory project such as KRE can be recommended to small cultural institutions, will be answered. The English translations of Dutch quotes found throughout this paper can be viewed in appendix B.

CHAPTER 1 WHAT IS PARTICIPATION?

"Participation is a malleable dialogue that informs the work of artists, builds and develops audiences, engages with communities, promotes learning and forges routes into active experience and artistic creation of many kinds."

(Arts Council England, 2010)

The aforementioned definition of the concept of participation shows how broad the concept actually is and how far it can reach. It involves artists, audiences and communities. With this definition in mind this chapter will look at the different forms of participation which can be implemented at cultural institutions such as museums or libraries. The main source for this section will be the book *The Participatory Museum* (2010), written by Nina Simon, who according to Nikki Timmermans and Machteld Vinkenborg in their report *Publieksparticipatie in de culturele sector* (2011), "kan zij als een autoriteit op het gebied van bezoekersparticipatie gezien worden" (p. 2). Furthermore, in a review published in the *Visitor Studies* journal, the book is described as "engaging, meaty, and very concrete" (Baum, 2011, p. 119). The review's author also appreciates "that the book is written from one who is an active member in the museum community, acknowledging the challenges and the realities of incorporating these experiences into our current institutional infrastructure." (Baum, 2011, p. 119). In the *Museum Management and Curatorship* journal, Leon Tan (2012) also reacts positively to Simon's book. Nevertheless, whilst Baum (2011) applauded the fact that Simon writes from the perspective of the cultural institutions Tan (2012) finds that "hers is an institution-centric-point-of-view, almost to the extent of giving the impression that cultural memory-making is by necessity the purview of institutions." (p.198). However, the fact that the book is centered on the institution point-of-view is very useful for the purpose of this paper. The book *The Participatory Museum* is a practical guide explaining how to implement participation at cultural institutions and will be used to introduce concepts within the field of visitor participation in this chapter, and will provide valuable insights in chapter three. During the research period leading up to the writing of this paper no other sources comparable to *The Participatory Museum* were found; a lot of information is available about the merits of cultural participation (see section 1.1), but unfortunately sources with practical information on how to organize such participation are limited.

Nina Simon defines a participatory cultural institution as follows: "a place where visitors can create, share, and connect with each other around content" (Simon, 2010, p. ii). There are three main elements in this definition: create, share and connect. These are the building blocks of participation in cultural institutions: visitors to the institution firstly "contribute their own ideas, objects, and creative expression to the institution and each other" (Simon, 2010, pp. ii-iii). Secondly

the visitors share their experience in different ways; they discuss it with other visitors or they can take their experience home with them and redistribute it to others. Third and finally, the visitors connect with other visitors and staff. By definition “all participatory projects are based on three institutional values” (Simon, 2010, p. 183); firstly, the institution desires the input and involvement of participants, secondly, the institution trusts its participants’ abilities, and thirdly the institution will respond to the participants’ actions and contributions. The goal of using participatory techniques is “both to meet visitors’ expectations for active engagement and to do so in a way that furthers the mission and core values of the institution” (Simon, 2010, p. iii). What makes participation so different from traditional ways of designing and organizing an exhibition is “de manier waarop informatie wordt uitgewisseld tussen de instelling en de bezoeker of gebruiker” (Timmermans & Vinkenborg, 2011, p. 2).

1.1 Why implement participation?

Simon identifies five reasons why participation is implemented at cultural institutions. Firstly, visitors may view cultural institutions as irrelevant to their lives. Participation addresses this issue by “actively soliciting and responding to visitors’ ideas, stories and creative work” (Simon, 2010, p. iii). Secondly, visitors may view the institution as static; they have visited the institution before and feel that they have no reason to return. Participation offers cultural institutions the possibility to provide visitors with “changing experiences without incurring heavy ongoing content production costs” (Simon, 2010, p. iii). Thirdly, visitors may perceive the institutions’ perspective as different from their own, or they may not understand that perspective. In this case participation makes it possible to present different views to the audience “which can help audiences prioritize and understand their own view in the context of diverse perspectives” (Simon, 2010, p. iv). Fourthly, cultural institutions may be seen as a non-creative place, where it is not possible for visitors to express themselves. Participation in this instance “can support the interests of those who prefer to make and do rather than just watch” (Simon, 2010, p. iv). Fifth and finally, visitors may not feel socially comfortable in the cultural institution, which prevents them from interacting with fellow visitors about ideas they may have. Participation offers the opportunity to profile themselves as “desirable real-world venues for discussion about important issues related to the content presented” (Simon, 2010, p. iv).

In the introduction Quirijn van den Hoogen’s dissertation was referenced to show the social effects of participation. François Matarasso (1997) in his work *Use or Ornament* about the social impact of participation in the arts delves deeper into these social effects of participation. Through his research in the United Kingdom he identifies fifty different social impacts of participation in the arts. From the research it is concluded that participation is “an effective route for personal growth, leading to enhanced confidence, skill-building and educational developments which can improve

people's social contacts and employability" (Matarasso, 1997, p. 6). Furthermore, it is concluded that participation in the arts contributes to social cohesion, as well as to community empowerment and self-determination. Also, participation has positive effects on the image and identity of the community. Participating in the arts also makes a big difference in "developing people's creativity and confidence about the arts" (Matarasso, 1997, p. 8). Finally, although Matarasso (1997) readily admits that the arts in health care were not included in the research, he did find evidence that participating in the arts made people feel better (p. 9). All of the aforementioned kinds of social impact caused by participation in the arts are reasons for cultural institutions to implement participation. Furthermore, there are also clear reasons why city councils or cultural foundations would finance participatory projects. In chapter two it will be shown which reasons were named by the SGKC for implementing participation at their institution.

1.2 What is needed for participation?

According to Clay Shirky (2008) in his book *Here Comes Everybody* cultural institutions who decide to implement participation (programs) need to keep three things in mind. He reasons that there are three components which make a participatory mechanism successful: "a plausible promise, an effective tools, and an acceptable bargain" (Shirky, 2008). Nina Simon interprets these three components as follows. Firstly, the institution makes a *promise* to the participants that they will have an appealing experience. Secondly, the institution must ensure to provide easy to understand *tools* for participation. Third and finally, a *bargain* must be made between the institution and the participants. This bargain "should accommodate participants' needs" when it comes to "management of intellectual property, outcomes of the project, and feedback to participants" (Simon, 2010, p. 17), "It means listening to participants, providing feedback on their efforts, and demonstrating how the institution will use their contributions." (Simon, 2010, p. 20).

What is also needed for a successful participatory project is a proper design. According to Simon there are two design principles which need to be taken into account when creating a participatory project. Firstly, "participants thrive on constraints, not open-ended opportunities for self-expression" (Simon, 2010, p. 22). She uses the example of a mural to illustrate this point: "if given the chance, very few people would opt to paint a mural on their own" (Simon, 2010, p. 22). This is not because of a lack of material to do so, it is because people would have no idea what to paint, and if they did, they would not have the confidence to paint it. However, if people were asked to participate in the creation of a mural, the situation would change because they would receive instructions about what to paint and what to paint with: this way, "you know what you are supposed to do to be successful" (Simon, 2010, p. 23). It is a common misconception that it shows more respect to the visitor when you let them do 'their own thing', but Simon argues that "visitors don't want a blank slate for

(2010) divides participatory projects in the arts into three different models: contributory projects, collaborative projects and co-creative projects (p. 187). In this section all three models will be shortly explained. In chapter three more information will be provided about what kind of project Kunst Rijk Emmen is, how it can be identified as such and whether it could have been improved or not.

1.3.1 Contributory Participation

According to Nina Simon contributory projects are most common in the field of participation. She identifies four ways in which visitors to an institution can contribute to it: firstly, they can provide feedback about visits to the institution orally or in writing. Secondly, visitors may contribute objects or their own creative works to participate in a crowd-sourced exhibition. Thirdly, visitors may offer their opinions and/or stories during tours, educational programs or on comment boards. Fourth and finally, visitors may post images or comments on the internet (Simon, 2010, p. 203). Contributory participation is most used in cultural institutions because it can be offered to every visitor, in contrast to collaborative and co-creative participation which can “accommodate only a small number of deeply committed and pre-selected participants” (Simon, 2010, p. 204), furthermore, in case of contributory participation the process does not require a lot of setup and visitors do not require a lot of coaching.

There are three different approaches which can be chosen when implementing a contributory project; firstly, the necessary contribution approach. In this approach, the project fully relies on the active participation of visitors. This kind of approach makes participants feel “a high level of ownership and pride” and “many contributory projects support a sense of shared ownership and community” (Simon, 2010, p. 207). Necessary contribution does entail a high risk for institutions who implement it, as participants may not do what they are expected to do which could cause a project to fail. Secondly, the supplemental contribution approach. In this approach, the contributions which the visitors provide enhance the institutional project. This approach is often used to “incorporate diverse voices, add a dynamic element to a static project, or to create a forum for visitors’ thoughts or reactions” (Simon, 2010, p. 209). Third and finally, the educational contribution approach, in which “the act of contributing provides visitors with skills or experiences” (Simon, 2010, p. 207) that are relevant for the mission of the institution. These projects “aim to teach skill building rather than generate content” (Simon, 2010, p. 211), and can often be found in science centers and children’s museums.

Simon refers to several aspects of a good contributory project which are important for participants, one of which has been previously mentioned in this paper in chapter 1.2: scaffolding. The scaffolding of contributory projects ensures that participation “is accessible regardless of prior knowledge” (Simon, 2010, p. 212). Furthermore, participants need to be provided with clear

opportunities to express themselves within their available time, and which respects their abilities. Also, it needs to be clear to participants in what way their contributions will be presented.

1.3.2 Collaborative Participation

Collaborative projects are different to contributory projects in the sense that an institution works together with community members to “develop new programs, exhibitions, or offerings” (Simon, 2010, p. 231). Participants to the collaborative projects are often chosen for a specific reason. For example, they may be selected because they have certain skills, because they are associated with a particular group, because they are of a certain age, or because they represent “the intended audience for the output of the project” (Simon, 2010, p. 231). According to Simon (2010) there are four reasons why a cultural institution would implement a collaborative project; firstly, “to consult with experts or community representatives to ensure the accuracy and authenticity of new exhibitions, programs or publications” (Simon, 2010, p. 231). Secondly, to improve the chances of success a collaborative project may be used to “test and develop new programs in partnership with intended users” (Simon, 2010, p. 231). Thirdly, a collaborative project may provide participants with an educational opportunity by letting them “design, create, and produce their own content or research” (Simon, 2010, p. 232). Fourth and finally, a collaborative project will make participants feel as partners and/or co-owners of what they produced for the institution.

Collaborative projects can be divided into roughly two different categories: the consultive projects and the co-development projects (Simon, 2010, p. 235). Whilst the former engages experts or community representatives to give advice to the institution about new programs, the latter involves cooperation between staff members and participants in order to create new exhibitions and/or programs (Simon, 2010). For this type of collaborative project specifically, it is required that the institution provides more guidance to the participants compared to a contributory project, because the relationship between the institution and the participants exists over a longer period of time and is more formal. Staff members of the institution need to explain what role(s) the participants will fulfill, as well as clarify what benefits the participants will receive from this; “participants often make long-term commitments to the project in exchange for institutionally-provided training” (Simon, 2010, p. 232).

What is interesting about collaborative projects is the way you look at how successful they are. Simon argues that the success of a collaborative project does not lie in the number of participants signing up for the project, but “what happens after the project is over” (p. 232). She reasons that “a strong collaboration encourages participants to connect more deeply with the institution and to assign value to the project beyond the compensation offered” (Simon, 2010, p. 232). If participants

become more involved with the institution after the completion of the project the project can be labeled a successful project.

