Leaving Marks on Society

Inspiration for the renewal of public enlightenment

“Public enlightenment is a great opportunity to involve the citizens in the advancement of society – and you should do so”

Torben Dreier – Head of FO-Aarhus

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Written and edited by journalist Ole Jessen

# **Confessions of a Grass Root**

Being a young person of today you are constantly meet by the mantra “you need to hurry up”. Hurry up and get an education (within the standard time limit) – and with grades in the double digits, needless to say in the right end of the scale. And then hurry out on to the labour market and be of use to society by earning a pay check, paying your taxes, buying a house, generate spending and preferably debts, get some children, and to the best of your ability try to avoid getting divorced. This is because the adult life and the work market has become synonymous despite the fact that your life is entirely lived in a society. A community which we as people, be it in our roles as workers, employers, fathers, mothers, Christians, Muslims, Jews, Buddhists, atheists or subscribers of Jyllands-Posten or Politiken are part of, depend on and are responsible to. But exactly this realisation and the derived acknowledgement of being part of something larger and having a joint responsibility for more than just your own life, your own career, your own family, your own future and your own progress, and instead acknowledge and accept responsibility for that which we all share, namely our culture, our democracy and our enlightenment, is where the citizen is born and the egomaniac takes his final breath.

When I along with my best friend Jakob, who like me was a student at Aarhus University in 2000, decided to take the step out of the shadows of the yellow walls of the university and into the public space and leave behind theory, exams and grades and augment the academic world with creating something in the real world, it would have been impossible for us to have moved from intention to realisation without FO-Aarhus. Here we found an organization – and in in Torben Dreier an individual – who despite us being neither experienced culture entrepreneurs nor acknowledged writers and debaters, but merely young idealistic students who wanted to grapple with public enlightenment and contribute to building a more illuminated and enlightened public space in Aarhus, was met with responsiveness, interest and in the end support, both in the form of a network, experience and means! In the beginning we had nothing but the ambition, curiosity, and the unsubstantiated faith in our own ability to create an experience, an exhibition, a debate, a conversation, a surprise that would encourage, at least those who were exposed to what we did, to become a tad more thoughtful, a grain more nuanced, a dash more inspired and just a bit more enlightened.

Whether we succeeded in enlightening anyone but ourselves with what we did, I will leave to others to judge, but I can say with a certain degree of confidence that had it not been for FO-Aarhus the debate event *Generation Fucked Up?* had never become a reality. And had that event never happened Politikken’s Debate Editor Per Michael Jespersen had never become acquainted with the term Generation Fucked Up and had never published an article on it, and then Gyldendal’s Literary Director Johannes Riis wouldn’t have read about the term and the generation criticism. And if he hadn’t done that, the debate book “Generation Fucked Up?” wouldn’t have been published, read by thousands and become a teaching resource for high schools for years.

And it all started with three debate events in Aarhus.

Public enlightenment works in mysterious ways, if you dare to not always want what is easiest, most conventional and well-proven – and FO-Aarhus and Torben Dreier dared.

**Grateful greetings and good luck with continuing the important work of public enlightenment**

**Morten Albæk**

# **Public Enlightenment in 2016**

**The foundation of the democratic, enlightened and creative Denmark we see today was laid more than a hundred years ago by the social movements in the 19th century. At that time the state school, the public libraries and the** **public enlightenment movement were created, along with the co-operative movement and the Labour movement. The theory was that by educating and enlightening the entire public EVERYONE would participate in the development of society, and help create a vibrant democratic, innovative and socially viable Denmark – and I would dare say it succeeded. It succeeded to the degree that today we talk about democracy, openness and social responsibility as being the DANISH values.**

This pamphlet is about how we have succeeded in keeping these values alive and current here in Aarhus. And about how it isn’t just empty rhetoric created for hollow words in grand halls when you speak about public enlightenment being the foundation of democracy, tolerance and community.

FO-Aarhus has managed to breathe life into these ideas and keep them relevant. Just read the chapter on “How Football for Refugees Kicked Life into the Debate” or “Aarhus Celebrates Tolerance and Respect”. This is about the democratic debate – not political agitation. Through the years and a number of events FO-Aarhus has helped start a lively debate, a debate which is central to keep a democratic society alive and thriving.

FO-Aarhus also has an eye for the diversity that exists in our city. Be it people with a psychological challenge, sexual minorities or immigrants and refugees.

The goal is always the same, to show the opportunities and perspectives, instead of pointing out the differences and the difficulties. In short, to tell the story of the diverse Aarhus we live in and to make sure diversity and solidarity are regarded as positively loaded words. Read for example “Disabled Achieve Success Through Music and Media” or “Troublemakers Educates Children on Good Behaviour”. In practice it’s about creating real social sustainability – on the participants’ terms.

Art and creativity also has a grand and important place in FO-Aarhus’ work. Naturally, FO-Aarhus is one of the participants when Aarhus is European Capital of Culture in 2017 and when the city offers “walk in museums” like Sculptures by the Sea – you can read about this here too. FO-Aarhus also leaves its mark on the world of sports. Read for instance “The Taboos of Sport in Open Debate”. The entire book tells the story of an education association in constant movement, always in on the action – not to make a name for itself, but instead to promote the values that started it all more than 100 years ago. Democracy, enlightenment and social sustainability.

It’s a great boon to Aarhus and its inhabitants, that we have an organization like FO-Arhus, which is able to act as a “playmate” or partner in so many different contexts. Read for example “Partnerships Build on Solidarity and Equality”, and then please read the entire book.

It’s a good story – and it’s real, and happening right here in Aarhus.

**Chair of the Culture Committee in Aarhus City Council and the Danish Library Association Steen B. Andersen**

# **Public Enlightenment that Leaves its Mark on Society**

**Through more than 25 years FO-Aarhus has worked with many different partners on education, debate, projects and flexibly organised activities. Often this has taken place in networks, that are not traditionally linked to public enlightenment, but it has always ended up drawing a great deal of influence from public enlightenment.**

**When you work in the kind of network that is not traditionally linked to public enlightenment, it often opens up new and formerly undiscovered opportunities of collaboration. This happens when you are an active participant. In these cases, public enlightenment can embrace groups and people that are normally harder to reach in the usual public enlightenment setting. And the activities can create debate in arenas that are highly topical, of concern to many people and of great importance to society.**

**FO-Aarhus’ collaborators are and have been a diverse group of volunteers, associations, institutions and others. The range is far, from a football club in Superligaen, over youths from Palestine and Bispehaven to well-known writers and musicians. And among them are plenty others like the local newspaper Århus Stiftstidende, Studenterhus Aarhus, various Somali societies, Aarhus 2017 and many more.**

**We cooperate on both smaller and larger projects; some of which are mentioned in this pamphlet. There are many means of cooperation, all within the laws and rules set up for public enlightenment in Denmark. Truly, as this pamphlet shows the possibilities and opportunities are endless. In this way public enlightenment can help engage and excite, change people’s positions and create new ones. In short; Leave Marks on Society.**

**The hope is that this pamphlet can inspire the continued development of public enlightenment.**

**For more information: fo-aarhus.dk**

# **How Football for Refugees Kicked Life into the Debate**

**In October of 2015 a current crisis, namely the refugee situation, was turned into something positive. This happened in a partnership between the Superliga club AGF and FO-Aarhus. 500 refugees were invited for a free trip to** **Aarhus Stadium to see one of AGF’s games, and it kicked new life into the heated refugee-debate.**

**The project of inviting refuges to see a football match was launched at a point where the social debate was storming: For or against allowing more refugees into Denmark. Daily the media reported of new flows of refugees escaping war and prosecution. Some Danes cursed and spat at these new refugees, whereas others greeted them with open arms and opened their homes to them.**

**This was the backdrop of the invitation, and for most of the refugees it was the first time they were to experience a football match live at the stadium.**

**“I’ve never seen a live football match. When I was told we were invited to see the match I was so happy” said Aliu Cessey, a refugee from Gambia, to TV2 Østjylland.**

**The many invited refugees helped cheer on their hosts, AGF’s team. Whether it was the added support from the stands that decided the matter is unknown, but never the less AGF won the game 3-0 over the opposing team FC Nordsjælland**

## **Football Equals Solidarity**

**“AGF equals solidarity, and that also includes refugees, whom we would like to help feel welcome. Naturally, we hope they have a positive experience, and that we can make a difference for some people who live their lives filled with uncertainty,” said AGF’s Director Jacob Nielsen prior to the game.**

**“Hopefully, we’ll be able to gather a lot of people to see the game. Football is a universal language, and that’s why I think that an initiative like this can help the refugees grow closer bonds to Aarhus, in spite of the language barrier,” said Torben Dreier, Head of FO-Aarhus before the game.**

**The invitation was extended to all refugees in the region, new as well as old. Bus transport was arranged from Odder, Favrskov, Skanderborg and Syddjurs. Prior to the game Head of FO-Aarhus Torben Dreier thought the initiative would be a success if 200 refugees turned up at the stadium. He was overwhelmed by the great interest, that resulted in 500 refugees attending the game along with the rest of the audience at the stadium.**

## **Wiser on Society**

**The initiative to Football for Refugees came from AGF, who contacted FO-Aarhus about a partnership, mostly to utilise FO-Aarhus’ large network to invite the refugees. AGF arranged the match and the seats on the stadium, while FO-Aarhus supplied the organisational skills by spreading the word about the free football match to organisations and associations who work with and has contact to refugees.**

**“We chose to work with FO-Aarhus because we considered them to have the right network to carry out the task and because they have the same fundamental wish to make a difference to marginalised groups in society. The event surpassed our expectations – actually we couldn’t have wished for a better partner in this endeavour,” Jacob Nielsen, Director of AGF tells us.**

**He points to the fact that AGF wants to be a visible and active partner in the life of the city – and is consequently more than willing to cooperate across lines, with the municipality, institutions and other elite sports clubs in the city. Their work with FO-Aarhus can be viewed in this light too. It’s like on a football team: You only get results by working as a team, he says.**

**“In its basis, public enlightenment is about growing wiser on the society you live in and about learning how to manage oneself in it. We think football can offer a lot to do that, and that was why we took the initiative to invite the regions refugees to one of our games. At a football match you meet across the boundaries of culture and that definitely allows us to more easily band together,” says Jacob Nielsen.**

## **AGF Nominated for Integration Award**

**The initiative Football for Refugees resulted in AGF being one out of three nominated for “Aarhus Kommunes Integrationspris” in November 2015. The award is presented once every year, and given to a person, a company or an organisation that finds a unique way to foster integration.**

**The municipality’s reason for nominating AFG for the award was that the refugee crisis is not only a European or a national issue, but also a local issue. With the initiative AGF has made a great effort to include the refugees in the local community.**

## **The Initiative Created Plenty of Debate**

Prior to the match, AGF and FO-Aarhus sent out a joint press release about Football for Refugees. It landed smack dab in the middle of the already critically heated debate about the refugee crisis in Denmark and Europe. The message was related to countless Danish media outlets both newspapers, TV-stations and news websites. On TV2 Østjylland’s Facebook site a video about the event, featuring interviews with some of the exited invited refugees, was seen by more than 400.000 people.

