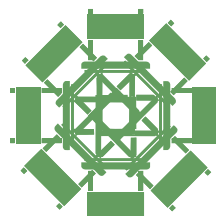


# A guide for the Culture Contact

by Kulturtanken, Norway



Photo: Kulturtanken/Trine Ruud Grønningen



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## 1. Foreword

This guide is about the responsibilities and tasks of the Culture Contact. You will also find recommendations regarding student participation in connection with the school's art events. The guide contains examples and tips that may be useful for a new Culture Contact.

A clear distribution of responsibilities and tasks between the principal, the Culture Contact, teachers and students will clarify and simplify the various roles.

### **Purpose**

The guide provides recommendations for the Culture Contact's practical tasks. It also highlights how responsibility for the art event is divided between the Culture Contact and the partners.

### **Target group**

The guide should be a helpful starting point and training for those who are new Culture Contacts. It can also be a support and inspiration for more experienced Culture Contacts.



## 2. Welcome as a new Culture Contact

Congratulations on an exciting and interesting job!

As a Culture Contact, you have a key role in making art experiences successful at your school. The role offers exciting tasks and challenges and is a very important link between the art providers and the school. One of the most important tasks for the Culture Contact is to secure a good information flow within the school about coming art events so that both teachers, students and performers get the best possible experience.

Your role as a Culture Contact is important to the art providers. The job can give you valuable knowledge about art and culture for children and young people, as well as the opportunity to strengthen the value that art experiences have for the school's education and educational mission.

Teachers, school librarians, principals and management can all act as Culture Contacts. If you like to coordinate and organize, and in addition, you are structured and solution-oriented, you have all the qualifications you need to do a good job.

### **Your main tasks will be to:**

- get to know the school's art programme and the art provider's information pages
- inform students and teachers in advance of each event
- provide the necessary practical preparations for each event
- establish contact with the performing artists in advance of the events
- be a responsible host during each event

**Good luck with the implementation of your first art event!**



## 3. Responsibility for performing art events

Making art events successful for the students is a shared responsibility. It's important to make your colleagues aware of what this responsibility entails. We suggest that you clarify with the principal how the programme or scheme can take root at the school. Good distribution of information and a clear divide of responsibilities between the partners will strengthen the anchoring of the programme. This helps ensure that the students are well prepared.

### **The principal is the one who**

- has overall responsibility for art events at the school
- allocates time resources to the Culture Contact

### **The Culture Contact is the link between the art providers and the school, and is the one who**

- ensures information from the art providers is passed on
- facilitates the inclusion of art events in the school's annual cycle
- is responsible for the practical implementation of performing art events

### **The teacher is the one who**

- informs and prepares students in advance of each performance
- links the art experience to learning opportunities when relevant
- gives feedback in collaboration with the students after the event when relevant

### **The Culture Crew are students who**

- have organizer tasks before, during and after the art event
- collaborate in a team with other Culture Crew members, the Culture Contact and possibly teachers
- make things easier for artists and audiences before, during and after the event



## **The students can participate in the performing art experience and**

- contribute when applicable
- give feedback on the event in collaboration with the teacher, when applicable

## **The Art Providers**

- book the performances and is often responsible for the art programme for a variety of schools in a municipality, region or the whole country
- can assist the school in booking an optional offer, when applicable and agreed upon



## 4. Distribution of work tasks

No schools are alike. The Culture Contact's tasks may vary from school to school, depending on the size of the school, which country, region or municipality it belongs to, and how many art events the school receives. The recommendations should therefore be adapted to local conditions.

To ensure a good sense of ownership of the art programme in the school, the Culture Contact should review the tasks below in cooperation with the principal. Clarify when the various tasks should be carried out. You can use the template below and customize the distribution of assignments to your school. All art events should be included in the school's annual cycle or activity plan.