1.3.3 Co-Creative Participation

Co-creative participatory projects are very similar to collaborative participatory projects with the big exception that “co-creative projects originate in partnership with participants rather than based solely on institutional goals” (Simon, 2010, p. 263). This entails that, for example, community groups get in touch with the institution to create a project, or that the institution invites outside participants “to propose and work with staff on a project of mutual benefit” (Simon, 2010, p. 263). Simon lists three reasons why cultural institutions would engage in co-creative participation. Firstly, co-creative participation can be seen as an opportunity “to give voice and be responsive to the needs and interests of local community members” (Simon, 2010, p. 263). Secondly, by implementing a co-creative project the institution will become a place where community members can engage with each other. Thirdly, co-creative projects are educational opportunities in the sense that they offer community members skills which they may implement to support their own goals or for the community.

Due to the fact that the position of the institution in this kind of participatory project is very different than in contributory or collaborative projects there are some principles the institution and the participants need to adhere to if they want the project to be successful; firstly, both staff and participants need to keep each other’s interests and goals in mind, and secondly, “staff members should not harbor pre-conceived ideas about the outcome of the project” (Simon, 2010, p. 269). Thus, the scaffolding of these kinds of projects is also quite different in the sense that the project is not scaffolded in such a way that it will lead to a certain outcome. In fact, the scaffolding of co-creative participatory projects needs to be put in place in such a way they do not prescribe the outcome, but do ensure that the participants achieve their goals (Simon, 2010).

1.4 Evaluating Participation

According to Simon a “lack of good evaluation of participatory projects is probably the greatest contributing factor to their slow acceptance and use in the museum field” (p. 301). She finds that evaluating a participatory project is not so different from evaluating a ‘normal’ project, but some elements of participatory projects are unique and do need to be accounted for in an evaluation. These elements include the fact that what a participatory project is about is not just the product (the outcome), but the process *and* the product. Also, what must be realized when evaluating participatory projects is that these sorts of projects are not just for participants; “it is important to define goals and assess outcomes not only for participants, but for staff members and non-

participating audiences as well” (Simon, 2010, p. 302). Furthermore, because participatory projects often take place over a longer period of time, they would benefit from “incremental assessment [...]to help complex projects stay aligned to their ultimate goals while making the project work for everyone involved” (Simon, 2010, p. 302). Additionally, Simon adds that in some cases it could be beneficial for the evaluation of participatory projects to make the actual evaluation process a participatory element.

As for the actual evaluation process, Simon (2010, p. 303) names three steps which need to be followed in order to evaluate a participatory project:

1. State your goals
2. Define behaviors and outcomes that reflect those goals
3. Measure or assess the incidence and impact of the outcomes via observable indicators

These three steps will be incorporated in chapter three in which the Kunst Rijk Emmen project will be evaluated. The four elements mentioned previously in this section will also be taken into account when evaluating the project.

CHAPTER 2 INTRODUCING KUNST RIJK EMMEN

KRE was a participatory project that took place in Emmen, the Netherlands. The *Stichting Grote Kerk Cultureel* (SGKC), the cultural committee of the *Grote Kerk* located in the city center of Emmen, worked together with the *Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed* (RCE), the Dutch Cultural Heritage Agency, to set up a participation project using the Dutch state's art collection, which is managed by the RCE. The art collection managed by the RCE contains over 100,000 objects, ranging from paintings to pieces of furniture (Hanssen, 2012). Approximately half of the entire collection is on loan to museums (Hanssen, 2012). The KRE exhibition would consist of works from the *Toonzaalcollectie*. This is a small part of the entire collection which is used to decorate the offices of cabinet ministers and embassies abroad (Kok, *Toonzaalcollectie*, 2012). To manage the project Petra Timmer from the *TiMe Amsterdam* consultancy agency was hired. The author was involved with the project as an intern for both the RCE and *TiMe Amsterdam*. Sources of funding for the project were the Emmen municipality and *Stichting DOEN*. The resulting art exhibition opened on September 30th 2012 and would run until November 25th 2012. This chapter will delve deeper into the project: its origins, its goals, its set-up, its timeline, who was involved, as well as the project's results.

2.1 Origins of the project

The SGKC approached the RCE in the spring of 2011 after one of its members had read several articles in the Spring 2011 edition of the RCE magazine (Aacken & Bergh, 2012). Two articles specifically captured their interest: one article about an exhibition which had been organized in Eindhoven using works from the *Beeldende Kunst Regeling*-era (BKR) and another article in which several curators working for the RCE were interviewed (Kok, *Kunst Rijk Emmen Experience*, 2012) (Kok & Campo Rosillo, *Zomermiddag in huis*, 2011) (Snoodijk, 2011). In the latter article it became clear that cultural institutions could send in a request for art loans. From reading these articles the idea for an exhibition in the *Grote Kerk* featuring BKR artworks was born. The director of the RCE art depot, Michaela Hanssen, and researcher Arjen Kok, who was closely involved in the Eindhoven BKR exhibition, came to Emmen to discuss the idea in the autumn of 2011 (Aacken & Bergh, 2012). During this session it became clear that organizing an exhibition about the BKR was more difficult than foreseen. However, because of a RCE research project looking into the value and valuation of cultural heritage, Arjen Kok proposed the idea of a participatory project in which the RCE's and the SGKC's interests could be combined. This way, the SGKC would get an exhibition of works from the state's collection, and the RCE could research how and why the general public values art. The SGKC's board of directors was very hesitant about the participatory element of the project and needed a lot of

convincing by Didi van Aacken and Trees van den Bergh, who usually organized the exhibitions at the *Grote Kerk* (Aacken & Bergh, 2012).

At this point it was still unclear whether there would be enough funding for such a project, and an agreement was reached that if the funding for the participatory project fell through, the SGKC could still loan several works from the RCE and create their own exhibition (Aacken & Bergh, 2012). Funding for this project was needed to organize and coordinate the participatory elements of the project, something which neither the RCE nor the SGKC was going to do. Therefore, a consultancy agency needed to be hired to fulfill this task.

2.2 Goals of the project

The goals of the KRE project were twofold. On the one hand the SGKC wanted to “een groter en breeder publiek trekken” as well as “meer betrokkenheid van inwoners bij culturele activiteiten” (Stichting Grote Kerk Cultureel, 2012) (Timmer, Kunst Rijk Emmen - Planning, 2012, p. 1). Whilst working on the KRE project Petra Timmer’s research question was “om erachter te komen of en hoe publieksparticipatie meer betrokkenheid teweeg brengt [en] hoe deze ervaring in de toekomst door SGKC kan worden toegepast” (Timmer, Kunst Rijk Emmen - Planning, 2012, p. 1). On the other hand the RCE was interested in the project because of its own research into the value and valuation of cultural heritage. Valuation of cultural heritage is usually restricted to expert opinions. However, recently it has become more accepted to also involve the opinion of the public (Kok, 2012). The participatory project offered the opportunity to research how and why the general public values art. The RCE’s research will be expanded upon in section 2.3.4.

2.3 Set-up of the project

2.3.1 Preparation

The preparation process for this project was quite long. Once the SGKC had accepted Arjen Kok’s proposition for a participatory project, Kok contacted Petra Timmer from the *TiMe Amsterdam* consultancy agency to get her involved in the project as project director. Kok designed the participatory process, which Petra Timmer and the author would later guide the participants through.

Before any participation could take place it needed to be clear which art works were available for the exhibition. It had been agreed upon that the exhibition would feature works from the *Toonzaalcollectie*, and that no sculptures or pieces of furniture would be included. To manage the costs of bringing the artworks to Emmen a pre-selection of approximately 260 works was made from the *Toonzaalcollectie*. It was decided to use this part of the total collection because all of the works

belonging to it do not require any restoration, which meant they would be readily available and no extra costs would be involved. The pre-selection of 260 works was based on the maximum value of the works which could be transported to Emmen with regards to insurance, the type of artwork (no sculptures or pieces of furniture) and the size of the art work.

Images of the approximately 260 works selected for KRE were uploaded onto a specially created KRE account on the relatively new social media platform Pinterest. Pinterest was the obvious choice for this project as it is free to use, and easily accessible. Participants of the project could browse the 260 images and then 'repin' them on their own Pinterest account. The use of Pinterest will be discussed in more detail in the next sub-section.

One of the most important elements of the project was the participants. Participants would be recruited in the form of pre-existing groups. It was a conscious decision to invite groups rather than individuals for several reasons: firstly, the project team felt that groups can be easily contacted and communicated with, and secondly, because group members are generally comfortable around each other and used to working together. To select groups a longlist was made comprised of many different groups from the Emmen community, the criterion for groups to be on this list was simply that they had a cultural link. The participation element of the project required approximately six groups, and for this reason the longlist was shortened to consist of about eight different groups. This shorter list purposefully consisted of groups which all focused on different cultural exploits.

2.3.2 Participation

The previously mentioned eight groups from the Emmen community were invited to an informative session in the *Grote Kerk* which took place on May 8th 2012. The goal of this session was to inform the representatives of the groups invited to participate in the KRE project. A presentation was held to introduce the general set-up of the project and to inform the representatives more about the art collection from which works would be chosen. In the weeks that followed this informative session it became clear which groups would be participating in the project: members of the *Tourdion* choir, members of the carnival association *De Zeskante Steen*, the board of the *Gehandicapten Sportclub Emmen*, the board of *Filmhuis Emmen*, members of the Lion's Club *The Broken Circle* and several students from the *Stenden Hogeschool*. A month after the informative session the first introductory session took place, in which all the participating members of the groups were informed about the project. Nearly every group had their own introductory session. During this session participants were introduced to the social media tool which they needed to use in order to select works for the exhibition.

The social media website which was to be used for KRE was Pinterest. Pinterest is a "virtual pinboard" (Pinterest, 2012) on which users can 'pin' images they find or upload on(to) the web.

Before an account could be created on Pinterest, it was necessary for participants to have a Facebook or Twitter account. During each introductory session every participant received a printed copy of instructions on how to create a Twitter account and how to create and use a Pinterest account. It was decided to add instructions for creating a Twitter account because the project team did not expect everyone to have either Facebook or Twitter. The choice between instructions for Twitter or for Facebook was made based upon the level of simplicity of deactivating an account; it was easier to do so with a Twitter account.

Participants were given several weeks to create their accounts and make an individual selection of five works they would like to see in the final exhibition. Due to the fact that Pinterest is a public social website it was easy for the project team to keep track of who had created an account and what works they decided upon. Because the RCE needed to know on time which works would need to be prepared for transport there was a deadline involved for the final choice of the groups. It was up to the different groups in which way they would decide on their final choice. The *Tourdion* choir organized a group meeting at one of their member's homes, during which a presentation was shown of all the works which had been individually selected. Every participant spoke to the group about the reason they chose a certain work. Once this had been completed every participant could divide ten points across the works which (s)he wanted to see in the exhibition. The five works with the most points became the group selection (Alting & Zabel, Kunst Rijk Emmen Experience, 2012).

At this point in time it had become clear that the participants from *Stenden Hogeschool* could not be included in the final exhibition. Of the three students present during the introductory session, only one student made an individual selection. Due to this, the decision was made to replace the *Stenden Hogeschool* with another group, after this had been discussed with the single student. To replace this group several members of the Emmen city council were contacted to see if they were interested in participating in the KRE project. Five members of the council eventually participated in the project. Several weeks before the opening a slightly altered introductory session was held. Instead of instructing the participants about how to use Pinterest, five laptops with different presentations containing the still available works had been set up in order for the council members to make their group choice. After each council member had selected a work from one of the presentations they were asked to provide a motivation for their choice; these motivations were later incorporated into their texts for the brochure. This will be expanded upon further on in this section.

After all the groups had made their final selection, this was passed on to the RCE who would arrange the packing and transport of the works to Emmen. A specialized art transporter would bring the works to the church and would arrange the placing of the works on the walls. Participants were not involved in this element of the project.

