

g³ method

shaping society together

6 process guidelines for work in heterogeneous groups

Introduction

The Genshagen Foundation has developed the g³ method (gemeinsam gesellschaft gestalten = shaping society together) in the context of five KIWiT "Culture+Economy" think-tanks at the Junges Schauspiel Düsseldorf. Inspired by the innovation method Design Thinking, a total of 6 process guidelines for work in heterogeneous groups were created, which are waiting for practical application.

Why do we need the g³ method?

It is becoming increasingly apparent that complex challenges in culture or politics can no longer be mastered satisfactorily by individuals or interest groups. Not only is the spectrum of needs constantly growing, but the traditional forms of decision-making are increasingly being questioned as well.

In the arts and culture sector, intensive work is being done on the question of how the entire population can be better reached and more closely involved in the debate on content. Recognised studies show that diverse teams often work more creatively, effectively and therefore more successfully. This raises the question of how cultural institutions can constructively shape **opening and participation** accordingly.

What can the g³ method do?

The g³ method is a concrete proposal on how to address opening and participation directly. It is:

- **Free of charge**, as it does not require professional moderation.
- It is ideally suited for the **participation of a wide variety of people** in heterogeneous groups of any size.
- Low-threshold and **simple**, so that you can start directly without introduction or further training.
- Efficient, as each workshop leads to **concrete results in just one hour**.
- Demand-oriented, **can be used as a whole, individually or in a variety of combinations**.
- Completely **transparent** in every work step and for all participants involved.
- **Highly practical** through central topics such as clarification of needs, development of ideas as well as prototype design and testing.

For whom is the g³ method intended?

The g³ method is an offer for all people involved in cultural institutions or projects who would like to develop **concrete answers to specific questions**. In addition, the process guidelines on hand seem to be ideally suited for other areas of politics, administration and civil society.

It is important to note that the g³-method should not be understood as a finished product at any point, but rather as an invitation to constructive cooperation. For example, it must be acknowledged that the current process guidelines are not yet completely barrier-free, as a lack of language skills and physical or mental impairments make active participation difficult. However, in the best case, every practical application can open up further ideas or perspectives, and so any feedback is expressly desired.

Welcome to the test team!

Genshagen in December 2019

In the beginning there is a question

A good starting point for working with the g³ method is to **look at your own situation**: how am I doing in my specific working context, what do I find inspiring and what is perhaps rather disappointing? What do I want to change or develop anew?

Through the exchange in the environment it will quickly become apparent whether there are others who are occupied with similar questions. You should be prepared to engage in a joint workshop **to develop an answer** that perhaps nobody could have formulated in this way before. It is important that the question is as concretely as possible oriented towards an event format or a structural development to be designed.

Once a question is formulated, there is immediately a new question: with whom should the answer be developed? As described in the introduction, a heterogeneous group from culture, politics, administration and civil society is recommended, bringing together as many people as possible who have a connection to the topic. Before starting, it only needs to be clarified whether one would like to work through all 6 workshops one after the other or start with the one that best fits the current state of work.

Basically, you should **formulate your questions in active** and relate them specifically to the way you are working: **How can we do something?** The work with the g³ method so far has dealt with questions like:

- How can we meet the demands of a diverse society with our cultural institution?
- How do we reach the entire urban society with our programme?
- How do we implement opening and participation in our institution?
- How do we sustainably create a motivating working environment for different people?
- How do we reduce regular overwork and the associated stress at work?
- How do we respond to the challenges of digitisation?
- How can we work in a more sustainable and climate-neutral way?
- How can we promote social cohesion through our work?

The process guidelines at a glance

1

How can we work well together?

Find out what your individual needs are for good teamwork: What experiences or ideas do you have for working openly, constructively and creatively together?

2

How do we learn more about the needs of other people?

Because it is often unclear who has what needs, it is useful to ask. Just a few suggestions can help you to listen better and understand more precisely.

3

How can we make use of the insights gained?

When it comes to developing a project that wants to take into account the needs of a target group, it helps to develop at least one persona as a model for a deputy.

4

How do we create new ideas together?

In order to find a good solution, you need a good question based on concrete needs and a sportive schedule to collect and condense your thoughts and ideas.

5

How can we make an idea tangible?

As great as an idea may seem at first glance, its further development into a vivid prototype shows much more clearly whether everything has been thought of and the developed approach can really work.

6

How can we test our idea before it gets serious?

In order to recognise early on how a project idea will be accepted, feedback from outsiders provides valuable insights: A good opportunity to invite and get to know people whose perspectives and opinions you are particularly interested in!

Before we start: What to consider when working with the process guidelines

First name

During the development of the process guidelines, it appeared that the participants feel more directly addressed and more involved when they are called by their first names.

Order

It is advisable to work through the process guidelines for the workshops in the given order - they can also be used individually as required.

Size of the working group

All process guidelines are suitable for groups of any size. It is important that the whole group is divided into small groups as heterogeneous as possible, each consisting of 4 persons.