Distribution of work tasks can be:

### PRINCIPAL

What	When
appoints the Culture Contact(s) at his/her school	Before the planning of the next school year's art programme starts
includes the art programme in the school's annual cycle or activity plan, in collaboration with the Culture Contact	At the start of the school year
allocates meeting time so that staff receives the necessary information about the art programme	At the start of the school year
has a dialogue with the Culture Contact about how the art programme has worked for the students and for the school	As needed

### TEACHER

What	When
enters the date and information of the art event in the timetable for their class	When the timetable is drawn up
makes use of information material and teacher resources for the various productions where applicable	Ahead of the event
adapts information material to the student group	Ahead of the event
carries out preparatory work and puts the art programme in the curriculum where relevant	Ahead of the event
participates in the art events with the students. The teacher is an important role model for the students in their encounter with performing arts	During the event
sets aside time in class for reflection and fills out the feedback form, if applicable	Following the event



## CULTURE CONTACT

What	When
Familiarizes themselves with the school's premises used for art events	Before planning next year's art programme
Familiarizes themselves with the art productions in the current school year	Continuous
Retrieves information about the school's art programme from the art provider's information pages	Continuous
Shares information about the school with the art provider: Culture Contact, times, arenas, classes/subject groups, student numbers and timetable/ calling times	As agreed with art provider
Contacts the art provider about the need for guidance and training	Continuous
Shares information and presents the art programme to students and teachers	At the start of the school year and a couple of weeks in advance of each event
Has a dialogue with performing artists	A few weeks in advance of each event
Follows up on the school's Culture Crew and creates good routines for their work	Continuous
Facilitates and adapts practical tasks for the Culture Crew	Before, during and after a visit
Adapts work tasks for the Culture Crew based on the students' age group and abilities	Associated with each visit
Ensure feedback forms are available to teachers/students, if applicable	On the day of the event





## Tasks related to each art event

As the Culture Contact, your job is to ensure that teachers, students, and artists get the best possible experience. The following recommendations are intended as a checklist for each art event:

### Preparation

- Read about the productions in information pamphlets or online. Look especially for technical and practical information that is important for the implementation of the various events.
- Reserve a suitable room and check any technical equipment well in advance. Make sure the room is set up and ready before the artists arrive.
- Meet with the Culture Crew well in advance of the event and delegate tasks.
- Check the arrival time of the artists, the meeting place and parking space.
- Check necessary practical or technical arrangements in the room before the event.
- You will find contact information for the responsible organizer and contact person on the art provider's website.
- Clarify how the Culture Crew can be of help before, during and after the event. Do the artists need help, do they want to be introduced, etc.?

### Implementation

- Make sure the artists are well received upon arrival. Direct them to the rooms they will be using, offer water/coffee/tea or fruit and otherwise be helpful.
- Check with the teachers that all students are in place. Welcome them and provide practical information.
- Attend the event yourself, if possible. If not, be sure to delegate responsibility for the event to another teacher or the principal.

### Finishing

- Set aside time to help the artists pack up, so-called "rigging down". Let the Culture Crew help you.
- Make sure the artists are taken care of as the school's guests, right up until their departure. They may be going on to another school and have limited time after the performance.
- If electronic feedback forms are linked to the event, forward them to relevant teachers by sharing the link. There may be separate forms aimed at teachers, Culture Contacts and students.

### Our recommendation

If you have already established a Culture Crew team at the school, several of these tasks can be taken on by them or adjusted to their abilities.



## **Art events outside of school**

Events that are being held at a different venue than the school, for example at the cinema, theatre, or a nearby school, require a different type of planning:

- Check if you need to book transportation.
- Check with the contact person at the venue if there are any considerations that you need to take into account.
- Check if the Culture Crew from your school can have tasks in the implementation.
- Find out if there are special expectations of the students attending the event.

## **Advice**

In some instances, local art providers organise gatherings for Culture Contacts. If this is the case in your municipality or region try to attend. These gatherings are great places to receive training and share experiences with other Culture Contacts, as well as receive important information.