Participants of the project had been informed about a creative element of the project during their introductory session. At that time the idea was that every group would do something creative based upon the works they had chosen for the exhibition. Examples which were used to illustrate what the organizing team had in mind included the Scottish initiative *'Inspired? Get writing!'* and the musical initiative *'Art Rocks!'* by the Boijmans van Beuningen museum in Rotterdam. *'Inspired? Get writing!'* is an annual creative writing competition in which participants write poetry or short stories based upon the inspiration they get from works of art belonging to the National Galleries of Scotland (English-Speaking Union of Scotland, 2012). The *'Art Rocks!'* initiative by the Boijmans van Beuningen museum was a musical competition during the first half of 2012 in which musicians were invited to get inspired by works from the museum's collection and to write and perform a song based upon a specific work (Boijmans van Beuningen, 2012). For all groups the eventual creative element turned out to be a short text about the works they had chosen, which would be published in the exhibition brochure. Five participants per group were invited to write a short piece inspired by one of the works selected by their group. Some participants wrote two texts as their group was smaller than five people. The *Tourdion* choir put more effort into the creative process by deciding to select five works from their musical repertoire which matched the five works of art they had chosen for the exhibition. They invested in five mp3-players and built their own consoles on which the mp3-players could rest. These consoles were placed below or next to the works in the church with instructions on how to use the mp3-player.

On September 30th 2012 the exhibition was opened. Nearly all of the participants were in attendance, and the *Tourdion* choir even surprised all of the attendants with a rendition of the *Magnificat*, composed by Hendrik Andriessen. The opening was attended by approximately 200 people, including the mayor of Emmen, Cees Bijl, and the director of the art collections at the RCE, Michaela Hanssen. In the weeks following the opening the different groups participating were invited to organize tours of the exhibition for the non-participating members of their group, their friends and their family. These tours were mostly also open to the public. Every group organized this in a different way: whilst some stayed for several hours and talked to all kinds of visitors to inform them about the exhibition, others organized a private evening tour with drinks and snacks.

Participants were also involved in publicity for KRE. All the different groups were interviewed by a local newspaper, *De ZuidOosthoek*, which would publish an article about a specific group and the exhibition every week during the time of the exhibition. *RTV Drenthe* also interviewed a number of participants about their involvement with KRE.

2.3.3 Photography project

In the late spring of 2012 *Stichting DOEN* had some concerns about the potential quality of the presentation of the exhibition. The worry was based on the fact that the exhibition would consist of forty different works which had nothing in common and could be confusing to visitors. A meeting was organized at the Amsterdam office of the RCE to discuss options to possibly improve the quality of the presentation. During this meeting Didi van Aacken and Trees van den Bergh represented the SGKC, Steve Elbers represented *Stichting DOEN*, Arjen Kok represented the RCE, Petra Timmer attended the meeting as the KRE project manager and the author attended in her role as intern. Arnoud Odding, an independent advisor to cultural institutions, attended the meeting to help brainstorm about possible ways to improve the quality of KRE. The meeting led to the formation of several ideas to increase the quality of the presentation by making the participants visible in the exhibition. Following the brainstorm, two ideas were produced: a documentary about the project, and a photography project.

It was decided that the documentary project would be a good way to improve the quality of the project, as it would illustrate the process behind the selection of the works. Also, because it would register the participation process it could be used as a sort of instruction for future projects. Furthermore, the documentary could be offered to different media outlets which would make the documentary publicity material. Unfortunately it was not possible to get enough funding to finance the documentary project and the project was cancelled. The photography project, contrary to the documentary, was achievable. The idea behind the photography project was that several different photographers would photograph the participants, and the results would be used in the exhibition. Possibly the results could also be used for publicity means. With permission from *Stichting DOEN* the financing of the photography project was arranged by using money which had been set aside for the facilitation of meetings with the participatory groups and for workshops benefiting the public. The money from the former had not been necessary and the money for the latter would not be needed because the participatory groups would organize their own tours of the exhibition. Part of the budget for publicity was also used for the photography project (Timmer, Personal Communication, 2012).

For this photography project Arjen Kok contacted Welmer Keesmaat, who is a photographer and graphic designer as well as an editor for a photography magazine. He was asked to select several different photographers who would capture the portraits of the different participatory groups. Keesmaat selected three different photographers/video artists. Teun Vonk is a video artist who captured the portraits of the *Carnavalsvereniging de Zeskante Steen* and *Kamerkoor Tourdion*. Heidi de Gier is a photographer who portrayed the *Filmhuis Emmen* and the *Gehandicapten Sportclub Emmen*. The third photographer was Willeke Duijvekam, who took photos of the *Lions Club the Broken Circle* and of the Emmen council members. The photographic results joined the works the

groups had chosen in the exhibition. Nevertheless, the photos/videos were not used for publicity means due to the fact that the *Gehandicapten Sportclub Emmen* was very unhappy with the result of their photo-shoot as none of the participants was recognizable in the resulting photograph (Timmer, Personal Communication, 2012). The photographer needed to produce a new result, which took time, making it too late for the photo's to be used as publicity means.

2.3.4 Research

Several research elements were incorporated into the KRE project. Senior researcher Arjen Kok from the RCE was interested in the KRE project due to a research program he is involved with at the RCE. This research program, *Waarde en Waardering*, delves into the different ways that heritage can be valued (Rijksdienst voor Cultureel Erfgoed, 2012). This research is mainly focused on how experts (should) value heritage, rather than on the valuation done by the public (Kok, 2012). One of the main goals of the research program was to create a methodology by which museums can value their collection based on different aspects such as historical value and social value. The research program is generally focused solely on professional valuations. However, the RCE felt that it would be interesting to add an element based on the valuation by the general public. To be able to say something about how the regular public values art two surveys were set up for the KRE participants to fill out; the first survey showed participants images of art works which they had to rate based on appearance, feeling, intellectual challenge, beauty, originality and skill. The second survey consisted of the same images and questions, but each picture was followed by a piece of text about the work written by an art expert. The goal of these surveys was to see whether the expert text influences the opinion of the participant about the work. The participants were divided into two groups; one group filled in the first survey, the other group filled in the second.

Related elements to the aforementioned research are the motivations participants in the KRE project provided when making their individual choice of works. An inventory was made of all the comments participants made on the Pinterest website to see what reasons they gave for choosing a certain work. By doing this it was possible to see what participants focused on when selecting an art work: emotions, memories, color, artist or technique. Although nothing was published about the results of the inventory, it was clear that one of the main reasons for selecting a work was nostalgia.

A second research element linked to the KRE project was a survey about the project itself. This survey was designed and processed by Petra Timmer and the author. As previously mentioned, KRE was a pilot project and it was very relevant to find out how participants had experienced this participation project. Every element of the project; the introductory meetings, the creation of a Pinterest account, the selection process (individual and group), the creative process, the

photography project, the project website and the group tours was included in the survey. The results would be used in the final report written about the project by the project manager.

2.3.5 Knowledge sharing

As mentioned earlier KRE was a pilot project. *Stichting DOEN* required that the organizers of the KRE project arranged a meeting with others from the cultural field to share the experiences of KRE. For this reason, a meeting was organized in the *Grote Kerk* during which several presentations were given to inform representatives of several cultural institutions in Drenthe about the project and how they could use participation at their own institution. Besides the presentations given by members of the organizing committee, a representative from *Stichting DOEN* informed the attendants about what kind of projects they support. Furthermore, a representative from *Kunst & Cultuur Drenthe*, an institution which supports and advises other cultural institutions, delved deeper into the concept of participation and how it can be implemented by cultural institutions (Timmer, Samenvatting 16 November, 2012).

2.4 Results of the project

The results of the project are listed in the report that *Stichting DOEN* requires every project they fund to send to them. Quantitative results of the project are limited to the number of visitors that came to see the exhibition: approximately 2900 (Aacken & Bergh, 2012). This is 600 visitors less than the expected 3500 visitors (Timmer, Rapportage aan Stichting DOEN, 2012). The suspected reason for this is the fact that the exhibition was cut short by three weeks. Qualitative results are numerous; according to the results of a questionnaire the participants had to fill out after the project they were very enthusiastic about the project and enjoyed the experience very much (Timmer, Resultaten Enquete, 2013). More results from the survey, which twenty of the forty-four participants filled out, will be mentioned throughout chapter three. For a full overview of the questions and results please see Appendix A. Furthermore, the visitors to the exhibition were also very enthusiastic about the project; this was concluded from the extended duration of their stay at the exhibition, their reactions and the entries in the guestbook. The large amount of attention the KRE project and the SGKC received from the local media is seen as a positive result; due to the attention the SGKC can be seen as an important element of the Emmen cultural scene by the local council, local artists, other cultural institutions as well as potential partners. Also, the exhibition has given a positive contribution to the city of Emmen's image and identity (Timmer, Rapportage aan Stichting DOEN, 2012). The social value of the project was not as high as it could have been, arguably due to the design of the project. This will be expanded upon in section 3.4.2.

The research done by the RCE with regards to the valuation of movable cultural heritage led to the publication *Op de museale weegschaal – collectiewaardering in zes stappen* in which a step-by-step guide is given with regards to valuating collections. The publication is downloadable from the RCE website: <http://www.cultureelerfgoed.nl/waarderen> .

CHAPTER 3 EVALUATING KUNST RIJK EMMEN

The previous chapters have delved deeper into the concept of participation and have explained what the KRE project entailed. This chapter will take a closer look at several aspects of the project; the set-up of the project, the goals of the project, staff member roles and the division of labor, the participatory elements of the project, and the results of the project. To be able to evaluate all these aspects of the project the information from the previous chapters will be implemented and will be supplemented with information gained from interviews with staff members and participants of the project as well as with results from a survey held under participants to get their opinion on the project.

3.1 Set-up of the project

The KRE project can be identified as a case in which collaborative participation is used to reach institutional goals. As was explained in chapter two, several groups from the local Emmen community were invited to develop a new exhibition at the Grote Kerk in Emmen. They were purposefully chosen for being diverse in their main activities, thus representing a broad demographic in the area. As explained in chapter one, there are two distinctive categories within collaborative projects: consultive and co-development projects. KRE can be identified as a co-development collaborative project due to the fact that staff members and participants worked together to create a new exhibition. The KRE project consisted of many different elements; all the participatory elements will be discussed in section 3.1.2. This section will evaluate the general set-up of the project, as well as the photography project which was part of KRE.

3.1.1 General Set-up

When asked whether they were happy with the set-up of the project, all interviewees answered positively. Petra Timmer says: “Wat lastig was aan de opzet was de tijdsdruk die er op zat. [...] Ik denk ook hoe we het [project] hebben georganiseerd over het algemeen goed was, dat blijkt ook uit de enquête [...] Alleen de tijd die we er voor hadden genomen was wel kort.” (Timmer, Kunst Rijk Emmen Experience, 2012).. The lack of time becomes particularly clear in section 3.1.2, in which the photography project is discussed. Some elements of the project were added at a later stage, meaning there was more pressure to finish them before a certain time. This can be explained by the fact that the KRE project was a pilot project for all those involved, and evolved with the passing of time. However, as will be shown in section 3.1.2 it is better to prepare the entire project beforehand, and ensure enough time for all elements to be completed.

Due to the project’s identity as a co-development collaborative project the relationship between the institution and the participants is quite formal and takes place over a longer period of time

(Simon, 2010). At the beginning of the project Arjen Kok, Petra Timmer and the author gave a presentation to the participants through which they were informed about what was expected of them and over what period of time the project would take place. However, during this presentation groups were not informed about how they would benefit from participating in a project such as KRE, contrary to what Simon says is an important element of collaborative projects. Nevertheless, Hannie Alting and Hilje Zabel, two participants from the *Tourdion* choir both admitted that their main reason for participating in the project was having *Tourdion* “in the picture” (Alting & Zabel, Kunst Rijk Emmen Experience, 2012). Although the benefits for the *Tourdion* choir may have been clear to its members, this may not have been the case for other groups, which shows the importance of making benefits very clear to (potential) participants. The two other elements which were mentioned in chapter one, the promise and the tools, were made very clear to the participants. Participants were indeed promised an appealing experience, and were handed easy-to-use tools to be able to participate in the project. This will be expanded upon in section 3.4, about participation.