Equipment

The minimum equipment consists of one table for 4 persons each. Each small group needs at least 2 printed process guidelines and, if necessary, sufficient worksheets as well as pens, post-its and other writing and craft materials.

Processing times

Processing times are specified in all process guidelines and must be strictly adhered to. For this reason, each working group should appoint a person to keep track of the times.

Good will

Any process guideline can lead to irritation or misunderstandings. In the interest of the best possible work result, the instructions should be met with goodwill and discussions should be postponed until after the workshop.

Group dynamics

In each group work, you come together with different team players, whose spectrum can range from dominant alpha animals to inconspicuous doubters. It is important to be aware that each and every one of them has strengths and weaknesses and that hardly any topic is completely overlooked by just one person.

Stay alert!

It is helpful to make a brief check every 15 minutes: Are we still on the topic, do we have the time in view and do all participants feel sufficiently respected?

Work in progress

To be as versatile as possible, the g³ method has been formulated as concretely as necessary and as openly as possible. Every application in practice can reveal possibilities for improvement, which in the best case should be incorporated into the further development of the method.

Please send us your comments and suggestions for further development: Moritz von Rappard, m@moritzvonrappard.de

Process guideline 1

How can we work well together?

Find out what your individual needs are for good teamwork: What experiences or ideas do you have for working openly, constructively and creatively together?

Total duration: 60 minutes

1

Get to know each other!

Get together in groups of 4 at one table each. For good teamwork it is important to know who you are at the table with. Introduce yourself briefly: What is your name, what do you do, why are you here.

Processing time: 10 minutes

2

Collect ideas

Write down your individual keyword answers to the question: How do I stay open and engaged in discussions?

Processing time: 5 minutes

3

Summarize answers

Read out all the answers one after the other in the group of 4 and then summarise the same or similar points.

Processing time: 10 minutes

4

Deepen ideas

Write down the answer that seems most important to you. Divide the group of 4 into 2 teams and present the selected answer to each other. One person will start and the other will ask questions for **5 minutes** to make the answer even more concrete. The person who starts notes the additional points. Then the roles are swapped.

Processing time: 15 minutes

5

Collection of results

Come together in the plenum and tell each other what you have found out.

Orientate yourself by 3 guiding questions:

- What did I notice?
- What do I want to do differently in the future?
- Where do I currently see the biggest challenge?

Processing time: 20 minutes

Process guideline 2

How can we learn more about the concrete needs of other people?

Because it is often unclear who has what needs, it is useful to ask. Just a few suggestions will help you to listen better and understand more clearly.

Total duration: 60 minutes

1

What would you like to know?

Form a group of 4 people, go to a table and write down in **5 minutes** keywords for the question: What do I need to know about the people I want to reach with my work, so that I can involve them and their needs in the planning of a project? Introduce your keywords to the group at your table. Then formulate 3 questions that you would like to ask representatives of the target group.

Working time: 10 minutes

Now there are 2 possibilities:

1. the person you want to interview is already in the room, because she or he has been contacted and invited in advance
2. there are no people to be interviewed in the room: Talk to people on the street. Alternatively, you can organise telephone interviews at short notice and call people you do not know yet.

2

Interview

It is important that you do the interviews in pairs so that you can exchange afterwards what you have heard. One person should conduct the interview and the other person should rather listen in. Before you start the interview, here are a few suggestions for active listening:

- Start with an open question (e.g. "Are you going to the theatre?").
- Interested questions: "How do you explain that ...?" is more open than a more direct "Why ...?"
- Hold out pauses as long as a statement does not seem to be finished.
- Ask if you are experiencing emotions: "I had the feeling that this makes you angry/ sad/ happy."
- Very important: At the end, summarise briefly what you think you have understood.

Processing time: 20 minutes

3

What did you notice?

Write down your impressions and observations on Post-its. Orient yourself by 2 guiding questions:

- What did I learn about the needs of the person interviewed?
- What surprised me the most?

Processing time: 5 minutes

4

Plenary Session

Come together in the plenum and present your findings.

Processing time: 25 minutes

Process guideline 3

How can we make use of the insights gained?

When it comes to developing a project that is to take into account the needs of a target group, it helps to work out at least one persona as a model for a deputy.

Total duration: 60 minutes

1

Develop a persona

Divide into teams of 2 and try to present a persona on a DIN A3 paper as vividly as you can.

Help yourself to all kinds of pens, painting and handicraft items!

If you have conducted interviews while working with the 2nd process guideline, you can use the results here.

Give your persona

- a name
- one age
- a gender affiliation
- a face
- a profession
- a private life
- and everything else that seems important to you (e.g. nationality, faith, political and cultural background)

Notify concretely to be named

- goals and behaviour

and

- preferences and expectations

Formulate a "quote" from the persona that clearly expresses her or his attitude to life!

Processing time: 30 minutes

2

To the point

Summarise in one sentence what is the most urgent need of the persona:

_____ needs _____ to _____.

Develop from this the guiding question for further action:

What can we concretely offer the persona in relation to our initial question in order to meet her or his needs?

What can we _____ offer to _____ ?