On FO-Aarhus’ side the focus was on creating an activity worthy of debate, where the contribution was paid from “debatpuljen” (funds set aside for debate-creating activities). There is no doubt the large press coverage created plenty of debate, especially because the debate about refugees in Denmark was already raging. Football for Refugees became a different and very positive contribution to the debate, where the civil society helped show the politicians how to build trust. Because refugees also like to go to the stadium to watch a football match and have a good time, just like everybody else does.

**For more information: agf.dk**

# **Youths with Problems in Living Gain New Zest for Life**

**Through music and drama youths with problems in living gain a new zest for life. They regain their desire to get up in the morning and challenge themselves to get on with their life in a good way. Opgang2 Ungdomsspor is the place where it’s happening, and what we’re talking about is a long-running cooperation between FO-Aarhus and Opgang2.**

**Actually this is the first out-of-house cooperation that FO-Aarhus started, as early as the 1980s. It was started as a development project, that helped evolve the then Leisure Law into what is now known as the Act on Non-formal Education and Democratic Voluntary Activity.**

It all started with an enquiry from Søren Marcussen, the leader of Opgang2. He was looking for a partner for a project involving some of the young people he dealt with, and was advised to seek out Torben Dreier, Head of FO-Aarhus. He did, and from this meeting the project Ungdomsspor grew.

## **A Pattern Breaking Project**

“This was a pattern breaking project, because it was the first time a corporation like this had come together. We needed Aarhus Municipality to work with us and together across departments, and that wasn’t easy. Because it was an entirely new way to collaborate,” Torben Dreier tells.

Back then, in the late 80s, FO-Aarhus and Opgang2 succeeded in working together to create Ungdomsspor. Opgang2 was started as a youth club where the focus was on making music and theatre based on the life of the young people themselves. From there, Opgang2 evolved into the current independent culture institution, that produces theatre, films, multicultural festivals and much more.

**Opgang2 Ungdomsspor is a program for young adults between 18 and 25 with problems in living, who has difficulties with gaining the courage and drive to get going with their lives since they feel like they don’t fit in anywhere. They are described as “the maladjusted, the punks, the tough cookies”. These youths are offered a 10 months long course where they, through the work with music, art and drama, can gain perspective in relation to work and education, and especially come to terms with their own personal relationships.**

***“The counsellors help us, but they also teach us to help ourselves” one of the participants from Ungdomsspor 2014 says (quoted from opgang2.dk).***

## **The Youths Own Experiences**

In Ungdomsspor the young people contribute to the production of music and theatre performances and art. As a crucial part this happens in collaboration with professional musicians, directors, lyricists and artists.

The other key ingredient in the artistic production is that the young people base the productions on their own ideas of what life is supposed to be. This means that the young people delivers the material for the performances, the music and the art they help make by drawing on their own lives and experiences. The performances and concerts are staged at Opgang2 in the middle of Aarhus, and sometimes elsewhere, while the art is exhibited at cafés, galleries and other locations.

At Ungdomsspor the young people are accepted for who they are. While the practices are open-mindedness, tolerance, close contact and individual support, at the same time demands are made of the young people and the focus is on collaborating to deliver a quality product.

*“Opgang2 has matured me and helped me more than I could have imagined. Opgang2 helped me recover from a major mental breakdown, and after only a year and a half I’m ready to be part of society. I’m really grateful for that,” said a participant from Ungdomsspor 2015 (quoted from opgang2.dk).*

## **A Viable Construction**

“The construction for Ungdomsspor we thought up in collaboration with FO-Aarhus back in the 1980s, has turned out to be extremely viable. It still works really well.” Søren Magnussen, leader of Opgang2 and the initiator of Ungdomsspor, states.

He tells us that education is the DNA of Opgang2, so for him it’s completely natural that FO-Aarhus is part of the collaboration on Ungdomsspor. He points to the fact that the instructors are professionals, musicians, dramatists and artists, and that is why the teaching is highly focused on creating a product.

“To a great extent, what happens in Ungdomsspor is an effort in public enlightenment. The young people who take part are a bit scratched up and have suffered from a lack of care. So it’s no surprise that they have trouble finding their way. Through the teaching they learn how to manage their own lives, and they gain an understanding of societal rules and values,” says Søren Marcussen.

## **Off Passive Support**

The objective of Ungdomsspor is that the youths gain a hold on themselves and their day to day lives through the production of culture, in a way that makes them capable to set some concrete life goals. In the long run this is aimed at getting them off of passive support. 25-30 young people participate in the course that takes place daily from 9 am to 4 pm and runs over ten months starting in September. Addicts or young people requiring treatment cannot attend the course.

At Ungdomsspor the young people work with professionals in music, theatre and art workshops. At the same time, each youth is supported and counselled individually by personal counsellors. The participants perform and express themselves on the stage, the screen and in music about what life holds, is good for and can lead to. The course is concluded with individual evaluations. Then the young people get a diploma and they can also get a written statement on their effort and personal growth throughout the course

The teaching in Ungdomsspor at Opgang2 is carried out in collaboration with FO-Aarhus and with support from the Act on Non-formal Education and Democratic Voluntary Activity. It’s a collaboration, which has by now existed for many years with good results. The collaboration also includes several municipal departments in Aarhus municipality.

## **A Progressive Cooperation**

At the municipal department of Social Affairs and Employment in Aarhus they like the effort put forth by Ungdomsspor.

“It’s a really, really good way to combine the artistic and the academic approach with public enlightenment. It’s remarkable to do it in this interdisciplinary way, especially considering the young people it’s directed towards,” says Vibeke Jensen, Head of Employment at Aarhus Municipality.

In her mind, the use of public enlightenment in the collaboration with Opgang2 on Ungdomsspor is highly application-oriented, thus endorsing the City Council’s wish to see more young people moving on to get an education or a job. It’s her perception that Ungdomsspor clearly works.

“I think it’s very progressive to use public enlightenment actively in this way,” says Vibeke Jensen.

For more information: opgang2.dk

# **Public Enlightenment Plays a Part at European Capital of Culture 2017**

**With a budget of two million kroner public enlightenment will be a** **vital element when Aarhus takes on the role of European Capital of Culture in 2017. FO-Aarhus has ensured this by entering into a partnership with the Department of Culture and Citizens’ Services, Aarhus Municipality and Aarhus 2017, which is responsible for the European Capital of Culture events.**

**“The purpose of public enlightenment is rendering important subjects into the topic of conversation, and I think this is a large part of the focus of the European Capital of Culture. There are many common denominators in the lifeblood of FO-Aarhus and Aarhus 2017. And I’m proud to say that FO-Aarhus is now part of the European Capital of Culture,” says Head of FO-Aarhus Torben Dreier.**

**FO-Aarhus enters into the partnership with 500,000 kroner, money that is funded by the “debatpulje” (funds set aside for debate-creating activities). The Department of Culture and Citizens Services contributes one million kroner, of which half comes from the departments of Citizens’ Services and Libraries and half from Sports and Leisure. The last 500,000 kroner is contributed by the Aarhus 2017 foundation. The agreement was signed at Aarhus City Hall.**

## **Great Partnership Opportunities**

The purpose of bringing public enlightenment in to play a vital part in the many arrangements and events surrounding the European Capital of Culture is to render important subjects into the topic of conversation. Among these can be mentioned sustainability, but there are also many other possibilities.

The administrative director of the Aarhus 2017 foundation, Rebecca Matthews, can envisage great opportunities in the new partnership, that can help support and consolidate the Rethink-theme of the European Capital of Culture.

“This is a fantastic Rethink-partnership. Public enlightenment is such a significant and important part of the Danish culture and combined with such competent and experienced collaborators I look forwards to rethink and discuss ideas and projects which will involve many citizens and make a difference in their daily lives,” says Rebecca Matthews.

“My dream is that this will be an example to follow. FO-Aarhus is not part of Aarhus 2017 for monetary gain. We’re investing to make a contribution to Capital of Culture. Everyone who wants Aarhus to prosper, should actively seek alliances with the Capital of Culture, because this is the only way to make 2017 a success,” says Torben Dreier.

## **A New Approach to Public Enlightenment**

“This is a good and exciting collaboration, that will be beneficial to all parties and will present the city’s citizens and guests with some exciting experiences. Public enlightenment and the associations delivering it is a central part of the Danish society. It plays a pivotal part in our cultural life, that the rest of Europe can learn from and be inspired by. At the same time, it will provide us with the inspiration to rethink and evolve our city,” says Rabih Azad-Ahmad, Alderman of the Department Culture and Citizens’ Services at Aarhus Municipality, about the collaboration.

“When we do this, we present a new approach to the workings of public enlightenment, creating a new platform for the evening classes in the future collaboration in correlation with the culture in Aarhus. So I’m very, very happy. And I hope others will follow our example and help support the Capital of Culture,” says Torben Dreier.

The concrete activities are produced in cooperation with all partners in the collaboration.

For more information: aarhus2017.dk

Somalis in Aarhus:

# **- We Need to Shape the Story Ourselves**

**A series of seminars in the spring of 2015, created as a co-operation between FO-Aarhus and AarhuSomali, has really gotten the development of active citizenship going for Somalis in Aarhus. The seminars have led to a collaboration with Aarhus Municipality on an effort to create employment, entrepreneurship and a better image for Somalis in Aarhus.**

**In the spring of 2014 two representatives of AarhuSomali sought out Torben Dreier, Head of FO-Aarhus. They came to ask him if FO-Aarhus would be interested in collaborating on a series of seminars. Their idea was to gather leaders and resource people in the associations under AarhuSomali to discuss topics that could lead to a greater understanding of the role of Somalis in the Danish society, and a heightened awareness of how you as a Somali can actively take part in the society and democracy.**

**The two representatives from AarhuSomali went to FO-Aarhus because they knew that one of the ways we work with public enlightenment is to advance integration, Osman Farah who was one of the representatives states. In AarhuSomali they thought that FO-Aarhus was a good place to go, because they harbour a positive attitude to people with new ideas. What was needed was premises to hold the seminars in, whereto they could invite people who was interested in entering into a dialogue with the Somalis. For that purpose, FO-Aarhus was a great collaborator they thought in AarhuSomali, which is an umbrella organisation for 13 Somali organisations.**

**After listening to the two representatives from AarhuSomali, Torben Dreier quickly said yes. He and FO-Aarhus was able to step in and provide the means for** flexibly organised activities **in public enlightenment. They were able to provide the payment for premises with the needed technical equipment for a series of five seminars, open for anyone against a small fee.**

## **Aarhus Municipality Was Invited**

**The representatives from AarhuSomali left the meeting happy and went home to plan the seminars. The planning took some time, but in the spring of 2015 the five seminars were conducted under the collective headline “Active Citizenship”. The five seminar topics were: Citizenship and developing AarhuSomali. Advocacy and gaining influence. Youth, the generation divide and radicalisation. What we can learn from the United States. Visibility in media and public.**

**AarhuSomali engaged the speakers, among others consultants from Copenhagen and London,** **civil servants from Aarhus municipality, and from the U.S. Somali leaders participated via Skype.**

**High ranking civil servants from Aarhus municipality was invited to** **participate in all five seminars, and at two of the five seminars the speakers included a representative from the municipality.**

## **Conclusions Reached at the Seminars**

**It’s important to:**

* **Break with the prejudice and myths about Somalis**
* **Meet with Danes**
* **Get more young people to join the process**
* **Build partnerships**
* **Get the base to join in the process to make changes, led by AarhuSomali**
* **Identify with the Danish society, not just the Somali society**
* **Parents needs to motivate their children to get an education**
* **Break with the “suitcase-mentality” and realize that you intend to stay in Denmark**
* **Participate in society, vote at elections, and thereby gain political influence**

## **Action to Create Change**

The main conclusion reached at the seminars was: “We Need to Shape the Story Ourselves”. In other words, **AarhuSomali and the other Somali societies needs to be active to have their voices heard and gain influence. And more than one concrete case, shows that it’s possible.**

**It’s also necessary to make an effort to improve the Somalis image, since many old prejudice still linger, although much has changed. But since the work is carried out on a voluntary basis, the activity naturally fluctuates. For this reason, the joy of participating in the seminars were great among the active Somalis, because it gave them a rich opportunity to discuss the many important questions which affect the nearly 4000 people in Aarhus of Somali heritage. The desire to enter into discussion was great, and afterwards there is a widespread desire to back the words up with action in order to generate change. At the seminars it was also discussed how the further work is to be carried out to foster better citizenship.**

## **A Neutral Meeting Ground**

“FO-Aarhus has met us with great openness and goodwill. We’re very grateful for that. The seminars have meant a great deal for AarhuSomali, and the participating Somalis are enthusiastic. They were heard on topics that they are not normally able to have a say in,” says Osman Farah, AarhuSomali, one of the organisers of the seminars.