On a design level the project may be seen as successful in the sense that it was properly scaffolded. As was explained in chapter one, scaffolding is necessary in participatory projects because “visitors don’t want a blank slate for participation. They need well-scaffolded experiences that put their contributions to meaningful use” (Simon, 2010, p. 25). Participants were given instructions about every part of the project for which their contribution was needed. This will be illustrated further on in this chapter.

3.1.2 Photography Project

As explained in chapter two, the photography project was implemented to improve the quality of the exhibition. The photographs would show who was behind the choice of artworks on the walls. Because the details of the project were finalized quite late, the participants only found out about this element of the project at the beginning of September 2012, several months after their introductory session held at the beginning of summer. Due to the amount of work the participants were already doing voluntarily there was some concern about also asking them to meet for a photo session. However, Hannie Alting and Hilje Zabel both felt that the staff did not ask too much of them. Asked about their opinion on the photography element of the project, 65 per cent of the participants felt that it was good to be visible as a group in the exhibition (Timmer, Resultaten Enquete, 2013). Unfortunately, the photography project did run into some problems. All three photographers hired for the project had little time to meet with their subjects to produce the photographs to ensure their readiness before the opening of the exhibition. For example, the meeting with the Emmen council members replacing the *Stenden Hogeschool* students was not only a session in which they decided on their selection of works for the exhibition, but it was also the photography session. This had been

arranged on short notice due to the fact that it would be extremely difficult to get all the different council members in the same place at the same time at any other given moment. Furthermore, an anonymous member of the Lion's Club *The Broken Circle* mentions in the survey that not only (s)he was disappointed in the result of the photo-shoot, this feeling was only strengthened by the fact that members who came to the photo-shoot later were not included in the final result (Timmer, Resultaten Enquete, 2013). The members of the *Gehandicaption Sportclub Emmen* were perhaps even more disappointed with the result of their photo-shoot (Timmer, Resultaten Enquete, 2013). The photographer had taken individual portraits of all the participants, and had used a photo manipulation program to cut all these portraits in small pieces and mesh them into one portrait. None of the participants were recognizable in the portrait, which not only hurt the feelings of the participants, but was also completely opposite to the point of having portraits in the exhibition in the first place. The photographer understood this and produced a new product, which suited the purpose of the photograph better and was also more acceptable to the participants. Eventually all groups were happy with the result and all ordered copies of the portrait for their own use.

The *Tourdion* choir had a completely different experience with their photographer/video-artist. Hannie Alting e-mailed the author on September 17th 2012 to say that *Tourdion's* experience with the photographer had been a lot of fun, which was confirmed during the interview in which both Alting and Zabel said they enjoyed the photo-shoot enormously (Alting, Personal Communication, 2012) (Alting & Zabel, Kunst Rijk Emmen Experience, 2012). Approximately 45 per cent of the participants also felt that their session with the photographers was fun, but only 40 per cent of participants felt that their portrait was a success (Timmer, Resultaten Enquete, 2013). These results are perhaps a consequence of the negative experiences expanded upon above.

Beside the extra quality the photographs would bring to the exhibition, the photographs could also have been used as publicity means. Unfortunately, this was not realized. Petra Timmer thinks this is because the photography project was started at a later stage, and the publicity plan needs to be planned quite some time ahead. Because the photography project was included so late, there was not enough time to include it in the publicity plan (Timmer, Kunst Rijk Emmen Experience, 2012). Furthermore, something which also played a role in the exclusion of the photographs for publicity means is the fact that the photograph for the *Gehandicaption Sportclub* needed to be re-produced, which took too much time for proper implementation (Timmer, Personal Communication, 2013)

Didi van Aacken and Trees van den Bergh, the SGKC representatives, were both very disappointed in this element of the project (Aacken & Bergh, 2012). What they particularly disliked about the project was the feeling that they were pushed to accept Welmer Keesmaat's plan for this part of the KRE project. Van Aacken and van den Bergh had selected a photographer from the

Emmen area to be a part of the photography project, but Keesmaat decided against it and selected different photographers (Aacken & Bergh, 2012).

To summarize, although it was a relevant element to the project, the photography project was implemented too late to reach its full potential. The pressure the photographers were under to produce a work was high; they were dependent on the availability of the project participants who were not available at all times. Furthermore, the organizing of the project led to some internal strife when the SGKC's suggestion for a photographer was not accepted.

3.2 Goals of the Project

Chapter two showed that the KRE project had multiple layers of goals. This section will take a look at these goals and whether or not they have been reached. The SGKC intended to gain “een groter en breeder publiek” as well as “meer betrokkenheid van inwoners bij culturele activiteiten” (Stichting Grote Kerk Cultureel, 2012, own translation) (Timmer, Kunst Rijk Emmen - Planning, 2012, own translation). These goals coincide with at least one of the “five commonly-expressed forms of public dissatisfaction that participatory techniques address” (Simon, 2010, p. iii). The public dissatisfaction in this case is as Simon puts it: “Cultural institutions are irrelevant to my life” (Simon, 2010, p. iii). Unfortunately, the KRE exhibition did not have as many visitors as the project team had planned on getting. Instead of the hoped for 3500 visitors, only 2900 people came to the *Grote Kerk* to visit the exhibition. According to Van Aacken and van den Bergh their exhibitions are generally visited by approximately 2000 people (2012). The lower number of visitors to KRE could be explained by the fact the exhibition was cut short by several weeks to ensure the readiness of the church for its next event, although this was partially made up for by extending the opening hours to also include Sunday afternoon. Petra Timmer (Kunst Rijk Emmen Experience, 2012) argues that not having reached the 3500 visitors should not be an indicator whether the project was successful or not; she finds that the quality of the visit is also of importance: “Heel lastig te meten, maar je kunt natuurlijk kijken naar de duur, van hoe lang blijven mensen. Zelfs herhaal bezoek, waarvan je zegt ja dat is dezelfde persoon dus heb je helemaal niet meer mensen bereikt, maar het feit dat, wil dus zeggen dat het heel goed is aangekomen.” (Timmer, Kunst Rijk Emmen Experience, 2012). Nevertheless, the quality and extent of the visits to the exhibition were not measured.

The exhibition received a lot of media exposure. Particularly the local press picked up on the exhibition; newspapers, television- and radio stations all interviewed participants and organizers. Although it was not researched as to how much influence this media exposure had on the visitor numbers, it could be argued that the media exposure in the area did inform the local inhabitants about the project and convinced them to visit the exhibition. A local radio station interviewed

members from every group about music they liked as well as about the project (RTV Drenthe, 2012). These broadcasts were aired every day in the week of the opening of the exhibition. A local newspaper, the *Zuidoosthoek*, interviewed all groups about their chosen works and featured a different group in the newspaper every week during the duration of the project.

The SGKC also wanted to involve the local public in the Emmen area with cultural activities. This can certainly be seen as a goal which has been reached. The groups which were invited to participate in the project came from a broad spectrum of the local population. This was done purposefully to not only involve them in the project, but also to convince their backing to visit the exhibition. This way, people who do not regularly visit exhibitions could perhaps be persuaded to visit the *Grote Kerk*. Unfortunately, this was not investigated. Also, the exhibition was publicized as an exhibition put together by the local community, implying that visitors can closely relate to those who chose the works in the exhibition and therefore making them feel involved with the project. A problem which can arise when setting up a participatory project is that you make participants included, but make visitors feel excluded. If your goal is to involve the local public with cultural activities by organizing a participatory project, it is of vital importance that you avoid making visitors feel excluded. Although an effort was made in the KRE project to avoid this feeling of exclusion by presenting the project as one made possible by local inhabitants, more could have been done to ensure the feeling of inclusion. For example, visitors to the project could have been invited to make their own exhibition by using the Pinterest webpage, which could then be featured on the KRE website.

As explained in section 1.3.2 about collaborative participation, Simon argues that how successful a collaborative participatory project is does not rely on the number of participants, but on “what happens after the project is over” (p.232). She reasons that if participants become more involved with the institution after the completion of the project, the project can be labeled a success. From the survey held amongst participants it unfortunately cannot be concluded whether the participants intend to become more involved with the institution. What does become clear is that 25 percent of the respondents intends to visit the exhibitions at the *Grote Kerk* more often as participating in the project has increased their interest in the arts (Timmer, Resultaten Enquete, 2013). This is a positive result even though 60 percent of the respondents indicated that they already often visited the *Grote Kerk* (Timmer, Resultaten Enquete, 2013).

The RCE was interested in the KRE project for several reasons; firstly, they wished to incorporate a research element into the project which would look at the way the general public values art. As explained previously, this was done by making an inventory of the reasons given by participants for selecting specific works of art. This way, these motivations could be compared to the opinion's of arts professionals and it could be discovered how values differ between professionals and non-professionals. Secondly, they wished to present their collection in different places and for different

audiences. The RCE successfully presented a part of their collection to a different audience; usually the *Toonzaalcollectie* can only be viewed in ministry buildings and offices, or in Dutch embassies across the globe. The RCE now also offers non-government institutions the chance to borrow the works and make them visible for a different audience. To make this affordable to small institutions such as the SGKC the price per object borrowed was drastically lowered; per object the institutions needs to pay €80, regardless of the type of object. This is much cheaper compared to the €900 normally asked per object for furniture and modern art, or €1.700 per object for old art (Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed, 2012). The low price is only applicable if the works are used for an exhibition. Making these works accessible to institutions across the country for a reasonable price will certainly help the RCE make their collections more visible to the general public, and the KRE project is a good example of this.

3.3 Staff member roles and the division of labor

Nina Simon identifies four different roles staff members play in collaborative projects. First, there are the project directors, “who manage the collaboration and keep the project on track” (Simon, 2010, p. 243). Secondly, there are community managers. These community managers represent the participants in the sense that they closely work with them and “advocate for their needs” (Simon, 2010, p. 243). Thirdly, some staff members take on the role of instructor. Instructors provide the training for participants in order to ensure their participation in the project. Fourth and finally, there are client representatives. These representatives represent “institutional interests and requirements” (Simon, 2010, p. 243). This section will evaluate the roles staff members played and how the division of labor was arranged. This is an important part of the evaluation because “participants have specific relationships with each of these staff roles, and these different relationships help make collaborations fair and reasonable” (Simon, 2010, p. 243).

The staff members which will be identified according to their roles in this project are Petra Timmer, Didi van Aacken, Trees van den Bergh, Arjen Kok and the author. Petra Timmer was first and foremost the project director but was also a community manager, as she stayed in touch with participants and took their needs into account. Didi van Aacken and Trees van den Bergh can be identified as client representatives, as they represented the SGKC during the project. Arjen Kok can also be seen as a client representative as he represented the RCE during the project; however he also played a role as instructor during the presentations for the participating groups. The author had a combined role of both a community manager and an instructor.

Simon argues that “it’s particularly important to separate out instructors and client representatives from other project staff.”(p. 243). This is important, she believes, because contrary to project directors and community managers, instructors and client representatives are authority

figures, not partners. It is beneficial to the project if the project director(s) and community manager(s) do not have to play an authority role whilst collaborating with the participants, because “collaboration requires equitable partnerships, whereas instruction often reinforces unbalanced power relationships between instructors and students” (Simon, 2010, p. 243). The KRE project partially adhered to this ‘policy’: none of the client representatives had a double role as a project director or community manager. As a client representative only Arjen Kok had a double role, but also as an authority figure: an instructor. Petra Timmer also played a double role, but both were facilitatory towards the participants, not authoritarian. Where the project (unintentionally) did not adhere to Simon’s ‘policy’ was with the roles the author played. The author instructed the participants in how they were to participate via Pinterest by making a how-to manual for them and going through it with them once, but after this mainly played a role as a community manager by staying in touch with the participants. Simon suggests that it is better to bring in guest instructors or asking past participants of the project to teach participants about the process to ensure that they do not feel inferior. Due to the fact that this project was a pilot, there were no previous participants, yet in retrospect bringing in a guest instructor would have been useful to avoid having the participants feel inferior.

