

EUConsult Autumn Congress, 28-29 September 2018 SUMMARY REPORT

Citizen Participation and Volunteering in Europe THE GROWTH OF COMMUNITY ACTION AND HOW CONSULTANTS CAN HELP

INTRODUCTION FROM EUCONSULT CHAIR, ROBIN BRADY

We see civil participation and community action around us every day, in almost every aspect of our work. It isn't often that you get to pause and take a step back and consider this trend from a broader perspective. This year's Autumn Congress allowed us to do just that. There was much to take away from the short and intensive gathering, not least the good conversation with colleagues and meeting new people with whom much has been discussed. It was fantastic to see so many of you there and I was especially pleased that we could welcome non-members to participate again. Always a great sign of an organisation intent on growing and evolving.

SUMMARIES OF CONGRESS SESSIONS

The third sector rule(s) - Prof Dr Lucas Meijs, Professor of Strategic Philanthropy and Volunteering, Rotterdam School of Management at Erasmus University, Netherlands

More and more local communities and social enterprises pop up to change the world, while governments in Europe seem less in control of social change. And so social change is becoming less central, less governed, more local and more citizen-led. We move from indirect to direct solidarity. What are the consequences for the Third Sector? And what is the influence on volunteering and philanthropy?

The world of philanthropy (donating and/or volunteering) is evolving quickly and the rules do not apply as they once did. We move to citizen led direct solidarity and with that comes changes for consultants. First of all Meijs wants to express that it is a force (to be recon with) and that change has an impact that can be positive or negative. For the sake of this presentation we will focus and view these changes as positive.

There has been a civic society and there have been volunteers. The past years there has been done a great amount of research and a focus on sharing knowledge (civic & philanthropy). These are the things we know. Now it's the time of change, and it is coming bottom up, and the politicians are getting nervous about the changes and new order of civic society. The government has played a big part by making budget cuts on areas where people are now thinking: I can do it myself. The classic government has been subjected to change, let the citizens decide how funds best be spend.

As an example Meijs talks about a notable ill regarded neighborhood in The Hague called De Schilderswijk. It has been an area where nobody wants to live and it has been for decades. For years they tried to figure out how they would get the area more appealing and attract new inhabitants. These last years there has been a shift: they let the current inhabitants have a saying about the spending in there are. The goal is to make the current inhabitants happy and create a great community where other people also want to live. Learning points: Decide what is needed and have a contact person to take the lead in communications. With a co space, comes co production, both sites

have to participate. Citizens take control in policy making and there has been a shift towards Asset bases community management with a focus on shared values.

Who are your volunteers?

An important question to ask yourself is who your customers are. This is a subjective choice. When we look for the Food Bank as an example there is a difference if it is run by a catholic or a protestant organisation. Catholics have the mindsets that one does not need to explain themselves and that the mere fact they have shown up to ask for help indicates that they need it. Who are they to decide who needs help. The protestants on the other hand have more rules and checks in place.

The sun always shines when I work

There is the need to approach and activate new audiences because the current pool is getting smaller and smaller. "While the value of volunteering increases in importance the time available for volunteering is seen as decreasing." (Mary Merrill). One should look at volunteers as an energy source. For example: The Oil: they are the people that will never say no or decline. Solar energy: it is the time we cannot store. They will come when there is a sudden need or popularity of your cause. Is your organisation prepared to make the transition? Because they need to in order to replenish the current pool of volunteers.

Hyper volunteering

It is the art of philanthropy connected to other aspects of life, hyper volunteering. Philanthropy nowadays can be organised by your company (corporate), social (friends / neighbourhood), family and connected to employability or welfare status. Civic engagement is part of your life now and organisations have to keep looking for different ways to connect to you.

The non volunteer

The non volunteer has been a difficult group to reach and motivate. Should we just accept that some people will never volunteer? Meijs asks us about The Fainting Goat phenomenon, does this fit our image of the non volunteer? Important for the future: How do we get them? How can we put the focus on improving this? We should look at their barriers and values, they often are subjective and still open for negation. Volunteering does not mean that you have to put in 40 hours a week and donating does not mean you have to give lots of money.