He is rejoicing in the fact that Aarhus municipality has opened up to the Somalis because of the seminars. In this way public enlightenment helps break down barriers in society, which he finds to be of great importance. “Public enlightenment is a neutral ground, politically and otherwise, and therefor it’s a really good meeting ground. Our cooperation with FO-Aarhus has meant that more Somalis have attended the seminars, and that we have been able to meet with high ranking civil servants from Aarhus municipality on an equal footing. The cooperation with FO-Aarhus has been invaluable to us,” says Osman Farah.

## **The Somalis Seek Inclusion**

Aarhus municipality’s City Manager Niels Højbjerg attended one of the seminars as a speaker. He made it clear that while the Somalis in Aarhus are well organised and active, it is still important to seize the opportunity to gain influence whenever it occurs.

At the seminar Aarhus municipality was censured for not including the Somalis in solving the problems surrounding integration. It was put forwards that the U.S. have had good experiences with round table meetings where more parties are heard.

Niels Højbjerg readily answered the criticism. He said: “For many years we’ve probably seen the integration of Somalis, as something we were supposed to do for you. But I think we need to turn our thinking around and learn to think of it differently. We need to be better to make use of your resources. We need to invite you to the table.”

## **The City Manager Extends a Hand**

After the seminar the city manager invited AarhuSomali to a series of round table meetings at city hall.

At these meetings concrete projects are discussed, project which are to be conducted in an equal collaboration between Aarhus municipality and AarhuSomali. It will be projects with the following focusses: Better employment for educated Somalis. Amping up entrepreneurship. Better image for young Somalis. Somali art and culture in Culture capital 2017.

“FO-Aarhus’ seminars with AarhuSomali has been a great opportunity to consider the challenges of integration from new angles. To me, participating as a speaker on one of the seminars supplied me with new contacts, which we have been able to translate into a much more direct dialogue about the integration of citizens in Aarhus with a Somali background,” says City Manager Niels Højbjerg.

He adds: “We’ve used the following round table discussions to clarify, how the Somalis can contribute to bettering the integration on a variety of areas. Personally, the meetings have given me and many of the municipality’s staffers new insight, which makes us able to actively advance the city’s goal of being a great city for all its inhabitants.”

## **Flexibly Planned Education**

The seminars about active citizenship for Somalis in Aarhus were arranged following the rules of flexibly organised activities.

FO-Aarhus worked with AarhuSomali on the seminars. It was publically announced and open for anyone. FO-Aarhus defrayed the expenses for the premises and the technical facilities and for the advertising.

The participant fee for the five seminars was 100 kr. in all. AarhuSomali arranged the speakers and conducted the seminars. They were held on Saturday afternoons as two lessons of 45 minutes with a break in between.

The seminars lived up to the rules of flexibly organised activities in full. They had as their primary goal to strengthen the development of active citizenship, and revolved around the significant socially relevant topic of integration.

For more information: aarhusomali.dk

# **Art Up for Debate in the Surf**

**Sculpture by the Sea is a recurring artistic event of great importance in Aarhus, where works of art is exhibited on the beach in town. In 2013 and 2015 FO-Arhus participated by hosting debate creating seminars about the artworks and meeting with some of the artists on the beach, where their works were placed.**

**Sculpture by the Sea in Aarhus calls itself ‘Denmark’s largest art event’. It was held for the first time in 2009 and has since then taken place every other year, with the crown prince couple as its patrons. The exhibit is always free, it’s open round the clock and it offers a host of exciting events and activities to its audience. FO-Aarhus is behind some of these events and activities in an effort to put art up for debate in the surf.**

## **Invited for a Cup of Tea**

At the exhibit in 2013 FO-Aarhus was the mediator between the artist Anja Franke and Megavol A/S concerning the montage of a solar cell panel on her interactive sculpture ‘Tea with a View II’. The sculpture is a large oak frame, and besides that it consists of a solar cell, mirrored glass and a water kettle. It invited guests to sit down, make a cup of tea and enjoy the view over the water.

FO-Aarhus arranged a debate with the artist Anja Franke. It was a free of charge ‘artist walk and talk’ event. The artist walked with the participants to her sculpture ‘Tea with a View II’. Here she told them about her piece, about her production, about what drives her in her work and about what she wants to accomplish with her art. Afterwards the floor was open for questions and debate.

## **More Debate Generating Presentations**

The sculpture was a highly popular and well-used part of the exhibit. This caused it to win the Sculpture by the Sea award of 50.000 kr. After the exhibit ‘Tea with a View II’ was bought by Fredensborg Municipality’s Art Fund, and is now exhibited in the park surrounding Nivaagaard’s Art Collection.

At Sculpture by the Sea in 2013 FO-Aarhus also arranged four other debate generating presentations. There was a presentation by art curator Axel Arnott, who spoke about the principles of selecting and placing the art work. There was two other ‘artist walk and talk’ events with artists Jette Gejl and Vibeke Nørgaard Rønsbo. And then you could join Politiken’s art critic Trine Ross to hear her review of the exhibit “live” at the event.

FO-Aarhus’ events at Sculpture by the Sea was paid for by funds from “debatpuljen” (funds set aside for debate-creating activities). They were popular events with about 100 participants each.

## **Back at the Beach in 2015**

At Sculpture by the Sea in 2015 FO-Aarhus returned with more ‘artist walk and talk’ events. This time it was three events of debate generating dialogue revolving around the sculptures, the exhibit and the thoughts behind the individual artist’s pieces. Again, the art was exhibited and debated at the beach, where the sculptures were placed. The events were free of charge and had about 80 participants each.

There was a meeting with artist Jette Gejl, who was the artist behind the work Burn Baby Burn. There was also an event with Charlotte Thrane, Louise Sparre and Niels Povlsgaard, who were behind the pieces En Halvdel/One Half, Skin Cube and Den Uendelige Bro. Furthermore, you could once more join art critic Trine Ross from Politiken and DR-K’s programme Kunstquizzen. This time she brought guests on a walk through the exhibit to talk about the pieces from an art critic’s perspective.

## **Experience and Commitment**

By debating the art on the beach, the guests were activated in a completely different way than by sitting in a row of chairs at a traditional lecture. People listened and participated in the discussions. Afterwards many people took a walk along the beach, looked at the pieces, debated the art, had a really god experience and related to the many impressions with great commitment.

At Sculpture by the Sea in 2015 FO-Aarhus was also behind creating a list of the activities in connection with the exhibit. This list was collected in an activity calendar, which was continuous updated and could be followed online at FO-Aarhus. The activities in connection with Sculpture by the Sea was paid for by funds from the “debatpulje”.

For more information: sculpturebythesea.dk

# **Debate in the Modern Community Hall**

**In close cooperation with the daily newspaper Århus Stiftidende, FO-Aarhus has created debate about important topics in, what can best be described as “the modern community hall”. The debate takes place partly among the participants at regular debates at FO-Aarhus, but it also, and perhaps even more, takes place in the pages of the paper and online.**

**The debates are held monthly at Stiften Loungen in FO-Byen, a wholly modern meeting room, with space for 80 people. The room is one FO-Aarhus and Århus Stiftidende has established together. From here the debate gathers waves and spreads like ripples on water throughout the entire Aarhus area. In this way more people are engaged in the debate, than just the participants at the debate meetings themselves.**

**The debate meetings were started in the beginning of 2015. Since then, several topics central to the development of Aarhus, in many different areas, has been up for debate.**

## **Aarhus as the Blonde Bombshell**

**In April 2015 the identity of Aarhus was up for debate at a meeting at Stiften Loungen.**

**The next day Århus Stiftidende referenced the meeting under the headline “If Aarhus was a woman, she’d be a blonde with big boobs and silicone lips”. This characterisation was curtesy of artist Stine Klejs, who at the meeting said: “For many years I thought: Come on Aarhus, you can do better than this. And luckily, I now discover that the pantyhose has runs, and the hair has become messy. Something more wildly growing has been allowed to catch root in the city, and we need to support that trend.”**

**A panel of no less than ten notable Aarhusians gave their views on what needs to be fostered in Aarhus, to make the city a better place to live. Everyone in the panel agreed that quickening the pulse of the city is paramount, and Martin Thim, principal organiser behind Kulbroens Venner, framed it like this in Stiften: “There is more courage in the city. More allowances are made and you’re allowed to be noisy.”**

**“When I lived in Copenhagen, I couldn’t get used to the fact that you didn’t say hi to the cashier in the supermarket. We do that in Aarhus. One of the city’s trademarks is the short distance between people,” said City Developer Rune Kilden.**

**The meeting had more than 80 participants, and Stiften’s article about the meeting was probably read by thousands of readers. Online the article received 170 likes on Facebook.**

## **Focus on Dementia Sufferers and Their Relations**

Dementia will cost us a heavy price, was the headline in Stiften of an article promoting a debate in June 2015. The article carried the subheading: “The number of dementia sufferers is exploding, and so are the costs.”

So saying the stage was set for an important debate, lead by Head of FO-Aarhus Torben Dreier. The backdrop was that today, 4,155 citizens in Aarhus Municipality is suffering from a dementia decease. According to the Danish Dementia Research Centre this number will increase by 28% over the next decade.

Ilse Klinke had brought her husband who suffers from dementia. She brings him everywhere – to the theatre, for meetings, and everywhere else. She stated a need for more respite care offers from the municipality that allows the next of kin some breathing space.

“When you suffer from a severe dementia-related decease, you’re heavily reliant on help night and day to perform every minor task,” said Dementia Consultant Hanna Frühstück. She underscored the importance of responding to the challenges that the next of kin are facing.

Alderman of the Department of Health and Care in Aarhus, Jette Skive (DF), attended the meeting and left with a great deal of input. At the meeting she declared: “One of the greatest and most important challenges is exactly how best to help dementia sufferers and their relations. My ambition is to make Aarhus a dementia-friendly city.”

## **The Creative Aarhus Can Become Like New York**

Entrepreneurship is on everybody’s lips, but how do we create the best possible growth environments in Aarhus? That was the topic of a Stiften Debate on entrepreneurship in June 2015. The other question asked was: Is it a task for the politicians or the business community to lift the entrepreneurs from the grass root level to the level of businesspeople on a national or global plane?