The above shows why instructors would need to be separated from the project director and community manager roles, but why would client representatives need to be kept separate from these roles? Simon identifies a client representative as “someone who has institutional authority over the direction of the project and may be different from the staff member who works with participants on a daily basis” (p. 244). She argues that the client representative is the “ultimate audience” (p.244) for the work the participants produce and “helps hold participants accountable by giving specific feedback that may be more honest (and potentially uncomfortable) than that offered by other project staff” (p.244). Although the identification of a client representative does concur with the way Van Aacken, van den Bergh and Kok played their role, the latter quote mentioned above certainly does not concur. In the case of the KRE project the client representatives did not give any feedback to the participants for several reasons; firstly, the point of the entire exhibition was that the participants chose the works, not the organizers. The client representatives therefore, had no ‘right’ to give participants feedback about their choice. Secondly, the creative element of the project, which consisted of writing a short text for the exhibition brochure about why a work was chosen or what the work reminded the participant of, was very personal. It would be against the entire idea of the creative element to give feedback about the quality of the work to the participants.

The division of labor within the organization of the KRE project does not necessarily concur with the division of roles as explained above. For example, although Van Aacken and van den Bergh were client representatives, they did play a somewhat active role in the organization of the project, specifically with regards to local contacts and representing the project in the media. Arjen Kok, also a

client representative, designed the project, was active in the photography project and was active in his research element. Petra Timmer worked on the project on a regular basis, and was actively involved with all elements of the project, as she had to keep the project on track. According to Timmer the author played a strong role in the back office of the project “zeker de organisatie naar de deelnemers toe, en al het ICT werk waar wij minder sterk in zijn” (Timmer, Kunst Rijk Emmen Experience, 2012). The IT work in question concerned creating a Pinterest account for the project, putting all the works available for the project on the website with a proper description, keeping the project website updated with news about the project and designing the brochure for the exhibition. In its entirety the project took a lot of work, which needs to be taken into account if a small cultural institution wants to implement a participation project such as KRE: it requires hundreds of hours of work. What also needs to be considered with regards to the KRE example is the fact that the SGKC is an organization based on part-time volunteers whilst Simon talks about professional organizations with employees who can probably spend more time on a project.

It can be argued that it was a good thing that a consultancy agency was hired for the KRE project as it could share in the workload. However, in KRE’s case, the location of the consultancy agency caused a new problem. Due to the fact the consultancy agency was based in Amsterdam, several hundred kilometers away from Emmen, there were some communication issues. Between Petra Timmer, Arjen Kok and the author communication often took place face-to-face, via e-mail and via telephone, but between the aforementioned three and Van Aacken and Van den Bergh communication was mainly set up by e-mail. Van Aacken, van den Bergh and Timmer all found the communication between them quite difficult. Timmer thinks that it would have been better to e-mail less and see each other face-to-face more to discuss the progress of the project, but she realized that this would have been hard to realize because of everyone’s busy schedules (Kunst Rijk Emmen Experience, 2012). Van Aacken and Van den Bergh particularly found the communication lacking in the sense that due to lack of- or miscommunication the division of labor did not become clear (Kunst Rijk Emmen Experience, 2012). Also, a problem which can occur during e-mail contact, and which did in fact occur during KRE, is that messages come across as especially harsh and/or mean, whilst this was not the intention of the writer at all. If the consultancy agency had come from a location closer to Emmen “[zou] het informeren van elkaar makkelijker, gewoon, logistiek makkelijker[zijn], dan het nu is geweest. [...] Je kunt dan veel makkelijker een afspraak maken met elkaar.” (Aacken & Bergh, 2012).

What also needs to be taken into consideration is the fact that Van Aacken and Van den Bergh, who were in fact Petra Timmer’s principal, were part of the project organizing team. This is one of the points which Van Aacken, Van den Bergh and Timmer were very critical of when interviewed. For example, when Van Aacken and Van den Bergh were asked what their exact role was during the

project they honestly admitted they found that a hard question to answer (Aacken & Bergh, 2012). In the following excerpt from the interview with Van Aacken and Van den Bergh they elaborate on their role:

Van den Bergh: *“Ik heb zelf nogal geworsteld met het idee dat we zo nu en dan de rol van opdrachtgever in onze maag gesplitst kregen, en soms ook dat echt voelde als zodanig. Maar soms ook helemaal niet, dat ik dacht ‘hé, ho eens even’, wij waren toch de opdrachtgever, dan mogen we toch...”*

Van Aacken: *“Precies, dan mogen wij toch ook onze voorkeuren geven? [...] Maar ook nog eens omdat dit een pilot is, dat hebben wij ook gezegd, we moesten het wiel uitvinden.”*

(Aacken & Bergh, 2012)

This excerpt shows the difficulty both ladies had with the role they had to play. Officially the SGKC was the principal of the KRE project. Van Aacken and Van den Bergh are volunteers in of the cultural committee of the SGKC, and in particular are responsible for the exhibitions in the church. They normally organize exhibitions on their own, not in collaboration with an agency such as *TiME Amsterdam*, and therefore they were not used to their ‘new’ role as principal. Petra Timmer realized the difficult position Van Aacken and Van den Bergh were put in could lead to problems:

“In de formele zin, als je kijkt naar het formele proces van het project inrichten en het project leiden, zij voelde zich, en ze zijn het misschien ook wel, vertegenwoordigers van de opdrachtgever, maar zij zaten dus in het projectteam, dus het komt het er op een gegeven moment op neer dat ik, als projectleider sta je onder, formeel gezien hè, onder de opdrachtgever, maar de opdrachtgever is vertegenwoordigd in het projectteam dat ik moet leiden.”

(Timmer, Kunst Rijk Emmen Experience, 2012)

In a formal sense, the roles of Van Aacken and Van den Bergh were therefore quite difficult. This problematic situation was caused by the fact that the RCE, who came up with the idea for KRE, could not apply for funding from *Stichting DOEN* because it is a government organization. Therefore, the SGKC needed to apply and hence became the principal for *TiME Amsterdam*. What needs to be taken into account in this case is that the KRE project was a pilot: there was no manual on how to organize a participation project, incorporating all the elements such as the selection method, the creative contribution and the research elements. Due to this, the RCE required the SGKC to hire a consultancy agency to ensure the project stayed on track (Aacken & Bergh, 2012). The involvement of the consultancy agency led to the changed role for Van Aacken and Van den Bergh. Nevertheless, they still felt they played an executive role during the organization of the project. Furthermore, they were the face of the project: they were the ones who invited the groups to participate in the project

and they represented the project organization during interviews and events. Especially the latter part was of great importance for the future of exhibitions in the *Grote Kerk* and both women realized this: “Wij moeten hier door, en ze moeten uiteindelijk ons weten te vinden [...], en niet het projectbureau in Amsterdam.” (Aacken & Bergh, 2012). This certainly is a valid point, by having Van Aacken and Van den Bergh represent the project they also shine a light on their organization. This can give them more credibility as exhibition organizers with both artists, the local council and the local community: “Wij zijn bekend bij de bestuurders van Emmen, [...] de burgemeester, bij de ambtenaren die er verder ook toe doen, gewoon als een serieus cultureel platform.[...] Ik kan het niet helemaal hard maken, we waren wel een beetje sexy op het moment dat we bezig waren met Kunst Rijk Emmen, dachten mensen nou, daar wil ik wel bij horen.” (Aacken & Bergh, 2012).

During the project Van Aacken and Van den Bergh, nor any of their team members, acted as a community manager towards the participants. Considering their role as client representative, Van Aacken and Van den Bergh do fit into the profile set up by Nina Simon, but perhaps it would have been better if they had connected to their participants, rather than someone who is not part of the SGKC. A goal for Petra Timmer was “om erachter te komen of en hoe publieksparticipatie meer betrokkenheid teweeg brengt [en] hoe deze ervaring in de toekomst door SGKC kan worden toegepast” (Timmer, Kunst Rijk Emmen - Planning, 2012, p. 1, own translation). It would have been more logical if at least one of the SGKC team members had played the role of community manager, so they could actively stay in touch with their participants and closely monitor their experience. This can certainly be seen as a missed opportunity.

3.4 Participation

Participation was the most important element of the KRE project. This section of the evaluation chapter will look at different parts of the participation process, as well as at the participants.

3.4.1 Selection of participants

As mentioned previously in this paper, several groups from the Emmen community were invited to participate in the KRE project. As explained in chapter two, the decision was made to invite groups rather than individuals for several reasons: because the project team felt that groups can be easily contacted and communicated with, and because group members are generally comfortable around each other and used to working together. Didi van Aacken and Trees van den Bergh started their search for participating groups by creating a long list of different kinds of groups in the Emmen area. They invited a number of groups from this list to participate in the project by sending a representative of the group a letter explaining the project and inviting them to an informative session to be held in the *Grote Kerk*. These groups were selected because they had diverse

backgrounds and represented a broad demographic. After the inforatory session, held on May 8th 2012, all but one of the groups decided to participate in the project. The group that decided not to participate felt that being part of the KRE project would require too much time.

Due to its pilot status, it is the author's opinion that it was smart to invite groups instead of individuals to participate in this project. Not only do the reasons above reflect this, but also the fact that due to the diverse backgrounds of the groups the possibility to reach a potentially large group of people who normally do not attend art exhibitions. Furthermore, by reaching out to pre-existing groups you reach much more potential participants, compared to if you would request individuals to participate.

3.4.2 Participation process

Selecting the works

Selecting the art works for the exhibition was arguably the most important participatory element of the KRE project. A lot of thought went into the design of this participatory element; because the project had a relatively tight budget the method needed to be as cheap as possible, and preferably free. It was quickly decided upon that designing the participation process via the internet would be the easiest to arrange and to monitor. Hans Schraven, the RCE's web and new media specialist, proposed using a relatively new social media platform called Pinterest. Due to the pre-existing infrastructure on Pinterest it would not be necessary to design an own website to post all the images of available works on. Pinterest made it possible to post all the images and information about works on a specific KRE page, which was publicly accessible. By having participants also create accounts which would be publicly accessible it would be easy to monitor their progress. Something potentially problematic about using Pinterest was that it required users to register with a Facebook or Twitter account. The project team understood that it was probable that not every participant had either of these. As explained in chapter two, a decision was made to not only make a manual explaining to participants how to create a Pinterest account, but also how to create a Twitter account in case they did not have access to one already. This manual was discussed during the introductory meeting with all the participants, and although they could take the manual home with them they were free to call the author if they needed any help with creating either account. The survey amongst participants about the project showed that 60 per cent of the respondents found the explanation about creating a Pinterest account clear to very clear (Timmer, Resultaten Enquete, 2013). Approximately 65 per cent of the respondents created a Pinterest account without too much trouble, and approximately 20 per cent called the author for some assistance (Timmer, Resultaten Enquete, 2013).

Hannie Alting and Hilje Zabel both thoroughly enjoyed the Pinterest experience for multiple reasons, even though they were both hesitant about it at first. Firstly they enjoyed the fact that this

way they could sit at home and take their time in selecting the works. Secondly, once they had registered they found that Pinterest also gave them the possibility to interact with each other by leaving messages on each other's pages (Alting & Zabel, Kunst Rijk Emmen Experience, 2012). Participants were informed about this possibility during the introductory meeting; however the survey shows that nearly 65 per cent of the respondents did not interact with other participants on Pinterest (Timmer, Resultaten Enquete, 2013). This shows that there was not much bonding in between groups. Other than Pinterest there were no other opportunities before the exhibition opening for participants to mingle and bond with participants from other groups.