The boardroom

The board of an organisation always balances between two parties. Does one prioritize the organisation or the project. Often you see that Corporate Social Responsibility will be hijack by the marketing departments, how can we profit from doing good? Therefore it's good to have at least 2 board members that will remind de board the original goal.

Philanthropy is best for lunatics

One of the benefits of philanthropy: the government treats people equally. If you are a minority you can at best hope for love and/or philanthropy. If the government decides to not fund research to cure a rare disease due to no interest from the policy makers (the usually act in interest of large groups) and a small target audience (people with the disease) than lunatics can still make a change. They put their effort in for a specific target and that way can make a concrete change. The impact they have in the bigger picture is difficult to monitor just like there added value, but in their own specific area they are being the change. Meijers asks the EUConsult consultants not to tell their clients to not invest in these specific goals but instead tell them to be as stupid as possible! Just go and invest where you think can make a change and what comes near to your heart.

Panel discussion - Moderator: Prof Dr Lucas Meijs - Harmen Kievit / KNHM , Anne Maljers / Oranje Fonds and Manja te Velde / Lokale Fondsen Nederland

Prof. Meijs points out that there has been a great deal of research done on philanthropy in the United States. But it becomes more and more clear that there is a big difference in culture between them and Europe. Their research can still be helpful but one should keep in mind that there are differences. Our panel members have a great deal of experience in the work field and would love to receive questions from the audience:

Are you making a difference between volunteer and donor?

Maljers says they don't see a difference at Oranje Fonds. After the national NL Doet day, a day where 250.000+ people volunteer in their local communities, they will contact a number of those people and ask for a donation (funds). It also helps to create more awareness and commitment for the local cause.

Should you send letters to donor to do volunteering and vice versa?

Organisations have been scared to do so but there should not be a reason why you could not ask for both. You could send a letter beforehand that you are going to approach them for making a donation by telephone. That way they prepare themselves for your request or even opt out by sending back a reply message (hopefully with a donation). *Should you ask donors for more money or more time?*

Do not ask for more money but ask for their time. That way they will be more invested personally and have an upgrade.

How do you get the voice of the community?

Manja te Velde of Lokale Fondsen Nederland is not aware that they should. They use vital signs, otherwise a massive study will be needed if you want to do it correctly. You should measure and compare their goals.

How do you choose which project to support?

Harmen Kiviet of KNHM says it is often a personal choice. You should look for projects in your local newspapers and do not choose on basis of strict requirements. You cannot support all causes and you will have to make choices. Some project for example wants more green in their local area and another project want lesser green in their neighbourhood, it would not be smart to fund both. You should always think about the impact your funding makes, is both parties in the example above should receive funds and would make each other's efforts redundant than there would be money spend and nothing gained

Should you choose for controversial causes to support? Can you make a difference that way?

Anne Maljers answers that they do not judge projects that way. If the local community wants it that way and it meets the goal of their organization than it is a match. They work from the credo: people – plan – support of the community.

Group visit & drink at social enterprise De Prael

De Prael is a social enterprise and brewery. Founded in 2001, there are now 3 locations in The Netherlands. The latest was recently opened in The Hague. The founders wanted to start a company to help people who have difficulty in finding work, for example due to psychological or other issues. At the moment there are 120 employees and the beer is also sold in shops. We will hear about the vision of De Prael and also enjoy a glass of beer! And we will have the opportunity of discussing some of the issues that are facing the organisation, sharing new and creative insights as consultants serving the sector.

For our next stop we visited social enterprise and brewery The Prael at their new location in The Hague. Thirteen years ago there was a plan hatched to combine working with people facing obstacles in the job market with brewing beer. The first location opened up in Amsterdam and with the help of partners and the city council it quickly became the place to be. Nowadays they have expended there enterprise with multiple locations in The Netherlands. The main focus is brewing a good beer and having a great atmosphere for costumer and staff. They have a broad array of own brews on tap including beer made from rainwater. The brewery in The Hague had been under construction and will finish shortly.