Adrian Fey, co-founder of CultureWorks, was moderator, and he had gathered a panel of entrepreneurs, politicians and businesspeople.

Århus Stiftstidende wrote about the meeting beforehand. There were moreover several articles in the paper, which provided other angles on entrepreneurship and the creative Aarhus, one of them with the headline: “The Creative Aarhus Can Become like New York.” In here it was made clear that: “8000 Aarhus C is the Danish postal code with the most people employed in creative professions. The creative underground in Aarhus has never been stronger. The city has the potential to reach the same international heights as New York and Berlin.”

## **The Dream of a New Stadium in Aarhus**

How does the dream of a new stadium in Aarhus become more than just a dream? This was discussed at a Stiften Debate in September 2015. The debate especially revolved around the much discussed running track that surrounds the football field and creates distance to the football audience.

“Our plans of building a new stadium without a running track is in no way a reflection of any disrespect towards athletics. It is about bettering the facilities we offer our spectators, which today is subpar,” said Jacob Nielsen, Director of Aarhus Elite, according to Stiften’s minutes from the meeting.

On the basis of Aarhus’ population figure, the director’s assessment is that it will be possible to fill a new stadium with 20-24,000 spectators. But where will the money come from? The finger was pointed towards the municipality and private investors.

Two local architecture firms each presented their idea for a new football stadium. Politicians from the City Council attended and were positive towards the idea of a new stadium, but unwilling to make any promises. After the meeting the debate of a new stadium continued in several local papers, strongly enlivened by the debate at FO-Aarhus.

## **Get Stuck in to the New Ideas**

The term apprenticeship gained renewed glory, when the aarhusian writer and professor Lene Tanggaard talked about her book “Learn” at a very well-attended Stiften Debate at FO-Aarhus in November 2015.

Along with co-writer, research assistant Tue Juelsbo; she established that we need to learn throughout our lives, but that we do it in the wrong way. She thinks that the good ideas and the right inspiration come from the long, laborious, daily hauls. So we simply need to get stuck in and get things going. That will create creativity, and everyone can learn to develop that.

“We have created a culture where you take a course if you need to upgrade your skills. This is not the optimal way to acquire new knowledge. We believe in re-establishing the idea of apprenticeship,” said Lene Tanggaard according to Århus Stiftstidende.

Professor dr. med. Peder Charles, Aarhus University, has worked with and done research in upgrading the skills of doctors, which is mentioned in the book. At the debate he talked about the idea of accelerated learning, a revitalising of the apprenticeship concept.

The debate gave a jumpstart to the discussion about how to create creativity and new ideas, when considering both private and public jobs.

## **Lifting the Debate to a Higher Level**

At the collaborator Århus Stiftstidende, the joy over the cooperation on the debates in the modern community hall is great.

“We are extremely happy with the cooperation with FO-Aarhus. It provides the paper with something that we could not handle ourselves,” says Jan Schouby, Editor in Chief of Århus Stiftstidende. He has a vision that the subscribers of the paper should get something extra, besides just getting the paper in the letterbox every morning. They need to feel like part of a community with some extra offers, and he views the debates as a really great part of this.

“Creating a debate is of crucial importance to our paper. We want to educate our readers and engage them, because some things you can only change through debate. So the collaboration on the debates is a giant scoop for the paper. It has lifted the debate to a higher level,” says Jan Schouby.

He likes that the debates cover a lot of the different topics that affect Aarhusians. He takes joy in the fact that politicians are willing to take part, allowing them to stay in touch with their electorate and with what goes on in Aarhus.

## **Debate Generating Activities**

On FO-Aarhus’ part the Stiften Debates are arranged as part of the debate generating activities. FO-Aarhus provides the funds for the room and the technical facilities for the meetings from “debatpuljen” (funds set aside for debate-creating activities).

The meetings are conducted in cooperation with Århus Stiftstidende. They are public and open to all who wish to attend. They are mentioned in Århus Stiftstidende both prior to and after the meetings take place, and often the debate continues long after the meeting is over.

The topics are all important, current and significant to the further development of Aarhus and are thus of interest to a wide array of Aarhusians. The meetings are free of charge.

Each meeting is conducted by an appointed “Stiften-ambassador”, who does the work voluntarily and free of charge, because the appointed person is dedicated to putting their specific topic up for discussion. The possibilities for doing that are optimal here: A centrally located venue, a well-functioning organisation and plenty of publicity both before and after the meetings.

At the meetings the participants are encouraged to participate actively in the debate. Afterwards there are rich opportunities to participate in the continuing debate with letters to the editor in Århus Stiftstidende and in other media.

For more information: Stiften.dk

# **Aarhus Celebrates Tolerance and Respect**

**On the 5th of May 2006 15,000 people gathered on Bispetorv in Aarhus under the headline: “To Joy – for Tolerance, Dialogue and Respect.” The backdrop was the great controversy and crisis following Jyllands-Postens Muhammed drawings and also several episodes of right-wing extremist violence in Aarhus. FO-Aarhus was responsible for arranging and linking the event to an array of other respect-events.**

**For years Aarhus had suffered from episodes of right-wing extremist violence, against which the City Council reacted. In the spring of 2006 the city council decided to instigate a preventive and debate generating campaign among the youth in Aarhus to prevent extremism. FO-Aarhus was asked to collaborate with the municipality to launch the campaign.**

**The campaign was composed of several components, specifically directed towards young people:**

* **A stand-up comedy event for 9th graders with the theme: Respect, dialogue and tolerance.**
* **A teaching resource for the older state school grades to be used as the foundation of an essay-contest.**
* **An essay-contest about the meaning of living in a democracy, with a prize of 5,000 kr.**
* **Having 25 of the essayists participating in a democracy debate with members of the city council at city hall.**

Besides these activities a huge and much talked-about event was arranged for the city’s inhabitants, scheduled to take place on Bispetorv in the middle of Aarhus on Friday the 5th of May. The foundation was that Aarhus City Council had decided to host an event, to mark their support of tolerance, dialogue and respect. At the same time 12 well-known authors wanted to do the same, among them Klaus Rifbjerg, Stig Dalager, Hanne Vibeke Holst and Benny Andersen.

The municipality asked Torben Dreier, Head of FO-Aarhus, and the later Director of Aarhus Festival, Jens Folmer Jepsen, to help carry out the project. That they did. And it ended up attracting 15,000 people. Several of the authors went on stage, and besides that well-known musicians like Kim Larsen, Steffen Brandt, Niels Hausgaard, Peter Sommer and Poul Krebs performed, as well as others like Ali Kazim and Nomadix.

## **A Colossal Media Coverage**

A great deal of sponsor-kroner was raised to cover the cost of the event, and FO-Aarhus provided a financial guarantee from the “debatpulje” (funds set aside for debate-creating activities). Aarhus City Forening paid for a full page ad in Jyllands-Posten (circulation 200,763) to run nationally on Sunday the 30th of April and another full page ad to run locally in JP-Århus on Thursday the 4th of May.

700 posters were printed and put up or distributed many different places in the city. 3000 flyers were printed and distributed in shop and cafes in Aarhus town centre, and besides that, the flyer was also circulated in several e-mail networks.

The media coverage of the event was colossal, ensuring that the message of respect, dialogue and tolerance was spread far and wide. In the days surrounding the joy-fest several TV-features was aired both nationally and locally, the event was covered on the radio, and numerous articles was written about the event both locally and nationally. Plenty of news sites and other websites also covered the event, and several of letters to the editor was written.

## **A Celebration of Tolerance**

Six years later, on March 21st 2012, FO-Aarhus again participated in celebrating tolerance at a similar event at Bispetorv in Aarhus. This time it was the collected city council, who invited to “A Celebration of Tolerance”, while FO-Aarhus yet again was behind organising the event.

This time the reason behind the event was that the right-wing extremist group Danish Defence League had planned an extremist demonstration in Aarhus. The event on Bispetorv was reaction against this, and again a long list of musicians and other artists took part in the celebration of tolerance. This event and its theme again garnered a great deal of attention in the media.

With the campaign for young people, and not least the two events on Bispetorv in Aarhus, the debate about tolerance, dialogue and respect was conveyed to many, most likely hundreds of thousands of people.

# **FO-Aarhus Won the DM in Partnership**

**At the award ceremony for evening class associations in 2014, FO-Aarhus won a great and important award, namely the Partnership Award. As at the Oscars, there were several nominees for the award, but FO-Aarhus won it on account of their many years of effort to make public enlightenment, in collaboration with many others, work actively to benefit the development of Aarhus in several areas.**

**The Award Ceremony for** evening class provider **was held for the first time in 2014 on the initiative of, among others FO-Aarhus. Awards were given in nine categories in the presence of 300 people. Attending the ceremony was among others Minister of Culture Marianne Jelved and Minister of Taxation Morten Østergaard.**

**The reason behind giving FO-Aarhus the Partnership Award was this: FO-Aarhus gets the award for having been an active player in Aarhus through many years, both when it comes to Aarhus Festival, sports, politics concerning senior citizens and much else. With the attitude that no project is too small for consideration, FO-Aarhus has been a key player in making Aarhus a more collaborative city and has raised the bar for what is possible.**

## **The Honour is Shared with Many Partners**

The Head of FO-Aarhus, Torben Dreier, was called onto the stage to accept the award, and the first thing he did was invite a whole array of FO-Aarhus’ partners onto the stage to, along with him, accept the applause from the filled hall.

One of the partners was Pia Marcussen from Opgang2, FO-Aarhus first ever collaborator from the late ’80s. Torben Dreier told the story of how they back then managed to create a fantastic partnership, which also included no less than three municipal departments at Aarhus Municipality.

The next partner was Jette Skive, Alderman of the Department of Health and Care in Aarhus, and Torben Dreier talked about the collaboration FO-Aarhus has entered into with Ældre Sagen and Aarhus Municipality. Another partner was Peter Nørskov, Culture Editor at Århus Stiftstidende, with whom FO-Aarhus collaborates on the regular Stiften Debates in Stiften Loungen at FO-Aarhus.

“I could mention so many people, and I almost get a high from being able to form this kind of partnerships, so thank you so much,” said Torben Dreier, while he was on stage sharing some of the glory from getting the Partnership Award with some of his collaborators.

And sure enough, the list of FO-Aarhus’ collaborators is quite long.

## **Nominations for Other Projects**

At the award ceremony in 2014 FO-Aarhus was also nominated for three other awards:

**The Handicap Award, for the project the Music- and Media workshop, which works as a social enterprise for adults with permanently reduced psychological- or physical functional capacity.**

**The Debate Generating Award, for year after year, since the creation of “debatpuljen” (funds set aside for debate-creating activities) in 2003, having organized a string of their own debate activities.**

**The Integration Award, for, in collaboration with the Alderman of Culture in Aarhus Rabih Azad-Ahmad, having arranged a visit from four young Palestinian role models from Ramallah, to talk to young people in marginalised residential areas like Gellerup about the importance of getting an education.**

## **A** **Great, Total Difference**

At the Award Ceremony for evening class associations in 2015 FO-Aarhus won the Debate Generating Award, for having put a particular focus on generating debate in 2015.