As explained, the selection process consisted of two parts: first the participants made an individual choice after which they would get together with their group and make a final decision. The group decision was not controlled in any way: it was up to the groups themselves how they wanted to arrange this. These group decisions were made in different ways; the majority of group decisions were made by organizing a meeting, but at least one group decision was made via e-mail (Timmer, Resultaten Enquete, 2013). The survey shows that making the choice as a group had several effects: approximately 43 per cent of the respondents found that because of the group experience they got to know their group members in a different way, whilst more than 70 per cent found that they looked at the works of art differently after hearing others' opinions about it (Timmer, Resultaten Enquete, 2013).

This element of the KRE project clearly illustrates the 'from me-to-we' process which Nina Simon expands on in her book and which was discussed earlier in chapter one. All the steps which she identifies in the process have been met, although there is one significant difference: the stages are used to illustrate how something changes from an individual experience to a communal experience. However, all the individuals participating in the project were already part of a community participating in the project. Admittedly, the process could make the communal bond stronger, but there is a different way of looking at this as well: going from all the different participatory groups to one large group. As this paper shows there were no opportunities for the different groups to mingle in such a way that their communal experience expands to encompass all the participants. The social value of the project, therefore, was not as high as it could have been.

Creative element

In the early stages of the project there was a plan to offer all the participants a workshop in, roughly said, getting inspired by artworks. After the introductory meetings with all the groups however it became clear that this would be very hard to realize due to the limited timeframe available. The introductory meetings had all taken place at the beginning of summer 2012, after which the participants needed time to make their individual and group choices, and due to the season a lot of

the participants went on holiday as well. In reality therefore, a workshop could not be realized. Instead, Arjen Kok sent images of all the selected works to the different participants which selected them and asked them to write a short text about it. The texts were used in the exhibition brochure instead of texts about the work written by art professionals. This part of the participatory process was quite scaffolded in the sense that Arjen Kok, who e-mailed the participants inviting them to write a text, made clear suggestions about what to write:

Wat roept het werk bij je op? Welke persoonlijke herinneringen of anekdotes komen boven als naar het kunstwerk kijkt. Waar doet het je aan denken? Zijn er beelden, geuren, sferen of gedachten die je voor de geest komen als je er naar kijkt? Wat de kunstenaar met het werk bedoeld heeft is niet belangrijk. En wat de conservator over het werk kan vertellen doet er ook niet toe.

(Kok, creatieve opdracht Kunst Rijk Emmen, 2012)

The survey shows that all the participants thought it was fun to be able to show why you enjoy a work of art so much, or how it inspires you. Furthermore, the survey showed that almost 65 per cent of the respondents found that it was very interesting to read what other people wrote about the works (Timmer, Resultaten Enquete, 2013). Comments from visitors to the exhibition were also positive: “Heel bijzonder het schilderij van W.H.F. Boers gekozen door Sinja Kuipers, gehandicapten sportclub. Geweldig hoe zij de elementen op het schilderij op haar leven van toepassing laat zijn. Bewonderenswaardig.” (Kunst Rijk Emmen Visitor, 2012).

If there had been more time this element could have been developed further by the organizers: for example, a workshop could have been organized and the creative contribution could have been expanded to not only include short texts, but also songs or artworks. The *Kamerkoor Tourdion* decided to expand their creative contribution, without any incentive from the organizers. During their group meeting to decide on their group choice they also made a selection of songs from their own repertoire which fit with the works they had chosen. For visitors to enjoy the music whilst visiting the exhibition, the choir made their own consoles and invested in five mp3 players which would be placed near the works in the exhibition. It is these kinds of initiatives which show the dedication of participants. In this case, it also helped the choir as visitors now knew about their music which made it easier for choir members to sell copies of their CD's to them. Selling copies of their CD's was a good way for the choir to earn back their investment for the mp3 players.

Tour

The idea for a tour given by participants in the KRE project originated quite late during the project. The background of the idea was to ensure that the participants could invite other (non-participating) members from their group, friends and family who perhaps would not have come to the *Grote Kerk* on their own. Generally the tours would be accessible by everyone visiting the exhibition, but the

Lions Club, for example, arranged a private evening tour for their other group members with hors d'oeuvres and drinks. Every group could set their own date for a tour and needed to invite their own guests. The dates for the tours were posted on the project website and on the participating groups' websites for anyone interested in attending the tour.

To give the participants an idea about what to do or say during the tour the e-mail inviting them to organize it, written by Petra Timmer, made several suggestions about how to go about shaping the tour:

We hebben een paar suggesties voor de onderwerpen waarover je het kunt hebben in de rondleiding:

- *Iets over Kunst Rijk Emmen: wat is dat voor project, waarom heet deze groep eraan meegedaan?*
- *Hoe zijn jullie tot deze keuze gekomen?*
- *Iets vertellen over de werken, waarom zijn deze gekozen, wat vind jij of wat vinden jullie ervan?*
- *Vraag aan de bezoekers: wat vinden zij er zelf van?*
- *Wat vind je/vinden jullie van de keuze van de andere deelnemers?*

(Timmer, planning rondleidingen Kunst Rijk Emmen, 2012)

The scaffolding in this part of the participatory process was therefore also properly arranged. At the same time, there was enough room for participants to arrange the tours in their own personal way. The *Lions Club* has been previously discussed, but the *Tourdion* choir for example, also decided to do it differently. During the weekends one or two representatives from the choir would be at the *Grote Kerk* for several hours to welcome visitors to the exhibition and inform them about the ins and outs of the project.

Unfortunately the survey shows that nearly half of the participants did not participate in this element of the project (Timmer, Resultaten Enquete, 2013). Reasons for this were not investigated, but it may be expected that at least for some participants the reason could be lack of time. Other results from the survey show that over 30 per cent of the respondents thought it was very nice to be able to invite friends, family and colleagues to the tour, and a little over 20 per cent realized that the tour would be a way to increase the exposure of the group to the public (Timmer, Resultaten Enquete, 2013). The latter figure is interesting with respect to how Hannie Alting and Hilje Zabel explained their KRE experience; they were very clear in expressing that they participated because it would put a spotlight on the *Tourdion* choir. From the results of the survey it can be concluded that not all of the groups had this same idea. This should have become clearer during the beginning of the project, as something that the participants would get out of their experience.

Overall, although there were many opportunities for participants to bond with members of their own group, this was not the case concerning opportunities for participants of different groups to bond. The from me-to-we process as described by Simon therefore was only partially successful.

3.5 Recommendation

In order to answer the main research question, can participatory projects be recommended to small cultural institutions based on the case study of the Kunst Rijk Emmen participatory project, Didi van Aacken, Trees van den Bergh and Petra Timmer were all asked if they would recommend a participatory project to other small cultural institutions. They all answered positively. Nevertheless, they did make some remarks about the project which could be relevant for other small cultural institutions. Van Aacken and Van den Bergh would advise other institutions to take on a project on a smaller scale (2012). Petra Timmer expands on this:

"Ik zou niet zeggen 'doe het als Kunst Rijk Emmen', want zoals wij het hebben gedaan moet je het niet herhalen, het was veel te omslachtig en ook in zekere zin te kostbaar. Volgende keer zou je het efficiënter kunnen doen. Wat een voorwaarde is voor een kleine organisatie met al of niet vrijwilligers, je moet het wel willen, je moet weten waar je aan begint. Dat het natuurlijk wel veel tijd kost, maar het is aan de andere kant, als je niet meebeweegt, dan wordt je uitgerangeerd. Dus ik denk dat de kleine organisaties die bereid zijn zich te ontwikkelen, zich aan te passen, en nieuwe dingen uit te proberen dat die op een gegeven moment de overlevers zijn."

(Timmer, Kunst Rijk Emmen Experience, 2012)

Something which also needs to be taken into account by other small cultural institutions according to Timmer is the reason why they would invest in a participatory project.

"Het werkt volgens mij alleen als je publieksparticipatie niet als doel ziet maar als middel om beter te functioneren en meer midden in de samenleving te staan. En die allianties niet als middel om aan geld te komen, maar als doel op zichzelf: relaties in die samenleving, gedeelde belangen."

(Timmer, Personal Communication, 2013)

For Timmer it is of importance that institutions not only realize what kind of practical implications the organization of a participatory project has, but also that they implement a participatory project for the right reasons. Both Timmer and Simon focus on the fact that participation should not be a goal, but a method for achieving goals. As presented in section 1.1 literature suggests that participation has many social effects, from contributing to social cohesion to community empowerment and self-determination (Matarasso, 1997).

CONCLUSION

Are participatory projects recommendable to small cultural institutions based on the case study of the KRE project? To answer this question this paper has delved deeper into the concept of participation in chapter one, and looked closely at the KRE project in chapter two. The information from these chapters was combined in chapter three where the KRE project was evaluated by looking at information gained from interviews with organizers and participants, as well as from a survey among participants. This chapter showed that there were both positive and negative elements in the project, which need to be taken into account by small cultural institutions which are interested in organizing a participatory project.

Time is perhaps the most important element to be reckoned with. As has been mentioned in the preceding chapters time was always a factor which needed to be taken into account: particularly the lack of it. Due to the fact that KRE was a pilot project some elements were adjusted along the way; this can be avoided by carefully planning all elements and aspects of the 'new' project. If small cultural institutions consider organizing a participatory project they need to realize that they will most likely need more than a year to fully prepare for several reasons. Firstly, as mentioned in the introduction a small cultural institution is fully dependent on volunteers. The SGKC is also fully dependent on volunteers and did not have the skills or the time to fully organize the project on their own. What other small cultural institutions therefore need to consider is firstly what kind of participatory project they want to organize (see chapter one) and whether or not they feel confident enough to organize it alone, or whether they feel they need professional help. If the latter is the case more time is required to find this professional help. Although in the case of KRE the professional help came in the form of Petra Timmer from the *TiME Amsterdam* consultancy agency, playing the role of project manager, there are different ways which professional help can be added to a project. For example, dependent on the project, professional help could also come in the form of an advisor who has some experience with participatory projects or with particular elements within the project. If a small cultural organization wished to organize a participatory project by using an outlet such as Pinterest, but the volunteers do not have enough knowledge about using such an outlet, someone could be hired to explain the use of the outlet and how to manage it. However, organizations may also use tools which were developed during other participatory projects. For example, with regards to using Pinterest, due to the KRE project a manual was produced for participants to help them use Pinterest. This manual could be provided to other organizations planning to organize a project using Pinterest.

Whilst professional help may be very helpful in organizing the participatory project what needs to be taken into account is the fact that the professionals need to get paid. This requires the cultural

institution to have a budget. In the case of KRE project the SGKC did not have this budget and requested funding for the project. The participatory process itself does not need to be expensive; as explained in the previous chapter social media outlets such as Pinterest are free to use. To make the most of having professional help with organizing a participatory project it can be recommended to hire professional help from generally the same area as the institution itself. Not only does this make communicating with each other easier, but the professionals can be expected to have knowledge of the local (cultural) infrastructure which may be useful for the success of the project.

If professional help is involved the division of labor needs to be clearly set up. Something which should have been done differently in the KRE project is the role the SGKC volunteers played. They were generally not involved in the day-to-day workings of the project and they did not play a role as community manager. Furthermore, during the KRE project there was some difficulty within the project team regarding the role of the volunteers: officially they represented the project managers' principal, whilst they were also part of the project team working under the leadership of the project manager. This does not need to be problem per se, but if conflicts arise the situation may become uncomfortable.