Interestingly and maybe even against the trend, they have decided to let their social character not be visibly seen nor their main selling point. You will not find in there communication that they are a social enterprise with staff that face obstacles on the job market. Next to the brewery and bar they have a collaboration with an art organization that showcases art made by people with a mental handicap. There workspace is incorporated within the bar area and the location is also available for corporate

events and tours. The Prael is involved with Social Hub The Hague and committed to support and promote social entrepreneurship and creating jobs in the area.

Their funding mainly comes from commercial revenue and they sell their beers in their own bar's, bars in the area and some supermarket chains. Their main frustration lies in the ever shifting amount of funding and conditions from the local council in relation to their staff. "We have calculated in mistakes beforehand. So when a mistake has been made it is not that of a big deal because we calculated it in beforehand". Their staff may not be as fast or failure proof but that's not an issue with the company or their clients. People come here for the good beers and great atmosphere. The social character of the organization and the commercial targets keep on being in balance. When it comes to spending the profit there are always different ways to go. In the past they have spent all extra money to create more jobs for their target audience, nowadays there has to be more spending on product, equipment, housing and marketing.

For more information about The Prael visit their [website](#) (in English)

Giving in Europe: How much, by whom, and for which causes?

Based on the methodology of Giving in the Netherlands, the European Research Network on Philanthropy (ERNOP) mapped the state of research on giving in Europe. Professor Bekkers shares the findings of the research in a comparison of countries: which country in Europe is most generous? Which causes are supported? How can differences between European countries in generosity be explained? And finally: what mechanisms can fundraisers rely on to increase the level of giving to their organisation?

Prof. Dr Rene Bekkers from the Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam is an authority on the subject of Philanthropy in The Netherlands. Every year he and his team publicize a report on "Giving in The Netherlands" and thereby mapping the giving culture. Why do people do these things? Asks Bekkers out loud. Why would you give away your hard earned money, that took you so much effort to get, to an organisation in the hopes they will spend it wisely / us it for good? There are still so many questions regarding the transparency and wise spending, so why would you do it? Organisations should not overtly state the positives and be transparent about their costs and use of donations. Honesty is the best policy and in many cases the donations does not get the hoped for effect.

The research: Giving in Europe

First we look into some typical Dutch giving behaviour like charity lotteries and the fact that 40-45% of donations come from households. Applying the same method on European scale had its challenges because of the different measurements, research methods and interpretations of questions on surveys. One does not simply translate the same question in different languages but also has to take notice of the meaning of the words in there context. During the research they were hoping to find correlations between the different outcomes, this was not the case. It remains a challenge to increase the validity and reliability of the research.

European trends in giving

- The influence of taxation is negligible
- A growth in welfare shows a growth in the amount and times people donate. At the same time this effect should not be taken for granted. There are chances for EUConsult to help organisations in these countries
- There has been an increase in transparency concerning finances and Corporate Social Responsibility. For researches it has been easier to map these donations. There still remains a culture with some companies that one should not speak or tell about their philanthropic activities. In the Netherlands almost half of households are responsible for donations but companies are responsible for a bigger amount
- The most donations come from religious countries with the exemptions of the Czech Republic and Iceland (40%)

Modern philanthropy

Prof Bekkers asks the audience for their definition of the modern form of philanthropy. He defines it as the pragmatic and voluntary transfer of funds. In The Netherlands the amount of money donated sounds impressive (40 billion) but compared to other household spending it compares to the spending on glass and tableware. When looking to the effect of the amount for government spending it seems to have no effect on the philanthropic sector. Unlike the liberal way of thinking, how bigger the tax burden the more donations are being made.