The nomination read: “In 2015 FO-Aarhus has held several debate events in collaboration with Århus Stiftstidende. FO-Aarhus is housing what is now known as Stiften Loungen, Aarhus’s new public debate space. There, they have for instance arranged meetings where Århus Stiftstidende’s 12 nominated ambassadors create debate with knowledgeable panellists with a plethora of views. Besides that, FO-Aarhus and Stiften has entered into a partnership with Livemagasinet, a journalistic stage show, which invites the audience into an intimate meeting with journalists and sources.”

In his acceptance speech at the award ceremony Head of FO-Aarhus Torben Dreier said: “One of the most amazing things that has happened is us getting these funds for debate generating activities. I usually say its God’s gift to public enlightenment, because here we get the opportunity to do something that makes a great, total difference.”

For more information: Aftenskolernespris.dk

# **Powerful Words on Education – In Gellerup**

**Great and powerful words were spoken to young people in Gellerup on the importance of getting an education. The words were spoken by four young role models from Ramallah in Palestine, when they visited Aarhus for 14 days in August 2014. And the young people in Gellerup really listened.**

**The four young people from Ramallah was invited by FO-Aarhus on the initiative of Rabih Azad-Ahmad, Alderman of Culture and** Citizens’ Services **in Aarhus. The role models from Palestine visited Gellerup and other marginalised residential areas where they made a great effort to inspire young people, especially those with a Palestinian background, to focus on getting an education.**

**Despite living** **their daily lives under very difficult conditions most young people in Palestine put great effort into getting a good education. They know that it’s imperative for them to get an education if they want to have a chance at better life. That is what the role models talked to the young people about at schools and societies in Gellerup.**

## **A Really Fulfilling Visit**

The young people in Gellerup, with a Palestinian background, are told again and again about the importance of getting an education. But the message is certainly not understood by everyone. Here Gellerup’s youth was suddenly faced with young people of nearly the same age, who hailed from the country that many young people in Gellerup still carry in their hearts, and the difference was tangible. They listened with pricked ears. The message was most certainly understood this time.

“The visit from the four young people from Ramallah was really fulfilling. It really meant something to our students to be with them and listen to them,” said then headmaster of Sødalskolen Susanne Berg after the young people visited the school.

“Our youth was really happy about the visit from the four young people from Ramallah. Education was the topic of the day, and the young people from Ramallah set a really good example for our young people in Gellerup, since the young people in Ramallah do their best to get an education despite of war, occupation and difficult conditions. That was something our youth took very seriously,” said Walid Mahmoud, Leader of the Ramallah Scouts in Gellerup, after the four young people visited the scouts.

## **Public Enlightenment for Actuation**

Alderman of Culture Rabih Azad-Ahmad is happy that FO-Aarhus so quickly and positively entered into the project of inviting young role models from Palestine to Aarhus.

“Torben Dreier at FO-Aarhus is really great at establishing collaborations involving public enlightenment. He’s good at seeing the possibilities and seizing them. And FO-Aarhus has always been good at developing ideas and using public enlightenment to put something concrete into action,” says Rabih Azad-Ahmad.

The alderman thinks, that the project yielded really good results. He’s happy that the young people from Ramallah got the opportunity to talk to so many young people in Gellerup, in schools and societies. And he thinks they made a great effort to further the understanding of how important it is to get an education. That’s something he himself values very highly.

## **Nominated for the Evening Class Associations** **Integration Award**

**FO-Aarhus was nominated for the** evening class associations **Integration Award in 2014, for the project where the four young role models from Palestine came to visit, the award was presented by Minister of Culture Marianne Jelved in Aarhus in 2014. The project didn’t win the award, but at the ceremony a video of the four young people was shown, in which they talked about their dreams for the future, their strong focus on getting an education, and about their experience of meeting the young people in Gellerup. The video was moving, and many of the attendees at the ceremony was highly affected by it. The master of ceremonies at the award ceremony, Marc Perera Christensen, city council member for the Conservative People’s Party in Aarhus, praised the four young people from Ramallah and their effort from stage, after having seen the video. He thought the role models had done a good job giving some of the young people a kick in the pants and getting them to realise that they need to get an education.**

**The role models from Ramallah met several local politicians at different times during their visit, both officially at city hall and informally at occasions in Gellerup.**

## **The Message Was Spread to Tens of Thousands**

The visit in Aarhus from the four role models from Ramallah, and their mission of education, was highly publicised in the press, both in newspapers, on TV and on news websites. This way the story of the visit and its message was spread to tens of thousands of people in East Jutland.

Under the headline “Role Models with Roots in Palestine” Århus Stiftstidende wrote: “Education is the key to the future. That is the stance of four young Palestinians, who is currently visiting Aarhus. In the coming days they are scheduled to visit schools, 6th form colleges and societies to inspire young people of the same background.”

To the paper one of the young people, the 17-year old student Mohammad Abd Rabu said: “We are basically here to tell young Danish people of Palestinian decent, that they have so many opportunities to get a great education here in Denmark. Compared to them, our possibilities are fewer, and yet we can still educate ourselves to be for instance doctors or lawyers.”

The 16-year old student Asar Jaradat said: “When you wake up in the morning you have two choices: You can either go back to sleep and keep dreaming. Or you can get up and make the dream a reality. I think education is the key to the future. There might be those who think it’s hard to become integrated, but maybe we can help them on their way.”

## **Our Mission is to Motivate**

Under the headline “A Dressing-down from Ramallah” Jyllands-Posten wrote: “Education, peace and freedom is anything but commonplace for young people in Ramallah. Four young Palestinians are visiting Aarhus with a message to young people: Get educated.”

The 19-year old law student Jana Jaradat said to the paper: “Our mission is the motivate the young Danish people to get an education, so they can become active citizens in their society.”

The article continued: “The thought is, that the young Palestinians needs to remind the Danish youth about the importance of getting an education, and that you should be grateful for getting a free education. In short, you could describe the visit as a finger-wagging for the Danish youth who, according to the four young Palestinians, don’t value their opportunities highly enough.”

“A lot of people have greeted us, listened to us, and have been inspired by our stories,” said Jana Jaradat.

## **Debate Generating with a Punch**

The visit from the four young role models from Palestine was a project arranged by FO-Aarhus according to the rules of debate generating activities, and was funded by the 10-percent pool. The expenses for the 14-day visit ended up being just around 27,000 kr.

The visit from the young people was widely covered in the media, leading tens of thousands of people to become aware of the problem concerning the lack of education among young people in Gellerup and other marginalised residential areas.

At the same time, the project added new opportunities to the agenda, with the view to steering this development in a positive direction. The many attendees at the Award Ceremony for evening class associations also got a moving impression of this by watching the video.

Last, but not least, an array of local politicians, the mayor of Aarhus, a member of parliament, several aldermen and city council members was made aware that this is a possibility to actively enter into the solution of a big problem, that politicians have been struggling with finding applicable solutions to for years.

# **ØKOgal Has Healthy Food and People in Focus**

**Healthy organic food has taken over in the** **cafeteria in FO-Byen, where in addition people and their development is in focus. This has happened on account of the social enterprise ØKOgal, an initiative which has come about as a collaboration between FO-Aarhus and the association ChangeMakers.**

**The association works to create jobs with special conditions for people with a mental vulnerability. They also run the sister company Café Kaffegal in Nørregade in Aarhus. All the associations social enterprises are run by a mix of professionals, volunteers with a substantial resource base and in addition to them people with a mental vulnerability, either in internships or hired in low-strain or flexi jobs.**

## **An Important Social Mission**

**The social mission is as important as creating an economical profit. For Café Kaffegal this means that all profits are reinvested in the cafés social mission, so that as many jobs as possible is created for those who need a job on special circumstances.**

**Café ØKOgal works as an organic cafeteria to the delight of those who live their** **daily life in FO-byen. The thought is that the enterprise will undergo further development. The second step of this development is to make Café ØKOgal the leading supplier of organic food for parties and functions. The third step is to make Café ØKOgal the city’s best purveyor of organic company lunch programmes.**

## **Daily Training**

The association ChangeMakers – and in extension hereof also Café Kaffegal and the sister company ØKOgal – is collaborating with FO-Aarhus, with support from the Act on Non-formal Education and Democratic Voluntary Activity. The framework for this is that the extent of the professional and social skill development is both comprehensive and sustained.

Nearly all the associations **mentally vulnerable** **people are unskilled workers and hasn’t gone through f**urther education. Therefore, they receive daily training in either cooking and kitchen hygiene or training in the a-z of waitering.

**For more information: cafekaffegal.dk**

# **Public Enlightenment Should Leave Marks on Society**

**With partnerships, debate generating activities, and openness to current trends, public enlightenment should leave marks on society. The citizens need to be involved and topics that are important to the development of society must be brought up for debate. All of this is the lifeblood that flows through the veins of Head of FO-Aarhus Torben Dreier’s, and he thinks that these kinds of activities are crucial to the survival of the evening class providers.**

**With public enlightenment your opportunities to involve citizens in the development of society is great, and in Torben Dreier’s opinion you should involve citizens. Nowadays it’s not enough to send out a catalogue of courses a couple of times a year and besides that, have a couple of debates with the most well-known debaters that you might as well see on TV.**

**“If that is all you do; I would seriously fear that public enlightenment might shrivel up and die,” says Torben Dreier with a gloomy expression, which is rare on the face of the otherwise always very positive Head of FO-Aarhus.**

**He is sincerely worried, that the traditional evening classes won’t in the long run continue to motivate the country’s politicians to spend as much money on public enlightenment. Not even if the classes are as good as they possibly can be.**

**“If that is all public enlightenment has to offer, I’m afraid, in the end the politicians might find that those are the kind of courses that people have to pay for themselves. And that would endanger the further survival of public enlightenment,” Torben Dreier warns us.**

## **The Core of Public Enlightenment**

**FO-Aarhus does have many of the classic evening classes on their schedule. But they are absolutely not on their own. For years FO-Aarhus has worked with a sea of societies, organisations and others, which has created exiting new projects and put important topics up for debate in a different and engaging way.**

**“Activism” some would call that way of running an educational association and** evening classes**. “Yes, please,” says Torben Dreier. That’s a label he doesn’t mind having attached both to himself and to FO-Aarhus. He sees it as something incredibly positive, to actively and openly relate to the society that surrounds you. Because that is the innermost core of public enlightenment.**

**The inspiration for this came back in the 1980’s, when Ole Vig Jensen was Minister of Culture in the Schlüter-led government. What was then known as the Leisure Law was a sort of ‘free-for-all’ where all you needed to do to secure both state- and municipal financial support was attract 12 people to a class about a specific topic.**

## **Transboundary Activities**

**Torben Dreier tells us about how the minister got a comprehensive experimental- and innovation work going. It was supposed to get control of and stop the economic growth in the field of public enlightenment, but at the same time it would mean a much higher degree of autonomy. Before it was not possible to work across sectors, but that was changed in the new Act on Non-formal Education and Democratic Voluntary Activity.**

**In the experimental- and innovation work there was a great emphasis placed on transboundary activities. The goal was to get working on breaching the boundaries between sectors, for instance between the social and cultural sectors. Moreover, the socially preventive work was granted a central place, for instance self-help groups for people in personal crisis, youth groups and groups for retirees, operated by the users themselves, and local drop-in centres and day folk high schools. This was, to a high degree, implemented on the basis of the users own conditions and traditions.**

## **The Importance of Outside Inspiration**

**Torben Dreier was inspired to think in a new way by the experimental- and innovation work, and at the same time Opgang2 came along with the idea for a project, which used this exact way of working across sectors (See page 13 for more about project Ungdomsspor). At around the same time people approached Torben Dreier with ideas that resulted in the establishment of Idrætsdaghøjskolen, Gøglerskolen and several other projects that turned out to be sustainable and significant each in their own way.**

**In 1990 the Act on Non-formal Education and Democratic Voluntary Activity was passed on the basis of the experimental- and innovation work and it was enacted on January 1st 1991. This resulted in a big change. In 1996, Aarhus City Council decided to set some goals for adult education, which lived up to the new law, and involved projects across legislation and sectors as well as transversal collaborations with societies and common houses. In addition, the goal was set to apply alternative modes of collaboration and teaching.**

**Since the first collaboration was started with Opgang2, FO-Aarhus has entered into a great deal of partnerships, and has by their involvement helped to get many projects off the ground. Torben Dreier is happy that so many people approach him and FO-Aarhus with their ideas.**

**“I can’t sit here alone in my bell jar and think up all these things. It requires outside inspiration, and I’m lucky to get plenty of that,” says the Head of FO-Aarhus.**

## **Good Ideas Get off the Ground**

Loads of great projects have come to life, because others have knocked on Torben Dreier’s always open door and have been invited in to have a talk. For instance, he mentions the example of a couple of Somalis, who came to involve FO-Aarhus in a project consisting of a series of seminars about active citizenship (See page 19 for more about the seminars arranged by AarhuSomali). This series of seminars was pivotal in getting a row of projects started as a collaboration between Aarhus Municipality and the Somali societies, and has hereby branched over into City Hall.