The SGKC does not have its own collection of art works; for the KRE project works from the *Toonzaalcollectie* were made available by the RCE. Small cultural institutions may or may not have their own collections. For a participatory project such as KRE, where participants select works to put in an exhibition, the works need to come from somewhere. It is highly likely that not all small cultural institutions have their own collection to use for such means. Like the SGKC got in touch with the RCE, other small cultural institutions may contact other (larger) institutions with their own collection to see if they would be interested in being part of such a project. This can be beneficial for both parties: the small cultural institution can organize a participatory project with the other (larger) institutions' collection, whilst the other (larger) cultural institution can present their collection to a different audience.

As was explained in chapter two the idea for a participatory project did not come from the SGKC, but from the RCE. The SGKC's intention was to set up an exhibition from the government's art collection. Although the SGKC realized that connecting to the community by organizing a participatory project could be beneficial to them; something which was lacking in the project was properly cementing the relationship between the SGKC and the participants (the community); as explained Petra Timmer and the author had the most contact with the participants, rather than the SGKC. This is something other (small) cultural institutions need to take into account: if you really want to play a pivotal part in your community make sure that you enter into a relationship with your participants. Being a community manager, as a volunteer for a small cultural institution is very important because if you want to cement the role of the institution in the (local) community you

need to be able to connect to that community. People need to know who you are. This point is closely linked to the first of three institutional values which participatory projects are based upon according to Nina Simon (see chapter one). The first value is that the institution desires the input and involvement of participants; as was shown above, although the institution eventually fully supported the project, the idea came from the RCE.

Looking back at the KRE project it seems that the project is very relevant within the general theme of public participation. Particularly for cultural institutions in small local communities participatory projects can be valuable on different levels, as has been shown by the KRE project. It can provide public support for the institution, whilst it also has the ability to connect different members from the local community. The KRE project has shown that it is possible for small institutions to organize a participatory project; although it does require a lot of effort, time and, dependent on the type of project, money. This is positive news as it shows that participatory projects do not need to be limited to professional institutions which have a budget and experienced employees. Nevertheless, this does not mean that all small cultural institutions need to start implementing participation in some form or other right away. If anything, institutions need to put a lot of thought into what they would want to achieve by implementing participation.

As mentioned in section 3.5 Didi van Aacken, Trees van den Bergh and Petra Timmer would all recommend organizing a participatory project to other small cultural institutions, even though they would take a different approach; downsize the scale of the project and ensure that it is less laborious and costly. This conclusion can also be reached from this paper. A lot can be learned from how the KRE project was organized, but implementing a participatory project gives small cultural institutions the chance to play a central role in their local community, assuming that the project is organized properly. The institution needs to stand behind the process every step of the way. Although organizing a participatory project may take a lot of time and effort, institutions need to understand what they will gain by investing in these kinds of projects. By creating and upholding alliances within the local community, be it with participants or with local sponsors, the institution can become a structural element within the local community. Perhaps that is the most important lesson which can be learned from the KRE project; participation is a means to an end, not a goal in itself.

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Enquête Resultaten

Wat is uw geslacht?

Man		10 (50 %)
Vrouw		10 (50 %)
		n = 20 # 20

Leeftijdscategorie

20-30		3 (15 %)
30-40		0 (0 %)
40-50		2 (10 %)
50-60		5 (25 %)
60-70		9 (45 %)
70-80		1 (5 %)
		n = 20 # 20

Bij welke deelnemersgroep hoort u?

Kamerkoor Tourdion		7 (35 %)
Carnavalsvereniging de Zeskante Steen		4 (20 %)
Filmhuis Emmen		4 (20 %)
Gehandicapten Sportclub Emmen		2 (10 %)
Gemeenteraad Emmen		0 (0 %)
Lions Club Emmen		3 (15 %)
		n = 20 # 20

Het doel van dit publieksparticipatieproject: voor SGKC meer en ander publiek, voor Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed onderzoek naar invloed publieksparticipatie op waardering kunst

Zeer duidelijk		4 (20 %)
Duidelijk		14 (70 %)
Vrij duidelijk		2 (10 %)
Onduidelijk		0 (0 %)
Geen mening		0 (0 %)
		n = 20 # 20

Uitleg over wat te verwachten gedurende participatieproject: individuele keuze, groepskeuze, creatieve opdracht, rondleidingen, enquête

Zeer duidelijk		1 (5 %)
Duidelijk		11 (55 %)
Vrij duidelijk		8 (40 %)
Onduidelijk		0 (0 %)
Geen mening		0 (0 %)
		n = 20 # 20

Uitleg Pinterest

Om een keuze te kunnen maken uit de online Toonzaalcollectie moest u een Pinterest account aanmaken, en eventueel daarvoor nog een Facebook of Twitter account. Wat vond u van de uitleg hierover tijdens de introductiebijeenkomst?

Zeer duidelijk		4 (20 %)
Duidelijk		8 (40 %)
Vrij duidelijk		5 (25 %)
Onduidelijk		3 (15 %)
Geen mening		0 (0 %)
		n = 20 # 20

Aanmaken account(s)

Wilt u aangeven wat voor u geldt:

Ik had al een Facebook/Twitter account en heb zonder veel moeite een eigen Pinterest account aangemaakt.		9 (45 %)
Ik heb zonder veel moeite een Facebook/Twitter account en daarna een Pinterest account aangemaakt.		4 (20 %)
Ik heb hiervoor hulp gevraagd aan Merel of anderen.		4 (20 %)
Merel of iemand anders heeft voor mij het Facebook/Twitter en/of het Pinterest account aangemaakt.		0 (0 %)
Ik vond het te ingewikkeld/zag het niet zitten en heb daarom niet meegedaan.		0 (0 %)
Ik bleef bezwaar houden tegen het eerst moeten aanmaken van een Facebook/Twitter account en heb daarom niet meegedaan.		1 (5 %)
Anders, namelijk		2 (10 %)
		n = 20 # 20

Had u contact hierover met andere deelnemers?

Ja		6 (31.58 %)
Nee		13 (68.42 %)
n = 19 # 19		

Hoe kon u overweg met Pinterest?

Heel goed		4 (21.05 %)
Goed		12 (63.16 %)
Matig		2 (10.53 %)
Slecht		1 (5.26 %)
n = 19 # 19		

Heeft u bij uw individuele keuze ook een motivatie geplaatst op Pinterest?

Ja		17 (89.47 %)
Nee		2 (10.53 %)
n = 19 # 19		

Heeft u via Pinterest gereageerd op keuzes van anderen?

Ja, een keer		3 (15.79 %)
Ja, meerdere keren		4 (21.05 %)
Nee		12 (63.16 %)
n = 19 # 19		

Vond u het leuk om te doen?

Ja		15 (78.95 %)
Matig		4 (21.05 %)
Nee		0 (0 %)
n = 19 # 19		

Hoeveel tijd kostte het u?

Minder dan een uur		2 (10.53 %)
1-3 uur		12 (63.16 %)
3-6 uur		2 (10.53 %)
Meer dan 6 uur		3 (15.79 %)
Ik heb geen keuze gemaakt want ...		0 (0 %)

n = 19
19

De groepskeuze voor 5 werken

Heeft u aan dit onderdeel meegedaan?

Ja		14 (70 %)
Nee, ik had hier geen tijd voor		5 (25 %)
Nee, ik had hier geen zin in		1 (5 %)

n = 20
20

Wat vond u van dit onderdeel? U kunt meerdere omschrijvingen aanmerken.

Inspirerend		3 (21.43 %)
Je leert de leden van de groep anders kennen		6 (42.86 %)
Je gaat toch anders aankijken tegen sommige kunstwerken door andere meningen te horen		10 (71.43 %)
Ik vind onze groepskeuze leuk afwisselend		7 (50 %)
Onze groepskeuze is een goede weerspiegeling van onze (verschillende) smaken		5 (35.71 %)
Jammer, mijn eerste keus zit er niet bij		0 (0 %)
Anders, namelijk:		2 (14.29 %)

n = 14
33

Op welke manier kwam de keuze tot stand?

Telefonisch		0 (0 %)
Per e-mail		2 (14.29 %)
Tijdens een bijeenkomst		10 (71.43 %)
Combinatie hiervan		2 (14.29 %)

n = 14
14

Hoeveel tijd kostte het u?

Minder dan een uur		6 (42.86 %)
1-3 uur		7 (50 %)
3-6 uur		1 (7.14 %)
Meer dan 6 uur		0 (0 %)

n = 14
14

Creatieve Bijdrage

Wij vroegen u iets te schrijven of te maken n.a.v. de door u gekozen kunstwerken

Heeft u aan dit onderdeel meegedaan?

Ja		12 (60 %)
Nee, ik had hier geen tijd voor		4 (20 %)
Nee, ik had hier geen zin in		0 (0 %)
Nee, andere leden van mijn groep hebben dit voor hun rekening genomen		4 (20 %)

n = 20
20

Wat vond u van dit onderdeel? U kunt meerdere omschrijvingen aanmerken.

Leuk om je eigen gevoel of associatie bij een kunstwerk weer te geven		11 (100 %)
Door dit te doen ga je beter naar het kunstwerk kijken, ga je het meer waarderen		4 (36.36 %)
Interessant om te zien wat andere mensen bijdragen		7 (63.64 %)
Dit is interessanter dan een tekst van een kunstprofessional		2 (18.18 %)
Ik lees liever een uitleg van een kunstprofessional		0 (0 %)
Ik vond het moeilijk om er iets over te schrijven		1 (9.09 %)
Anders, namelijk:		0 (0 %)

n = 11
25

Hoeveel tijd kostte het u?

Minder dan een uur		9 (75 %)
1-3 uur		2 (16.67 %)
3-6 uur		1 (8.33 %)
Meer dan 6 uur		0 (0 %)
Ik heb er niet aan meegeedaan		0 (0 %)

n = 12
12

Website Kunst Rijk Emmen

De website biedt algemene informatie over Kunst Rijk Emmen, zowel voor deelnemers als voor buitenstaanders. Nieuws, praktische informatie voor de deelnemers en ontwikkelingen in het project worden regelmatig toegevoegd.

Hoe vaak heeft u de website geraadpleegd?

Meer dan 10 keer		4 (20 %)
5 tot 10 keer		3 (15 %)
1 tot 5 keer		12 (60 %)
Niet geraadpleegd, ik wist het niet		1 (5 %)
Niet geraadpleegd, het interesseert me niet zo		0 (0 %)

n = 20
20

Wat vindt/vond u van de informatie op de website?

Zeer goed		1 (5 %)
Goed		16 (80 %)
Matig		1 (5 %)
Slecht		0 (0 %)
Geen mening		2 (10 %)

n = 20
20

Wat vindt/vond u van de toegankelijkheid en overzichtelijkheid?

Zeer goed		1 (5 %)
Goed		16 (80 %)
Matig		2 (10 %)
Slecht		0 (0 %)
Geen mening		1 (5 %)

n = 20
20

Enquête over Waardering

De Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed doet onderzoek naar de waardering voor kunst door publiek. In het kader van Kunst Rijk Emmen kreeg u op 30 oktober hierover een enquête toegestuurd.

Wat vond u van dit onderdeel? U kunt meerdere omschrijvingen aanmerken.

Interessant		10 (50 %)
Moeilijk		2 (10 %)
Saai		2 (10 %)
Makkelijk		4 (20 %)
Geen mening		4 (20 %)

n = 20
22

Hoeveel tijd kostte het u?

15 - 30 minuten		13 (65 %)
30 minuten - 1 uur		4 (20 %)
Meer dan een uur		1 (5 %)
Ik heb er niet aan meegedaan		2 (10 %)

n = 20
20

Eigen rondleiding(en) door deelnemersgroep

Elke groep kon zijn eigen achterban uitnodigen om gezamenlijk Kunst Rijk Emmen te bekijken.

Wat vond u van dit onderdeel? U kunt meerdere omschrijvingen aanmerken.