## 5. Student Participation

### A) Culture Crew

The Culture Crew are students who help before, during and after art events at the school. They can be an important resource for you as a Culture Contact. The role is suitable for students from grade 5.

#### The Culture Crew can help to:

- Prepare the room before the event starts, for example by placing chairs, carrying and putting equipment in place, or blacking out windows
- Share information about the art event in the classes that will be attending
- Accompany students to and from the event
- Welcome performers and make sure they get the help they need before, during and after the event
- Welcome students to the event, introduce performers before the performance and thank them afterwards
- Tidy up after the event is finished

#### Advice

- Check to see if an art provider in your county or municipality arranges courses for the Culture Crew and how to sign up students.
- Let students write an application to become a part of the Culture Crew. It can create engagement and excitement around the role.
- Use students from different classes and grade levels. This will prevent a no-show situation if the performance art visit collides with other activities.
- Let experienced Culture Crew members pass on their expertise to new members of the team.
- Honor the Culture Crew. Give them a certificate or a diploma at the end of the school year.



## B) Creating teams in upper-secondary schools

The Culture Contacts in upper-secondary schools are often the school librarians or a head of department. In large schools with many events, it may be useful to have several Culture Contacts who divide the tasks between themselves throughout the school year.

The Culture Crew group works well in primary and secondary schools but can be harder to implement in upper-secondary schools. These schools may therefore benefit from establishing an Art Event Team where students participate. The composition of the Art Event Team should be adapted to each school.

### Members:

- Culture Contact
- Culture Crew
- Principal
- Teacher representatives
- Communications Manager

### Tasks:

- Attend presentations of coming art production choices, if possible.
- Participate in the selection of art productions for the school's art programme, if possible.
- Suggest which classes and students should take part in the various productions.
- Present the art programme to the school management, staff and student council at the start of the new school year.
- If the school has a Culture Crew, make an annual plan and divide up responsibilities. The Art Event Team can also relieve the Culture Crew/Culture Contact in connection with art events.
- Attend evaluation meetings with the principal about how the year's art programme has gone.
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### Recommendation:

It's important that students participate in the planning and implementation of the art programme at their school. Ensure that students are involved, whether they're represented in an Art Event Team, or as part of the Culture Crew. The Culture Contact is responsible for monitoring the work.



## 6. Information flow

Sufficient information well in advance is crucial for good art experiences. This applies to students, teachers, other staff and artists. There may already be a good system for sharing information at the school that you can use.

### Preparation

- Arrange a meeting with the principal to discuss the coming art programme for the school.
- Review with the principal the division of responsibilities and tasks listed in this guide.
- Work with the principal to add all art events to the school's annual plan: date, place and which students will participate where.
- Inform relevant colleagues (department managers, team leaders, etc.) of all art events that are planned for their classes.
- Make sure that the information about your school is updated for the art provider.
- Add the art events to the schools' planning tools, where applicable.

### Preparation two weeks before the art event

- Contact the caretaker, IT department or others for any practical and technical clarifications.
- Create and follow a routine for internal communication about art events.
- Send reminders of upcoming visits. Include information about time, place, duration, transportation, practical considerations, and a link to any teaching resources for teachers.
- Make sure everyone involved at the school is informed, for example cleaners, caretakers and others.
- Clarify practical and technical details with the performing artists.

### Implementation

- Present the art events in the school's annual cycle to teachers and student council/Culture Crew at the start of the year. Refer to any websites, "teasers" and available teaching resources.
- Encourage teachers at the start of the year to incorporate the events into the annual and period plans for their subjects.
- Ensure that you are present for the visiting artists, to welcome and provide practical information, together with the Culture Crew if relevant.
- Keep in constant contact with the art provider in case of changes.
- If changes occur just before an art event is supposed to happen, take responsibility for finding good solutions and ensure good and up-to-date information for everyone involved.