“I would never have come up with the project with the Somalis myself. It only came into existence because they came to me with the suggestion,” says Torben Dreier.

He tells us that on average, he is approached with ideas for new projects five times a week, and he’s known as the man who never says no. And he doesn’t. The Head of FO-Aarhus’ approach to new proposals is to look into the options and potential. Then he makes a judgement on whether the people who approached him with the ideas, is also able of realising them with the help of FO-Aarhus.

“I believe that it brings more energy to all parties, when we are able to find the right partnership in which to foster a project. It is pure oxygenation of public enlightenment. But the people who supply the ideas, also needs to be able to take on the task. It’s important to underscore that point,” says Torben Dreier.

## **Yes to Debate, No to Agitation**

The Head of FO-Aarhus emphasises that the people who approach him, needs to roll up their sleeves themselves. It’s no good if they think all they need to do is show up with a good idea, and then expect FO-Aarhus to do all the work and possibly hire them in a project post. That’s not how it works. A real partnership requires both parties to put their energy and effort into getting the project of the ground and get it going. At the same time it’s important for him to underscore, that the partnership is equal and that no one partner is able to dictate to the other.

Torben Dreier has some specific limits set, for what FO-Aarhus is interested in being part of. Agitation, propaganda and party political influence doesn’t fly with him. He would never agree to harnessing FO-Aarhus to a propagandistic cart carrying a specific political opinion or anything like that. But that doesn’t mean that you can’t debate almost any topic.

One example is when some representatives from a political party came to suggest having a debate on an interesting topic, but only suggested people from that party be on the panel. Torben shook his head, but he didn’t say no. Instead he asked them to make the panel more diverse, and it ended up being a great debate with several political views being represented.

## **15,000 People was Gathered on Bispetorv**

Public enlightenment should leave its mark on society. That is Torben Dreier’s leading idea. To him, that is the very justification of everything he does. He’s able to mention innumerable examples of how FO-Aarhus has helped create debate, create citizen involvement, create activity, create projects, create involvement, create enlightenment. In short, leave its mark on society.

He’s proud of it all, and find it difficult to point to specific examples as being the ones that really made a difference, created progress and changed people’s attitude. And yet: the event on Bispetorv in Aarhus on May 5th 2006 “To Joy – for Tolerance, Dialogue and Respect” must be mentioned. (See page 31 for more information about the event)

The event was held in the light of the crisis after Jyllands-Posten’s Muhammed-drawings and after many episodes of right extremist violence in Aarhus. Aarhus city council decided to hold an event, marking their support of tolerance, dialogue and respect and some well-known authors wanted to do the same thing. The municipality asked Torben Dreier, FO-Aarhus, and the later head of Aarhus Festival, Jens Folmer Jepsen, to get the event of the ground.

In the end, an array of well-known authors and musicians helped emphasise that Aarhus is a diverse, democratic and open-minded city. 15,000 people gathered on Bispetorv to demonstrate this, and the debate about the substance of the event was spread to hundreds of thousands of people. Torben Dreier was both happy, proud and very moved. His eyes still shine when he thinks about it. For him this event was the very essence of what he himself and FO-Aarhus stand for.

For more information: fo-aarhus.dk

# **Disabled Achieve Success Through Music and Media**

**The bands play around Denmark and abroad, while the media people do television with politicians and famous people. That’s what happens in the Music- and Media Workshop, where the students are all disabled. They experience great successes through their work with music and media in a safe environment that FO-Aarhus has helped preserve.**

**The students at the Music- and Media Workshop are adults with permanently reduced mental or physical functional capacity. They all need pedagogical support in their everyday life, and they only feel comfortable in small spaces. For many of them the Music- and Media Workshop is the first workplace where they feel safe. Here they can develop while doing a job that is of fervent interest to them.**

**“I call them students, because they’re here to learn things,” says Brian Lauri, Leader of the Music- and Media Workshop about the 20 students, who are physically- or mentally challenged adults. The education at the workshop is conducted in collaboration with FO-Aarhus with support from the Act on Non-formal Education and Democratic Voluntary Activity.**

## **It’s About Achieving Success in Life**

**At the Music- and Media Workshop the students are close to the leader and the staff. Half of the students are in the music** **programme where they make up the workshop’s three bands, who harbours great ambitions. They get to live out these ambitions, as for instance Jacob Jensen Band has done, by releasing several CD’s and giving concerts abroad.**

**The other half of the students are in the media programme, where they tape and edit TV interviews, especially with politicians and famous people. These interviews are aired on TV-Aarhus. Students from the media programme also make sure to film the bands from the workshop when they give concerts. They are also behind the Music- and Media Workshop’s Online Paper that features news, interviews, reviews and much more.**

**“To me everything that goes on here in the Music- and Media Workshop is about giving the students a feeling of success in their lives,” says Brian Lauri.**

## **Wouldn’t Put Up with Closure**

**Originally the Music- and Media Workshop was a grass root project, that was supported financially by Aarhus municipality. However, budget cutbacks in the municipality meant that the financial support was withdrawn, and in December 2010 the workshop was under threat of closing-down. It came as a shock to the students, and it was something they wouldn’t take lying down. They had music to play and TV to make, so to them a shutdown wasn’t a possibility.**

**Along with others, they arranged a demonstration against the municipal cutbacks in front of Aarhus city hall, with protests from parents and others. The solution was that FO-Aarhus entered into the picture to support the project, by taking on responsibility for the instruction. FO-Aarhus and Aarhus municipality entered into a partnership, where they agreed to continue the** **operation of the Music- and Media Workshop in FO-Aarhus’ facilities in Åbyhøj.**

## **Great and Positive Energy**

The Music- and Media Workshop have three instructors employed, and the students pay for the teaching they receive. There is a great positive energy on site. An example of this was seen when the Music- and Media Workshop and FO-Aarhus arranged an aid concert for disabled children in Japan in 2012. The three workshop bands performed, they sold T-shirts, food and drinks, and they collected 20,000 kroner for the cause.

Jacob Jensen Band, formed in 1989, had its starting point in the Music- and Media Workshop. It consists of professional musicians, who all has reduced functional capacity. The band has, under different names, released 10 cd’s and given lots of concerts in Denmark, and toured Japan, Russia and Australia. The band performs without the help of music teachers or social workers, and their repertoire is big enough that they can play for five hours without repeating a single song.

For more information: mume.dk

# **Artists Meets at Perron 1**

**A group of visual artists meets at the FO study circle Perron 1, where the artists provide each other with professional sparring, to the benefit of their own personal development as well as to the benefit of their joint projects.**

**FO-Aarhus provides the study circle with facilities, and it is a great joy and benefit to the five visual artists in the group.**

**“It’s important to have a group of professionals, in which you speak the same language. We are able to critique each other’s projects, and in that way elevate what we do,” says visual artist Anne Hoffman.**

**The artists have other things to see to in their daily lives, both work and family. But they can show up at their room at FO-Aarhus, when and as often as they want, day and night if they wish it.**

## **Meetings at Godsbanen**

“It’s an incredible luxury. And we work both late at night and early morning, however it works for us,” says visual artist Erik Hørning.

He tells us that they often get together two-three people, which allows for a really great atmosphere and a great working community that fosters the exchange of ideas and viewpoints both on their own and other people’s art.

The name of the study circle, Perron 1, at first sounds mysterious but it isn’t just random. The name arose from the fact that the artists first met in one of the open workshops at Godsbanen in Aarhus, where they, for different reasons, couldn’t stay. But then they found their way to FO-Aarhus and saw the chance of starting a study circle.

## **The Artists Help Each Other**

All the visual artists in the study circle meets regularly once a month. Here they discuss their own work, and in addition they discuss other artists and their work.

“It’s really exiting to follow each other and experience the development of the others,” says Anne Hoffman

The way the visual artists work with shapes, colours and techniques is widely different. Some of them have entered into the Kunstnernes Påskeudstilling, and they help each other pick out the works they want to enter into the exhibit.

For more information: foaarhus.dk/studiecirkler

# **Troublemakers Educates Children on Good Behaviour**

**Crime and vandalism was running wild in the residential area Bispehaven in Aarhus, so something had to be done. But what? One of the best solutions became employing four of the young troublemakers from the area to come up with activities for the slightly younger residents, so they didn’t end up displaying the same sort of criminal behaviour. This was done in collaboration with FO-Aarhus and it worked really well. Since then, this model has been used and developed for several other projects.**

**In 2004 in the then Boligselskab Præstehaven they had had enough of the crime and vandalism, that ran rampant in Bispehaven and made the residents feel unsafe. Therefore the housing association summoned a group of the older youths in the area to have a serious discussion about the problems.**

**At the meeting, they reached a common decision to do something to end the unlawfulness. The four young people simply suggested that they needed to start arranging some activities for the young people. The idea was that this would keep them from the criminal behaviour. The housing association offered up a bag of money. In the bag was the amount they could save on expenses for repairs after vandalism and crime. This was on the condition that the young people kept their word and managed to keep down the vandalism.**

## **FO-Aarhus Enters the Picture**

The four young people started an array of activities prompting the most restless of the boys in Bispehaven to spend time together, and as a result the incidents of crime and vandalism in the area slowly started dropping. After six months, in March 2005, the effect of the four young people’s effort was so obvious, that the housing association and the municipality’s Socialcenter Vest jointly decided to hire the four young people in wage subsidy jobs and start the project Outsiders2Insiders.

This is when FO-Aarhus entered the picture. Starting in December 2005, FO-Aarhus supported the project financially so the four young boys were able to be hired permanently for 18 hours a week during the period of the project. FO-Aarhus organised the instructional part of the project.

## **Many Doors Opened**

In FO-Aarhus magazine Nicolai, in November 2006, the leader of the project Trine Nielsen was able to talk about the more positive atmosphere in Bispehaven after Outsiders2Insiders had started.

