

The Netherlands, Peer Supervision Networks

The peer supervision network is an exchange network for managers of institutes of art education. Such networks aim to benefit the individual (staff member level) and, indirectly through knowledge transfer, possibly to benefit the trade branch as a whole. The goal is the exchange and testing of knowledge, information and experiences. Other networks in which Kunstconnectie participates are: strategic networks (profiting the entire branch) or thematic networks (aimed at collective or regional benefit for the members).

Target group

For the management and middle management of art education institutes, peer supervision provides an effective approach to improving one's own professionalism. Within their own organisations, managers generally lack a sounding board to discuss and reflect on their own vision, leadership style and working methods. This places them in an isolated position. Learning with and from managers from other organisations, focusing on direct practical benefit, prove to be very valuable activities, highly appreciated by managers of existing peer supervision groups. Partially due to an increasing interest in peer supervision, Kunstconnectie shall continue to facilitate the peer supervision networks.

The number of people interested in peer supervision is such that the number of groups has doubled in 2004. At present there are seven groups, and there is a request for seven more, coming mostly from middle managers.

The guidelines for peer supervision networks

A peer supervision network requires modified guidelines. This, because of the particular history and specific character of peer supervision, the option of enlisting external expertise, and the diverse ways in which groups (have come to) conduct peer supervision.

Participation in these networks is open to whoever applies and is part of the target group. Previously this mainly entailed members of the directorate, yet now there are also a number of middle management groups composed of heads and coordinators of departments. The participants are free to decide if, and if so which, non-association members can be admitted to the group.

As a rule, a starting group is provided with guidance by an organisation- and consultancy agency for the first three (consecutive) meetings. After that, the group can call on external expertise twice more. The staff of the organisation- and consultancy agency will also focus on identifying collective benefit.

Participants pay an annual contribution. These contributions are used to pay part of the costs incurred by Kunstconnectie in offering its facilities.

Special activity- or project proposals serving a purpose larger than the own peer supervision group can be submitted to the Board of Kunstconnectie. Depending on the subject, Kunstconnectie may take subsequent steps. As long as the results of the network are made available to the entire trade branch, the national service bureau offers customised (paid) support regarding recruitment, communication, network management and such.

Annually, the peer supervision groups submit a concise report on the proceedings, the number of meetings, the external expertise enlisted and the overall benefit delivered by the peer supervision.

Further information

Kunstconnectie, sector association for art education and art practice

Contact person: René Eijsermans (sr. policy staff member) r.eijsermans@kunstconnectie.nl

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