## **Follow-up**

- Share information about the feedback form with the relevant teachers.

## **Recommendations**

- Remember to notify the art provider if the school appoints a new Culture Contact.

## **Advice**

- Use the same information channels for reminders every time. This way teachers and Culture Crew know where to find information.
- Use your school's information boards/screens, when possible. Share information about coming art events.

## **Information distribution when the art event takes place at a venue outside of school**

### **Facts**

The performance art event can also take place at other venues, such as museums, cultural centers, cinemas, outdoors, etc. Look up information about this on the art provider's website.

### **Preparation**

- Take special note of art events that take place at venues outside of school when the annual plan is being created.

### **Preparation two weeks before the art event**

- Make sure that the schedule includes sufficient time for transport/walk to the venue.
- If you have practical questions, contact the art provider.

### **Implementation**

- Often, the responsibility for art events at other venues lies with the venue staff or the art provider.
- Teachers and students follow the preparation and information provided.
- Make sure that affected teachers and students are notified quickly if changes occur.

### **Recommendations**

Art providers can be responsible for many schools, artists, and tours. When you make contact, remember to state which production it concerns and which school the inquiry comes from.



## 7. Feedback routines

The art provider may send the school a request for feedback, often in the shape of a short survey.

Feedback is important for developing and improving the art programme on offer. The Culture Contact can contribute to a positive development by making sure that requests for feedback are met.

### **Why are feedback tools used?**

Feedback is used to improve the quality of art events. Art providers and producers are given the opportunity to adjust productions along the way and afterwards. The students' feedback gives them a voice that may influence both the production itself and future programming.

### **Preparation:**

A short feedback form may be sent out to the Culture Contact shortly before the event. The Culture Contact is responsible for forwarding the form to relevant teachers.

### **Implementation:**

The teacher is responsible for making sure that feedback forms are completed and should allow time for students share their opinions.

### **Follow-up:**

In most cases the feedback will be automatically logged when the form is completed but if not, the forms should be returned to the art provider. The feedback is essential in terms of quality, assuring the art programme on offer is as good as possible.

### **Advice:**

Send a reminder to affected teachers to submit the feedback form.



## 8. Frequently asked questions

Question:	Our recommendations:
I teach other students while the art event takes place. What should I do?	Clarify with your immediate superior or delegate your tasks to another teacher.
Help, I am sick today when the art event is happening. What should I do?	Notify your immediate superior. The principal is responsible for art events at the school.
The artist just called and have driven the wrong way to school. They will be half an hour late. What should I do?	Postpone the art event for half an hour, if possible. Call and notify affected teachers and members of staff as soon as possible. Then inform the school's management. Have an ongoing dialogue with the artists along the way, look for other solutions when possible.
The teachers have forgotten to prepare students for the art event. What should I do?	If you discover this just before the event starts, it may be too late to do anything. If possible, make sure students are given a short introduction in advance. Make sure that the principal is aware of this and agrees on measures that can be taken to avoid students participating without being prepared in future.
How much responsibility and work can I impose on the Culture Crew?	Talk to the students' teacher. In collaboration, you should choose tasks that match the students' abilities.
Who can I contact if I have any questions?	Contact the artist or the art provider. On their website, you can read about the production itself, and you may find the answer or the right person to ask.
How do I know that the premises are suitable and that we meet the technical requirement?	Look at the art provider's website. You should find the information you seek there. Check the status of power outlets, etc. on the premises in advance. If you have any questions, you can contact the art provider or the performers directly and ask them what they need.
How will I set aside time for my duties as a Culture Contact?	Talk with the principal and clarify what you need according to the number of art events the school has planned. Consider whether more people at your school should share the responsibility. Give the Culture Crew have more responsibility if possible.
Are there network groups with other Culture Contacts in my municipality? Who can I contact?	You can contact a Culture Contact from another school or contact the art provider.