“By means of this project, the young people in the area have gained a feeling of belonging, they have been allowed a place where they feel they fit in and they have been allowed to do things they wanted to do, like for instance starting a football team. Generally, it has opened people’s eyes to the possibilities of this kind of project, and through this project we have furthermore helped young people into educations and jobs,” said Trine Nielsen to Nicolai.

The four young employees worked as role models for the younger people. The young people themselves started educations or jobs, and they then experienced that many doors opened to them.

“What the boys are really doing is teaching the younger boys to behave themselves, how to adjust into society and show them how to act normally, stay out of crime, look for work, show up on time and so on,” said Trine Nielsen

## **The Younger Listens to the Elder**

23 year-old Mohammad Murad was one of the four young people who were employed in Outsiders2Insiders, and besides this he started an education in youth work. He pointed out the importance of the daily contact with the young people, which also included meetings with their employers and guidance counsellors. Trust was created between the young people and the four employees, so the young people often came to them with their own problems.

“I’m one of their own so they trust me and want to talk to me. Besides that, age and precedence matters a lot out here. The younger people respect and listen to their elders. We are able to use this in a positive way,” said Mohammad Murad to Nicolai.

At city hall they were also appreciative of the project.

“The good thing about Outsiders2Insiders is, that they hired young people from Bispehaven. They have previously been involved in criminal behaviour, and they know the area for good and bad. They are only a few years older than the young people who are behind the criminality taking place now. But the young people in the area trust them and listen to them. Their work is of far more impact, than if you sent a youth- or social worker to Bispehaven,” wrote Gert Bjerregaard (V), Alderman of Social Affairs and Employment, in Nicolai in November 2006.

## **Subsidised from Means for Public Enlightenment**

Outsiders2Insiders was subsidised by the EU-financed Urban-project, by the Ministry of Refugees, Immigrants and Integration, by Aarhus municipality and by FO-Aarhus. FO-Aarhus organised the instruction and thus supported the project with means for public enlightenment.

In 2009 NIRAS-konsulenterne composed an evaluation of the resident advisory service in 62 social housing estates, for the years 2004 and 2008. In this evaluation the local project Outsiders2Insiders from Bispehaven is highlighted as a good example of a differently effective approach to the work with marginalised children and young people and integration.

## **Self-worth Grows with Responsibility**

The model from Outsiders2Insiders has since been carried on in some current projects, where FO-Aarhus is an active participant in the social effort in marginalised residential areas. The second-hand shop “Smukt og Brugt” and the social café “Café Viggo” are placed in a house in the middle of the housing area; both places are aimed at people with a lesser resource base, of which most have dropped out of the labour market.

“Many of the users have a tendency to isolate themselves in their flats, but here they have a place to go, in a calm and cosy atmosphere, where they can thrive. Many of them have big problems in life, that often needs to be solved through a longer process of help and guidance,” Kasper Müller, Project Leader of the Housing Social Overall Plan in Bispehaven.

He acts as a mentor to the unemployed that the municipality places in work ability testing at the place. Furthermore, he teaches social skills to the projects participants, something that takes place under the auspices of FO-Aarhus. It is informal teaching, that lifts people up and gives them more self-worth. This is particularly attributable to the fact that it happens in connection with their participation in the work at the second-hand shop and at the café, where they gain self-worth through growing responsibility for work tasks, in a way that makes them feel like they are making a contribution to the community. The proceeds from the second-hand shop helps fund an annual summer camp for the children in Bispehaven, something the whole community sees the benefit of.

## **Valuable to Many**

In Østjysk Bolig, which Bispehaven now belongs to, they are happy to have public enlightenment be part of several projects.

“With the challenges posed in Bispehaven the education that FO-Aarhus provides is crucial. That way, we have something valuable to do for the many people who would otherwise stay at home in their flat. They come out to meet other people and get activated,” says Allan Søstrøm, Director of Østjysk Bolig.

He thinks that the collaboration is great, because it focuses on what is realistic and on what works.

“We are very happy about the collaboration with FO-Aarhus, and we hope it lasts for a long time,” says Allan Søstrøm.

## **Focus on the Young Peoples Good Sides**

A group of young people in Bispehaven has started restoring some old youth facilities to serve as a drop-in centre for young people under 18. This goes on as part of a mentorship project and the group’s young people are led by Mohammad Murad, who was part of Outsiders2Insiders. Now he is a mentor and instructor to the young people.

Mohammad Murad was hired in a project positon in a collaboration between the housing association Østjysk Bolig and FO-Aarhus. His job is to teach the young people between 18 and 30 years of age. The instruction goes on under the auspices of FO-Aarhus, and it is very different than the teaching the young people is used to from their time in state school. Mohammad Murad tells us, that he focuses on the young people’s good sides, while at the same time acting as a role model to them.

“At one point I was a troublemaker myself. But then I entered the picture, because our help was needed. We were the oldest generation in the area and it was time for us to give back to the community,” says Mohammad Murad. The young people attached to the project tell us that they mostly don’t have anything to do on a daily basis. Renovating the youth facilities makes them happy, because they are now able to establish a music studio for the inhabitants of Bispehaven. They are looking forwards to that. And they also want to launch a bicycle workshop.

## **Opportunities for the Weakest**

“It’s great,” says Jens Winther about the entry of public enlightenment in an area like Bispehaven. He is the Head of the Boligsociale Fællessekretariat in Aarhus and was for some years employed at the department of social services in Aarhus to head several projects in Bispehaven.

“Of course public enlightenment has something to offer there too. Actually you could say that it was about time that public enlightenment also gave opportunities to the weaker people in society, and didn’t only focus on Italian, fine cooking and that kind of thing,” says Jens Winther.

He thinks that FO-Aarhus’ involvement with public enlightenment in Bispehaven has been a great success. He points to the fact that while Outsiders2Insiders was a very ambitious project, it was a great success, and it produced some very fine young men.

“Subsequently, I’ve been the head of other projects where public enlightenment has been a part, and these have likewise been successful,” says Jens Winther.

# **Diverse Debate for Students in Aarhus**

**For years FO-Aarhus has been behind a long row of debate generating events in Studenterhus Aarhus. These events have covered a wide range of subjects: From fair trade fest featuring a sustainable fashion show, to experiences as a deployed soldier and moreover a clarification on whether or not you are intelligent.**

**Every year FO-Aarhus publish a little pamphlet, in which you can read about all the debate generating activities that has taken place over the year in collaboration with others and funded by the “debatpulje” (funds set aside for debate-creating activities). Events at Studenterhus Aarhus always take up a good deal of space in this account.**

**Over the later years FO-Aarhus has thus, every year, been involved in 15 to 20 debate generating events in Studenterhus Aarhus, which is to be found in Stakladen at Aarhus University. The funds for the events have come out of FO-Aarhus’ “debatpulje”.**

## **A Wide Array of Subjects**

In 2014, 22 of these kind of events was held. The subjects were: politics, films, Islamism, Ukraine, poverty, poetry, the natural sciences, theology, the EU, Grundtvig, world power, media ethics, humour and handicap, the Czech Republic, student jobs, melancholia, group work with a functional handicap, human science graduates in the business world and direction in relation to job opportunities.

As shown, the subject matters are widely spread. The films were a cavalcade of three Niels Malmros films. The talk about Islamism was held by professor emeritus at Aarhus University, Mehdi Mozaffari. Both a Russian and a Ukrainian attended the meeting about Ukraine. Social entrepreneur Steffen Rasmussen from Aarhus, the founder of Fundamenter, talked about poverty in Denmark seen in a European perspective.

Other exiting and well-known guests at the debates during the year was poet Søren Ulrik Thomsen, TV presenter Clement Kjærsgaard, journalist Henrik Qvortrup, chief physician Ole Helmig and visual artist Jørn Henrik Olsen.

## **Collaboration on Courses**

The “debatpujle” is, with these frequent events, partly responsible for starting debates among the students in Aarhus on a wide array of subjects that varies greatly from year to year.

Besides this, FO-Aarhus has a collaboration with Studenterhus Aarhus on classes and courses, for instance in languages. FO-Aarhus provides Studenterhus Aarhus’ members with a discount on a number of courses.

## **Intelligent Students**

And then there was the **clarification on whether or not you are intelligent. In 2008 an event was held under the headline: “Are you intelligent? - And would you like to know?”**

**A headline like that is just the thing to provoke this or that student with ambitions within their field to show up. The meeting was held in collaboration with Mensa Denmark’s Intelligence Test, and featured a presentation on intelligence by Tina Refning Larsen, who is a member of the European Council for High Ability and Mensa Denmark, and the founder of the society Gifted Children.**

**How many students left the meeting with a positive assurance of their own intelligence no one knows, just as no one knows whether some students left the meeting feeling severely let down in their own abilities.**

**For more information: studenterhusaarhus.dk**

# **The Taboos of Sports in Open Debate**

**Global sports: Reform or revolution? That was the headline of the introduction at the conference Play the Game in Aarhus in October 2015, where the world champions of sports debate were gathered for days of debate. With money from the “debatpulje” (funds set aside for debate-creating activities) FO-Aarhus helped fund the opening debate at Aarhus city hall, where the public was allowed access.**

**At the conference, the establishment of the sports world had a fight to the finish concerning the many taboos in the world of sports. This took place as about 400 journalists, scientists, sports clubs leaders and other experts met in Aarhus from the 25-29th of October 2015 to debate the worst challenges to the international world of sports. Up for debate were subjects like corruption, match fixing, doping, human trafficking, the lack of sports on offer to the populations, and many others.**

**For nearly 20 years the Danish initiative Play the game has helped break the taboos of the sports world.** **Over time, the challenges to the world of sports stemming from corruption, doping, match fixing and the abandonment of the sports clubs have developed to such a dangerous degree, that Play the Game at its ninth conference had to ask the question: Global Sports: Reform or revolution?**

## **Many challenges to be solved**

“Over the last 4-5 years Play the Games influence on international sports policy has grown at a steady pace, and we expect some of the harshest critics of the sports world to attend the conference, as well as some of the actors, whose responsibility it is to shape the future in the area of sports politics: EU, the European council, UNESCO and hopefully also some of the larger sports clubs,” said Jens Sejer Andersen, the international head of Play the Game and the Danish Institute for Sports Studies prior to the conference.

Jens Sejer Andersen referred to the motto ‘Rethink’ that Aarhus uses as Culture Capital 2017. He thought this might serve as an apt reminder for the international world of sports to take to heart, if the many challenges are to be solved.

## **Rethinking the World of Sports**

Alderman of the Department Culture in Aarhus, Rabih Azad-Ahmad, was happy that the conference could help strengthen Aarhus’ profile before 2017. He said: “Aarhus was selected to be Culture Capital, because we have offered ourselves as a laboratory for rethinking solutions, and the world of sports is struggling with an array of concrete challenges, that exactly needs to be rethought if we are to succeed.”

The official opening was conducted by Minister of Culture Bertel Haarder along with Aarhus Mayor Jacob Bundsgaard and the President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Anna Brasseur of Luxembourg. After the opening, a string of speakers was invited to debate.

## **Popular Protests have Increased**

One of the subjects of the conference was the popular protest against large sporting events, which has increased to a level never seen before. Millions took to the streets in Brazil in opposition to the FIFA World Cup, and a handful of cities voted against bids to be the host of the 2022 Winter Olympics. Countries all over the world invest a lot of money and prestige in becoming the host of global sporting events, but there is a rising doubt about the returns of the investments.