Processing time: 15 minutes

3

Presentation of the personas

Come together in the plenum and introduce yourselves to each other briefly and concisely.

Processing time: 15 minutes

Process guideline 4

How do we create new ideas together?

In order to find a good solution, you need a good question based on concrete needs and a sportive schedule to collect and condense your thoughts and ideas.

Total duration: 60 minutes

1

Collect ideas

Move to a table in groups of 4 people. Take an **A* worksheet** and sketch 4 ideas in individual work in response to the initial question.

Attention: Sketching means painting on + maximum 3 words!

Working time: 5 minutes

2

Select ideas

Split up into teams of 2 and present your ideas to each other. Agree on a total of 2 favourites. Transfer them to a Post-it (paint on + maximum 3 words!) and stick them on a **worksheet B***.

Processing time: 10 minutes

3

Fill the tower of ideas

Introduce your ideas to your group of 4 in **1 minute** each. Put your 4 ideas (worksheets B*) on a pile in the middle and take one sheet each. You have exactly **90 seconds** to develop the idea on paper (drawing + 3 words maximum!); maybe an extension, a specification or a completely new idea! Fill in as many fields as you have ideas in **90 seconds**. Then turn your sheet clockwise and work on the new paper in another **90 seconds**. In the end, each person should have worked on each paper twice.

Processing time: 20 minutes

4

Evaluating the tower of ideas

Look at the results together and spend **3 minutes** thinking about which of the many ideas you like best and in which direction you would like to continue working. Try to combine your favourites into one approach, choose a title and transfer all this quickly and sketchily to **worksheet C***.

Processing time: 10 minutes

5

Summary in plenary

Meet in the plenum with the other working groups. Per group of 4 you have **1 minute** to present your idea. Afterwards the others have **2 minutes** for their feedback.

Processing time: 15 minutes

* Copy templates for the worksheets mentioned are available on the following 3 double pages and on the Internet: www.stiftung-genshagen.de/g3-methode

Process guideline 4

How do we create new ideas together?

Worksheet A

Required print run: 1 worksheet per person participating

Process guideline 4

How do we create new ideas together?

Worksheet B

Required print run: 1 worksheet per person participating

...

Space for start idea

Space for developing or new ideas

Process guideline 4

How do we create new ideas together?

Worksheet C

Required print run: 1 worksheet per team of 4

Process guideline 5

How can we make an idea tangible?

As great as an idea may seem at first glance, its further development into a vivid prototype shows much more clearly whether everything has been thought of and whether the developed approach can really work.

Total duration: 60 minutes

1

Form groups of 2: Become concrete

Decide which aspect of your idea you would like to develop, for example what spatial, technical or personnel requirements you need for implementation.

Processing time: 5 minutes

2

Groups of 2 at tables of 4: developing prototypes

Take **5 minutes** to first develop initial approaches to the chosen aspect alone. Then, in teams of 2, bring your ideas together within **5 minutes**. Now team A has **2.5 minutes** to present its approach to team B. Afterwards there are **2.5 minutes** for constructive feedback from Team B. Afterwards it is Team B's turn to present and Team A gives feedback. Work the feedback into your drafts within **5 minutes**.

Processing time: 25 minutes

3

Building prototypes

Bring the ideas together at your table to create one single prototype. There are no limits to creativity! Build, tinker, paint or design a game scene and do not worry about perfection! The whole point is to learn by watching where the prototype already works and where there is room for improvement.

Processing time: 20 minutes

4

Plenary Session

Come together in the plenum and briefly present your prototypes.

Processing time: 10 minutes

Process guideline 6

How can we test our idea before it gets serious?

In order to recognize early on how a project idea is accepted, feedback from outsiders provides valuable insights: A great way to invite and get to know people whose perspectives and opinions you are particularly interested in!

Total duration: 60 minutes

1

Welcome

Welcome your guests and describe the starting point and goal of your work process.

Processing time: 5 minutes

2

Presentation and discussion

Present your solution approach to further develop the idea together with your guests. If you have already developed a prototype with the help of the 5th process guideline, this will provide a good basis for constructive and critical feedback. Listen carefully to your guests and do not hesitate to ask them for their opinion on topics where you were unsure during the development process.

Make a note:

- What is seen particularly positive about your prototype and what is seen more critically?
- What insights would you like to incorporate into your prototype?

Processing time: 35 minutes

3

Plenum with a view

Come together in the plenum, to which you can also invite your guests. Discuss in the round about how to proceed:

- Should the prototype be realized as it is?
- Do we need another working meeting to improve details?
- Is there a fundamental need for change, so that a further clarification of needs would be useful?

Collect all suggestions on a wall and decide on the way that seems to be the most appropriate by voting with 2 glue dots per person.

Processing time: 20 minutes

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Logos:

Imprint

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www.stiftung-genshagen.de/g3-methode

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The process guideline 4 is inspired by the Tower of Ideas from the "Digital Innovation Playbook" by Dark Horse Innovation: www.digital-innovation-playbook.de

Further information:
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