Does it make you happy? This question seems to be more and more relevant. Some organizations forget to simple thing like saying thanks to the donor instead of asking / begging for more time after time. Prof Bekkers urges organizations to look at creative ways to get there donors to be involved and make them feel happy. For example: give away 5 times a 100 euro and let them decide how to spend it: they can keep it for themselves, keep half of the money themselves and half to charity or let them donate it as a whole to charity. People will feel happier when giving to charity. In short: more taxation – people feel happier – people donate more

Who are the givers?

“Hunt for happy people” is the somewhat surprising answer from prof Bekkers, “they are the givers.” Giving does not make you happier, but givers are happy people. You should invest in making people happy and donations will go up. While looking for donors you should focus on happy people.

With his interesting findings way of presenting them we could go on for much longer. There were still more subjects to discuss and questions to be asked but because of the time we had to come to an end. Please look at the disclosed Power Point Presentation to learn more insights.

Celebrating 200 years of citizen participation – Sanne ten Bokkel Huinink – Director Fonds 1818 – Netherlands

‘Enrich your Neighborhood is an initiative of Fonds1818 to not only finance local citizens’ initiatives, but also to provide coaching and networking. The foundation does so in the context of its 200th anniversary. What are the results for the foundation? And more importantly, what impact is generated for the local society?’

Yesterday and today we have been guests at Het Nuthuis a location owned by Fonds 1818. This building has a rich history in serving the local community and director Sanne ten Bokkel Huinink takes us on the journey of this 200 year old foundation. The foundation does not only give out funds but also gives advice and helps projects with expanding their network. Their mission is to invest in local social activities and they have 12 million-budget to do so. “We have the money” says ten Bokkel Huinink “but we need local partners to make our projects a success.” There has to be a local collaboration and then we can do it together. They usually work with charities, citizen participation projects and established partners. For there 200 years jubilee they decided to focus on individuals and wanted to keep things as simple as possible. The jubilee project has taken over 2 years of preparation and they were expecting 50 applicants.

One of the main differences of their regular approach was investing more time in communication but they decided that it was worth the effort. At the beginning they were apprehensive about the amount of applications they would receive and wished to get 200 projects funded matching the amount of years the foundation existed. As of now they received 300 applications whereby only 20 applications have been denied. The selection criteria were not very strict and getting more applications approved to increase social activities had been the main priority. They have not stopped at 200 and hope for even more applications, expecting a total amount between 400 – 500 applicants. There is a real potential that for these local citizen participation projects to grow into “established” projects. Fonds 1818 normally does business with established projects so they hope to see and facilitate the shift of these jubilee applications into long term partnerships.

For more information about Fonds 1818 visit their [website](#) (in English)

Delivering community action for your clients – Robin Brady – Chair EUConsult

Using scenarios agreed with the participants, we will use group work to explore the various roles a consultant could take when facilitating or enabling community action.

Before starting with this interactive session hosted by EUConsult chair Robin Brady we explore the meaning of: what is community action? The definition for our group today is: an initiative that forms when needed, binding, from the ground up, it is a solid action and has community engagement. How can you support your clients? What is our role as consultants? To get these questions answered the attending consultants are divided up into groups and get 15 minutes to plan their approach as a consultant dealing with 2 community action projects. Based on a model presented on the Power Point the consultants have to answer questions like who are your stakeholders, what are opportunities, where do the risks lie and what tools would you employ? After these intense 15 minutes each group has to present their approach to the others. This exercise makes it clear that we as consultants have a role to play in community action and that it has many opportunities to insert our expertise without taking over and therefore making the project core principles redundant.

Rise, shine and... the reinvention of a unique radio fundraiser – Hanna Emmering – Campaigning Manager 3FM Serious Request - Red Cross Netherlands

3FM Serious Request is a unique Dutch fundraiser that, since its start in 2004, has collected over 100 million euros for the Netherlands Red Cross. It was launched to raise awareness and money for the people in Darfur, and has addressed many silent disasters since then. Over the years, the format hasn't changed: 3 DJs are locked up in a glass house on a public square. While broadcasting 24/7 radio, and fasting as a sign of consideration, they play songs for money: a serious request.