The conference was backed by several entities, among them the Ministry of Culture, DGI, Aarhus Municipality, Anti-doping Denmark, the Danish Union of Journalists, the American Embassy in Denmark, Aarhus 2017, Danish Foundation for Culture and Sports Facilities, the European Council, the Danish School of Media and Journalism and many more. And also FO-Aarhus with funds from the “debatpulje”.

For more information: playthegame.org

# **Partnerships Build on Solidarity and Equality**

**What can you accomplish alone, and what can you accomplish if you collaborate with others? That is a question that has absorbed people working in associations, researchers, politicians and many others for years. Studies have been carried out and reports have been written on partnerships, and it has been tested in many contexts. In the area of public enlightenment municipal visions for partnerships have been made, and that way of working has even been written into the Act on Non-formal Education and Democratic Voluntary Activity.**

**Partnerships are built on synergy, solidarity and equality. This is evident in the report “Partnerships – on the way towards a new culture of cooperation”, written by Mette Hjære, Danish Institute for Voluntary Effort, in 2005.**

**In the report, a partnership is described as a** **form of co-operation, and it is made clear that it involves far more structured and binding elements than just the joint work of two organisations. The existence of many different forms of partnerships is described. But in the rapport the following definition has been chosen: “A partnership is a structured, binding, mutually beneficial and dialogue based voluntary co-operation between organisations from different sectors, that by combining their resources and qualifications work together to expand (new) social activities.”**

**This is clarified as, a partnership being a specifically qualified construction of co-operation between two or more organisations. The co-operation has a high degree of structure and formalization. By means of the different** **qualifications and resources of the partners, they work on a specific task towards a common goal.**

## **Equal Partners**

In the rapport, it is made clear that a partnership is a co-operation between two or more equal partners. Even if the partners don’t contribute with the same amount of work, the connection has to be equal. One partner might be the main co-ordinator and in charge of contents, while the other partner might contribute with facilities. Still, there has to be equality, also when it comes to decision making, so all partners have an equal influence in the process.

The fundamental idea of partnership is described in the report as: “the partners step into the same arena, so to speak, and from there they lift the task in solidarity.” It is crucial that the partners are committed to dialogue and equality, and that this principle is encapsulated in the planning of the **co-operation.**

## **Partnerships Mentioned in The Law**

Partnerships in the area of public enlightenment are mentioned directly, several places in the Act on Non-formal Education and Democratic Voluntary Activity.

In section 8a it reads: The municipal council may decide that special grants be given for the following purposes, cf. section 6(2):

1. Reduction of participant fees for particular groups.
2. Teaching etc. that implies small classes.
3. Establishment of partnerships for solving concrete tasks.

In section 19(3) it reads: The municipal council may decide that special grants be given for the establishment of partnerships for solving concrete tasks.

In section 34 it reads: The municipal council shall adopt and make public a policy for non-formal education and democratic voluntary activities in the municipality indicating the following:

In subsection 4: Correlation between non-formal education and democratic voluntary activities and other policy areas, including opportunities for the establishment of partnerships for solving concrete tasks, cf. section 8a, no. 3), and section 19(3).

Working in partnerships in the area of public enlightenment is thus a direct result of the contents of the Act on Non-formal Education and Democratic Voluntary Activity. But how do you get started on this? Who can you work with, and what are the challenges? The examples in this pamphlet should hopefully give some answers and besides give the inspiration to get started.

## **Partnerships Provide Quality**

In Aarhus Municipality the contents of the Act on Non-formal Education and Democratic Voluntary Activity regarding partnerships has been implemented in Aarhus Municipality’s Sports- and Leisure Policy (page 18-19), under the headline “Partnerships Provide Quality”: “Partnerships must be established between the area of public enlightenment, public organizations and private companies. The partnerships must provide quality and coherent solutions, both to the participants and the actors in the partnerships.”

This is further clarified: “The partnership can involve an array of tasks. It can be activities, that are immediate extensions of the associations and evening classes core areas, for instance if a sports club and an after-school care facility work together on a sports course or an association that arranges evening classes work with for instance an adult education center. Moreover, there might be several areas where the association/evening class provider and the municipality enter into a partnership concerning more specialized tasks like for instance health promotion, rehabilitation and integration.”

Further it says: “One of the basic ideas behind allowing an association or an evening class provider to solve a specific task in collaboration with the municipality is that children and adults are easier retained in an activity that occurs in this framework. This occurs when the participants build up a social network and interconnectedness with the association or evening class provider.”

## **Partnerships Should Be Contracted and Supported**

In the sports- and leisure policy the municipality states the following ambition concerning partnerships: “Partnerships between actors in the public enlightenment area and the municipality should be contracted around solving specific tasks, for instance in the areas of health, social inclusion, events et cetera.”

The following initiative should be taken: “Sports and Leisure should support the formation of partnerships between associations, evening class providers and actors in the municipality to solve tasks regarding for instance special exercise offers for children and young people, visual profiling of fitness equipment and running trails, disease prevention, rehabilitation or offers for disabled or socially marginalised people.”

# **Many Forms of Enlightenment and Debate**

**With the present laws and rules concerning public enlightenment it is possible to generate debate and provide courses in many different ways even some that might not be all that traditional.**

**In this way it is possible to generate popular debate about current subjects, which affect a lot of people. It is also possible to arrange courses for some of the groups of society that normally wouldn’t turn to** evening classes**. Here some of the most important rules of this is described.**

## **Flexibly Organised Activities – Strengthening Citizenship**

A public enlightenment association/ evening class provider is able to arrange courses planned according to the rules of flexibly organised activities. This is evident in section 8; subsection 4 of the Act on Non-formal Education and Democratic Voluntary Activity.

The grants for flexibly organised activities may not exceed 36 percent of the total expenses for the course. The grant can be used for other expenses than remuneration of teachers and executives.

The purpose of flexibly organised activities must be to strengthen the development of active citizenship. This should happen within areas, topics or subjects of significant relevance to society. This could be topics such as integration, lifestyle diseases, public health, consumer guidance, public participation, culture and literature.

Flexibly organised activities must clearly stand out from traditional teaching. It can be arranged as open study circles, open study workshops, workshops, remote learning or another way.

The courses should be conducted in classes, it must be publicly announced and it has to be open for everyone. Moreover, course fees must be charged. The length of the lessons are 45 minutes, as known from traditional education.

## **Debate Generating Activities – the 10 Percent Pool**

A public enlightenment association/evening class provider must spend 10 percent of its grants for public enlightenment on debate generating activities. This is evident in section 8; subsection 3 of the Act on Non-formal Education and Democratic Voluntary Activity. This amount can be used for other expenditures than remuneration of teachers and executives.

The debate generating activities must be publicly announced. They must be open for everyone. It needs to be obvious from the announcements that the purpose is to generate debate on the chosen topic. Fees for participation is not prerequisite.

The chosen topics of the debate generating activities should be put into a wider society related and coherent framework, and they must be aimed at a wide target audience.

The topics should be substantive and they must be debate generating. They must also be of interest to the community, and they should be planned in a way that ensures that the event contains a debate that actively involves the participants. The debate should be the principal element of the event, and it must be featured as a natural component.

The purpose of the debate generating activities mustn’t be treatment or therapy, agitation, entertainment, electoral campaigns, preaching or the spreading of superstition. It is, however, allowed to inform and generate debate about these subjects.

The debate generating activities can be conducted in collaboration with other associations, organisations, institutions etc. If this is the case a special account is made where the expenses and profits of the public enlightenment association appear.

## **Courses**

A public enlightenment association/evening class provider is given grants for public enlightenment adult education. This is evident in section 8; subsection 1 of the Act on Non-formal Education and Democratic Voluntary Activity. This also applies to teaching the disabled, instruction in playing a musical instrument, study circles and lectures.

The grants are applied towards reducing the expenditures for the remuneration of teachers and executives, who are paid according to centrally fixed rules and rates. This means that grants are only given for courses taught in classes where remuneration is given to a teacher or executive, or where a fee is paid for a lecture.

The courses must be taught in classes. They must be announced, be publicly accessible, and open to anybody. Besides this, a course fee must be paid.

# **Yes - to Municipal Funds for Public Enlightenment**

**Round the table, politicians in Aarhus city council is in agreement that transferring funds from the municipality to public enlightenment is a good idea, if specific tasks are to be undertaken. This is evident in a survey carried out prior to the local election in November 2013.**

**The survey was carried out by FO-Aarhus’ Magazine Nicolai, whose question for city council candidates from seven political parties was: “If public enlightenment and the municipality is to enter into a collaboration to solve specific (municipal) tasks, are you open to the idea of transferring funds from other municipal areas to public enlightenment?”**

**All the questioned politicians answered yes, each in their own way, and representatives from the entire political spectrum was asked. According to this, it is evident that there exists a pronounced political commitment to include public enlightenment in the solution of tasks. And in this connection, a widespread political commitment to transferring funds from different municipal areas to public enlightenment also exists.**

## **Ready to Allocate Funds**

**City council candidate for the Danish Social-Liberal Party, Klaus Bach Jacobsen, provided the most succinct answer: “Yes, it is a healthy principle for the funds to follow the task,” he said. The then political spokesman for the Social Democratic Party in the city council, Lotte Cederskjold, was equally clear: “If a task, which today is undertaken by the municipality is better solved, either by public enlightenment alone or in collaboration with the municipality, we must be willing to allocate the funds,” said Lotte Cederskjold.**

**Alderman Bünyamin Simsek from the Liberal Party of Denmark almost couldn’t get started fast enough: “Yes – that has been our policy for many years, we have already ensured a wide collaboration between the municipality and the public enlightenment on many areas, and there is still room to develop and expand the collaboration to the benefit of both the citizens and the municipal services,” said Bünyamin Simsek.**

## **The Money Must Follow the Task**

The candidate for the Red-Green Alliance Maria Sloth, now city councilmember pointed to the importance of including the volunteers: “If public enlightenment is to solve municipal tasks in the future, the funds that were earlier used for the task must follow the task. Asides from that, it is extremely important that the relocation of the task happens on the volunteers’ terms,” said Maria Sloth.

In the other end of the council chamber, at the Danish People's Party councilmember, now alderman, Jette Skive also wanted to move the funds around, but mostly inside the municipality it seemed: “I wish the finances could be moved from one municipal department to another, but that is nearly impossible in a municipal government with five little independent kingdoms,” said Jette Skive.

## **The Benefits of Collaboration**

Then Alderman now city councilmember, Marc Perera Christensen, the Conservative People's Party, could easily see municipal tasks and thus also funds that could be moved: “It is important that we’re talking about substantive partnerships that are of benefit to both parties. If this is the case, the relevant municipal departments should be able to see the advantage of investing the resources in solving the task in collaboration with the public enlightenment area. I can certainly see the prospect in moving for instance funds for rehabilitation and funds for the children- and youth area over to public enlightenment,” said Marc Perera Christensen.

The Socialist People's Party’s then city councilmember, Claus Thomasbjerg, was open to relocating the resources: “The Socialist People's Party is very concerned with using the funds the best possible way. That’s why the SPP is more than open to moving resources, if there can be created specific solutions in the collaboration between the public enlightenment and the municipality, that creates better results, and where there is a direct or indirect interaction between the specific municipal departments,” said Claus Thomasbjerg.