Leuk om te doen		5 (26.32 %)
Leuk om vrienden, familie, collega's uit te kunnen nodigen voor zoiets		6 (31.58 %)
Het is tegelijkertijd een manier om de eigen club, vereniging, groep bekender te maken bij het publiek		4 (21.05 %)
Leuk plan, maar heb er niet zelf aan meegedaan		9 (47.37 %)
Geen leuk plan, ik heb er dan ook niet aan meegedaan		0 (0 %)
Ik deed het omdat het gevraagd werd, maar vond het toch leuk		0 (0 %)
Ik deed het omdat het gevraagd werd, maar voor mij had het niet gehoeven		0 (0 %)
Anders, namelijk		1 (5.26 %)

n = 19
25

Hoeveel tijd kostte u dit?

Minder dan een uur		3 (15 %)
1-3 uur		5 (25 %)
3-6 uur		1 (5 %)
Meer dan 6 uur		1 (5 %)
Ik heb er niet aan meegedaan		10 (50 %)

n = 20
20

Groepsportret

Van elke deelnemersgroep is een portret gemaakt door een fotograaf/video-kunstenaar voor in de tentoonstelling.

Wat vond u van dit onderdeel? U kunt meerdere omschrijvingen aanmerken.

Goed om als groep zichtbaar te zijn in deze tentoonstelling		13 (65 %)
Groepsportret had voor mij niet gehoeven		1 (5 %)
Het is een geslaagd portret geworden		8 (40 %)
Het is geen geslaagd portret geworden		2 (10 %)
Het was een leuke sessie met de fotograaf		9 (45 %)
Ik heb geen positief gevoel over de sessie met de fotograaf		1 (5 %)
Het heeft veel tijd gekost, maar dat heb ik ervoor over		1 (5 %)
Het heeft te veel tijd gekost		1 (5 %)
Anders, namelijk ...		6 (30 %)

n = 20
42

Hoeveel tijd kostte u dit?

Minder dan een uur		5 (25 %)
1-3 uur		12 (60 %)
3-6 uur		0 (0 %)
Meer dan 6 uur		0 (0 %)
Ik heb hier niet aan meegedaan		3 (15 %)

n = 20
20

Publieksparticipatie

Kunst Rijk Emmen is door u, als publiek, gemaakt.

Hoe heeft u de publieksparticipatie van het project Kunst Rijk Emmen als geheel ervaren? U kunt meerdere omschrijvingen aanmerken.

Publieksparticipatie bij de samenstelling van een tentoonstelling spreekt mij aan		13 (65 %)
Een volgende keer zou ik weer meedoen		12 (60 %)
Dit spreekt mij meer aan dan een reguliere tentoonstelling		6 (30 %)
Het spreekt mij aan, maar het kostte me meer tijd dan ik had verwacht		6 (30 %)
Het viel mij tegen, ik vond het niet zo leuk/interessant als ik had verwacht		0 (0 %)
Het viel mij tegen, het kostte me teveel tijd		0 (0 %)
Anders, namelijk ...		1 (5 %)

n = 20
38

Heeft u vrienden/familie/collega's/leden van uw groep, vereniging of club uitgenodigd om te gaan kijken?

Ja, verschillende malen		9 (45 %)
Ja een enkele keer		5 (25 %)
Nee, ik was niet in de gelegenheid dit te doen		4 (20 %)
Nee, ik denk niet dat het hen interesseert		2 (10 %)

n = 20
20

Hoe vaak bent u zelf naar de tentoonstelling geweest?

Meerdere keren		13 (65 %)
Een enkele keer		4 (20 %)
Alleen met de opening		3 (15 %)
Niet gegaan		0 (0 %)

n = 20
20

Heeft u voor Kunst Rijk Emmen eerder een tentoonstelling in de Grote Kerk bezocht?

Nooit, dit was de eerste keer		4 (20 %)
Enkele keer		5 (25 %)
Regelmatig		11 (55 %)

n = 20
20

Bezoekt u vaker tentoonstellingen of musea?

Nooit		2 (10 %)
Enkele keer		7 (35 %)
Regelmatig		11 (55 %)

n = 20
20

Denkt u na uw deelname aan Kunst Rijk Emmen weer een tentoonstelling in de Grote Kerk te bezoeken?

Ja, het interesseert me nu meer dan voorheen		5 (25 %)
Ja, want ik ging er al vaker heen		12 (60 %)
Nee, kunst interesseert me niet zo		2 (10 %)
Anders, namelijk ...		1 (5 %)

n = 20
20

Projectteam, organisatie

Er zijn verschillende bijeenkomsten geweest, met de groepscontactpersonen en met de groepen apart. Verder is het contact (instructies, overleg, vragen, afspraken etc.) voornamelijk verlopen via e-mail, telefoon en via de website en Pinterest.

Dat was voor u:

Precies voldoende		14 (70 %)
Te weinig, u had meer contact gewild		4 (20 %)
Te veel, u had minder contact gewild		2 (10 %)

n = 20
20

Verwachtingen t.a.v. het project Kunst Rijk Emmen

Heeft Kunst Rijk Emmen voldaan aan de verwachtingen die u in het begin ervan had?

Ja, het is geworden wat ik ervan had verwacht		4 (20 %)
Het is leuker/interessanter/inspirerender dan ik had verwacht		12 (60 %)
Het is niet helemaal geworden wat ik ervan had verwacht		2 (10 %)
Het voldoet helemaal niet aan mijn verwachtingen		0 (0 %)
Anders, namelijk ...		2 (10 %)

n = 20
20

Wat verwachtte u aan het begin van het project? U kunt meerdere omschrijvingen aanmerken.

Meer te weten te komen over kunst		4 (20 %)
Leuk om een tentoonstelling mee samen te kunnen stellen		16 (80 %)
Leuk om op deze manier leden van mijn groep anders te leren kennen		6 (30 %)
Interessant om uit een bijzondere collectie kunstwerken te kunnen kiezen		12 (60 %)
Anders, namelijk ...		0 (0 %)

n = 20
38

Heeft u nog iets op te merken wat in deze enquête niet (genoeg) aan de orde is gekomen?

Nee		18 (90 %)
Ja, namelijk:...		2 (10 %)

n = 20
20

APPENDIX B

Page 3

“Culture mobilizes the creative imagination of people and offers new action perspectives. Cohesion arises when the social connection between individuals and groups become stronger by, for example, new forms of interaction.”

(Stichting DOEN, 2013, own translation)

“to cooperate with the general public, communities and socially engaged organizations to achieve social renewal and construct actual change”

(Stichting DOEN, 2013, own translation)

“increasing the involvement of locals with visual arts in Emmen by actively involving them with the development and realization of art exhibitions”

(Stichting Grote Kerk Cultureel, 2012, own translation)

Page 4

“actively participating in culture contributes to cultural citizenship: to individual happiness but also to mutual bonds in villages, neighborhoods or cities”

(Fonds voor Cultuurparticipatie, 2009, p.5, own translation)

Page 5

“an institution which consists solely of volunteers and aims to organize cultural activities”

(Gemeente Emmen, 2012, p. 1, own translation)

Page 6

“can be seen as an authority in the field of visitor participation”

(Timmermans & Vinkenborg, 2011, p. 2, own translation).

“the way in which information is exchanged between the institution and the visitor or user”

(Timmermans & Vinkenborg, 2011, p. 2, own translation)

Page 15

“reach a larger and broader audience” as well as “more involvement of the local inhabitants with cultural activities”

(Stichting Grote Kerk Cultureel, 2012, own translation) (Timmer, Kunst Rijk Emmen - Planning, 2012, p. 1, own translation)

“find out if and how public participation creates larger audience involvement, and (...) how this experience can be used by the SGKC in the future”

(Timmer, Kunst Rijk Emmen - Planning, 2012, p. 1, own translation)

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“What was difficult about the set-up of the project was the time pressure it was under. [...] I think the way we organized [the project] was generally well done, which also becomes clear in the survey, [...] but the time we had was not enough”

(Timmer, Kunst Rijk Emmen Experience, 2012, own translation)

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“a larger and broader audience” with the KRE project, as well as “more involvement of the local inhabitants with cultural activities”

(Stichting Grote Kerk Cultureel, 2012, own translation) (Timmer, Kunst Rijk Emmen - Planning, 2012, own translation)

“Difficult to measure, but you can look at the duration, at how long people stay. Even repeat visits, you can say ‘well it’s the same person so you didn’t reach more people’, but the fact that [repeat visits occur], means that [the exhibition] did catch their attention.”

(Timmer, Kunst Rijk Emmen Experience, 2012, own translation).

Page 30

“particularly with respect to staying in touch with the participants and all the IT work which we aren’t as comfortable with”

(Timmer, Kunst Rijk Emmen Experience, 2012, own translation)

“the cooperation and informing each other would be logistically easier, than it was now. [...] You can easily meet up with each other.”

(Aacken & Bergh, 2012, own translation).

Page 31

van den Bergh: “Personally I had some difficulties with the idea that we were forced into the role of principal, and that it actually felt like that sometimes too. But in other moments it absolutely didn’t, and then I thought, wait a minute, we are the principal so shouldn’t we...”

van Aacken: “Exactly, shouldn’t we be able to voice our preferences? [...] But because it’s a pilot, we said that as well, we needed to invent the wheel.”

(Aacken & Bergh, 2012, own translation)

“in a formal sense, if you look at the formal way of designing the process of the project and leading the project; they felt, and maybe they are, representatives of the principal, but they were on the project team, so at some point it comes down to the fact that I, as project manager, am formally beneath the principal, but the principal is represented in the project team which I am supposed to lead [...]”

(Timmer, Kunst Rijk Emmen Experience, 2012, own translation)

Page 32

“We need to continue here, and eventually they need to be able to find us for [following exhibitions], and not the consultancy agency in Amsterdam.”

(Aacken & Bergh, 2012, own translation)

“We are known by the leaders of Emmen, [...] the mayor, important council members, as a serious cultural platform. [...] I can’t prove it, but we were quite sexy when we were doing the Kunst Rijk Emmen project, people thought ‘wow, I want to be a part of that!’”
(Aacken & Bergh, 2012, own translation).

“find out if and how public participation creates larger audience involvement, and (...) how this experience can be used by the SGKC in the future”
(Timmer, Kunst Rijk Emmen - Planning, 2012, p. 1, own translation)

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What does the work evoke in your mind? What personal memories or anecdotes surface when looking at the work. What does it remind you of? Are there images, smells, or thoughts that come to mind when looking at it? What the artist meant with the work is not important. Nor does what the conservator has to say about the work matter.
(Kok, creatieve opdracht Kunst Rijk Emmen, 2012, own translation)

“Very special, the work by W.H.F. Boers chosen by Sinja Kuipers, *Gehandicapten Sportclub*. Amazing how she applies the elements in the painting to her life. Admirable.”
(Kunst Rijk Emmen Visitor, 2012, own translation).

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We have several suggestions for subjects to be discussed during the tour:

- Something about Kunst Rijk Emmen: what kind of project is it, why did this group participate?
- How did you arrive at your choice?
- Say something about the works, why were they chosen, what do you or your group think?
- Ask the visitors: what do they think?
- What do you think about the choice of other groups?

(Timmer, planning rondleidingen Kunst Rijk Emmen, 2012, own translation)

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“I wouldn’t say ‘do it like Kunst Rijk Emmen’, because the way we did it should not be repeated, it was much too laborious and in a way too costly. You could do it more efficiently next time. [...] A requirement for a small institution, either with volunteers or not, you need to want it, you need to know what you’re getting yourself into. It takes a lot of time, but on the other hand, if you don’t evolve, you’ll be sidelined. So I think that small institutions which are prepared to develop themselves, to adapt, and to try new things, that those will be the survivors.”
(Timmer, Kunst Rijk Emmen Experience, 2012, own translation)

“I think it will only work if you don’t see visitor participation as an end but as a means to function better and to play more central role in the community. And to see those alliances not as a means to get funding, but as a goal in itself: relationships within the community, shared interests.”
(Timmer, Personal Communication, 2013, own translation)