Hanna Emmering has been there since the start, 2004, and has seen the explosive rise and rise of 3FM Serious Request. It is not uncommon to see large, national fundraising events in times of direct need. The difference of Serious Request has been their dedication to give attention to silent disasters that are happening and don't get a lot of attention. They are not considered sexy, the sense of urgency seems long term and there are no quick fixes. Each year they manage to get lots of people involved and raise millions of money. The secret is a combination of storytelling and crossmedia actions.

3FM is a national radio station funded with tax-payers money. In the early days they started broadcasting their radio shows and it grew out to be a massive 24 hour television, internet and radio broadcast during the 6 day Serious Request campaign around Christmas. As before mentioned the Red Cross has been a partner since the beginning. This can change any moment and that brings uncertainty with it. The Red Cross does not only give emergency relief but also has to fund their regular aid in a structural way. Even for Dutch people, it will come as a surprise how much the Red Cross does in their own country. For example: first aid at festivals or sporting events, helping the elderly during hot summer days (overheating) and safe proofing houses. All these projects need funding but the bigger silent disasters are a bigger sell. With the help of Serious Request the Red Cross got their platform to inform the public and move them to donate.

Raising the money can be done in different ways;

- one can request for a song to be played in exchange for a donation
- there is an online auction where one can find rare items / events donated by celebrities
- people can donate a larger amount of money raised by their own business, organisation, family and or friends
- people can donate larger amounts of money raised by their own fundraising campaigns / activities

The first time this event took place 3FM and the Red Cross got taken aback by the massive interest and attention. They put down a so called Glass House where the DJ's produced their programme and slept and members of the public could visit and watch. The turnout was massive and suddenly there was a need of security, better accommodations, media connections and festivities surrounding it. People wanted to donate money upon their visit so they made a post-box, now they had to find a way to storage and transport big amounts of cash money. The media got involved and now the fundraising campaign is a household name in the Netherlands.

What is the secret of their success?

Emmerson is very clear about it: they did not see this success coming. They had to adept and learn by doing. Therefore they managed to be fiercely innovative about the whole ordeal and get a big marketing / communications team behind them. 3FM and The Red Cross have separated tasks and responsibilities making the most of their own expertise. They will focus on picking out “the good cause of the year” which has been difficult at times. Disasters surrounding children are most popular and bring in the most funds. But one cannot continuously focus on the same kinds of disasters when there are so many causes that need funding. A good story sells and getting people emotionally involved helps raising funds. Therefore there is a great amount of detail and organisation that comes with making the back story. They will invite all kinds of local (where the Glass House is going to be stationed) en national media on a trip with their reporters and ambassadors. That way they can see for themselves how bad the situation is and how the Red Cross helps. Stories from local affected people help to give the disaster a face and name. It is also important to let your donors see how there donation has helped after the campaign is over.

Companies in the past have had partnerships with Serious Request but there collaborations have ended because it is a government funded radio station. Luckily the last couple of years there has been a surge of private events who raise money to donate. These business and community action driven events that generate money are being supported from the online platform and are growing in size and number. The organisation still gets surprised at some of the actions that are being taken and the way the public raises money. For example there was a little boy named Thijn who raised money by painting the nails of people and came to The Glass House to make his donation. This little boy had a chronic illness and his life expectancy was nearing its end. The nation was thoroughly moved and painted their own nails in honour and support of his action. The little boy had become the face of a movement and after his death his action continues to leave an impact on Serious Request.

Nowadays you can find Serious Request in other countries like Korea, Belgium and Sweden but they keep innovating. After many years of doing basically the same they came to a conclusion that they needed to change things up before people would get bored. This new approach was announced one week before EUConsult and the public’s reaction to it was somewhat unsure. Some changes: the DJ’s no longer needed to vast for 6 days, there will no longer be a glass house and the focus will go to the community action projects. The DJ’s are being split up into 3 teams and will visit these projects, that way the public’s involvement will be even more prominent.

For more information about 3FM Serious Request, visit their [Wikipedia page](#) (in English).