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DACCHE

COMMUNITY

CLIMATE

HERITAGE

Proceedings from Our Shared Futures

March 25–26
Östersund, Sweden



INTRODUCTION

On 25 – 26 March 2026, the DACCHE project welcomed the world to the event Our Shared Futures in Östersund, Sweden. This was one of the final public activities of the project which wrapped up many of our learnings – but we also wanted it to function as a stepping stone towards the future. That is why we chose the name Our Shared Futures – we wanted this to be an opportunity to talk about the possible future that we can all be part of.

The participants came from various backgrounds and occupations – museums, tech companies, NGO's, regional development, tourism, schools, culture workers to name a few. But they were also of different ages, ranging from high school students to seniors!

Here follows a summary of what Our Shared Futures came to be – shaped by all the people who came, participated and contributed. Thank you to all partners, contributors and participants for making it happen!

About DACCHE

Heritage organisations are key actors in climate dialogue, motivating communities and visitors through awareness and action. The project Digital Action on Climate Change with Heritage Environments (DACCHE) facilitated the use of local knowledge and equipped communities to preserve cultural landscapes, with digital solutions and methods for storytelling in a context of climate change. The project ran between June 2023 – June 2026 and was co-funded by Interreg Northern Periphery and Arctic (NPA), Region Jämtland Härjedalen, Trøndelag fylkeskommune and Donegal City Council.

DACCHE project partners



With support from



DAY 1 - 25 MARCH AT JAMTLI

Welcoming words and interactive museum tour

Iñaki Escudero, moderator and facilitator for the conference, welcomed everyone and gave the floor to Kevin Denham, project manager for DACCHE, who gave a short introduction to the project.

The participants were then divided into four groups and got to take a tour around the Jamtli open-air museum. In the tour, they acquainted themselves with three time periods – 1785, 1942 and 1975. In each time period, the participants explored a historical environment under the guidance of one of Jamtli's educators impersonating a person from that time. Issues such as consumption, memories, community and environmental care came up through the explorations of the different settings – also inviting participants to reflect on the different conditions for each time period and how that relates to their own lives and time.

Kristina Persson – What role does heritage play for successful green transition?

Kristina Persson, former Swedish Minister of the future and County Governor of Jämtland, shared about how the challenges of today and tomorrow need to be addressed by the civil society on a local level.

Kristina started with addressing that we live in turbulent times, and that the need for international cooperation is bigger than ever before. Conflicts, authoritarian leadership, xenophobia and nationalism are present in Europe and other parts of the world. There is also an unwillingness to implement needed climate policies to reduce CO2 emissions – on a national Swedish level, practically none of the climate and environmental goals are going to be met with the current policies.

So then – what can we do? Kristina argued that it does not suffice to elect politicians. There is a need for a broad mobilisation of civil society, organisations and individuals, and this is where culture can play a vital role combined with social entrepreneurship.

Kristina envisioned a revival of the broad understanding of culture and popular adult education that was crucial to the building of the Swedish welfare state a 100 years ago. Culture policy was the very basis for democracy and would lead to more self-sufficiency, innovations and creativity in the society. Apart from the fine arts, it also included the idea that learning and education should be available for all citizens and should be led by the citizens themselves through the civil society. Kristina argued that this idea should be the political vision of today but that we cannot wait for the politicians to act. We need to take action ourselves as individuals and as a community.

She finished with a clear statement – The future is being shaped by us. The challenges we are facing – authoritarianism, war, mistrust and the effects of climate warming – are strong but not stronger than the capacity of people to get organised and create the sustainable and meaningful future we want.

Øystein Viem - Heritage shaped with our hands

Øystein Viem, craftsman and museum educator at Stiklestad Nasjonale Kultursenter in Verdal, Norway shared a very personal story about why heritage matters – to him it is about knowledge, ethics and values. He used his own childhood and upbringing to demonstrate how heritage can become part of your family values through what you do more than what you say – through taking care of your belongings and through living close to nature as well as your neighbours.

Through the example of a reindeer hoof he showed how traditional Sámi knowledge can be used to make as much use of the reindeer as possible – how both fur, hoof, bone and tendons are used for different purposes – which is an example of a culture which values the scarce resources at hand and makes the most out of them. These are values and mindsets which can be brought forward as guidance and inspiration. One big question is how the traditional knowledge can be passed on, not only as values but also as skills.

Øystein also reminded us of the importance of symbols and doing things for the sake of your values. To pick up trash from the sidewalk might feel like a small and insignificant thing but it can be used as a ritual reminding you of your values – I am a person who cares about the environment, therefore I pick up trash.

He finished with stressing the importance of community – to get to know your neighbours but also that you are influenced and inspired by your community. If people around you care for their surroundings, grow their own potatoes or help their neighbours, there is a bigger chance that you do too.

DACCHE project team - what have we learned

The project team, consisting of Kevin Denham from Jamtli, Helena Kuhlefeldt from NCK, Judith McCarthy from Donegal County Museum, Andrew Brownridge from Nord University, and Håvard Sørli from Tindved kulturhage shared their key learnings from the project.

- Participation is a practice, not a product
- Culture and nature are inseparable
- Dialogue transforms
- What matters most can't always be measured
- Technology can be a bridge

Storytelling performance

After dinner and mingling, the actor and drama educator Sofi Bärger held a performance together with her colleague Vendela Agestam based on a story that Sofi created through the DACCHE project. Through the performance, the audience got acquainted with the life story of Anna Lithström and how she ran a guesthouse in Österuppland in western Jämtland in the early 1900's – but also how her story has resonated with Sofi in present day.

DAY 2 - 26 MARCH AT FRÖSÖ PARK HOTEL

Hanna Mellemsether - Museums and the future

Hanna Mellemsether, with a PhD in history and former Head of Collections and Research at Museene Arven, held an inspiring talk on the role of museums not so much as keepers of the past but as agents of the future.

Hanna started with claiming that museums always have been instrumental for shaping futures and not only for preserving pasts. These futures have looked different depending on the historic and cultural context of the time. Today there are crisis stacking up – conflicts, big tech companies, climate change to name a few. What futures should museums help shape today? Hanna argued that museums should transition from identity politics to future politics – not asking “Who are we?” but “Who are we becoming – together – across our differences?”

We need to understand where differences are coming from – what particular past has created us, them and the others. Museums can cultivate identity as bridge instead of a boundary. Not “us vs. them,” but “us – in relation to each other.”

Hanna argued that museums can move beyond being “safe spaces”, where disagreement is avoided, to becoming “brave spaces” where citizens practice the difficult art of listening to opposing views while remaining in relation.

What could a brave space look like? Hanna asked the audience to imagine an exhibition where a wind turbine sits in the gallery not behind glass, but in a circle of chairs. Visitors are invited to debate whether it should stay or go. The goal is not to reach agreement but to practice something rarer: to disagree, deeply, and still remain in relation. That is the muscle of democracy. And that is what museums can train – as a gymnasium for civic muscles. A gym is not a place where you go to be comfortable; it is where you go to strain your muscles. Similarly, a museum should not be a place where we agree; it is where we practice the muscle of disagreement.

The old question for museums was: ‘Whose stories do we preserve?’ The new question must be: ‘What futures do these stories make possible—and for whom?’ When highlighting historical moments where ordinary people successfully navigated crisis or achieved social change, museums can provide a script for civic action. Museums can in this way go from being memory institutions to orientation institutions.

Daniel Slungård - Developing XR for immersive storytelling

Daniel Slungård, owner and software engineer at Bithero AS, shared his insights on XR development and storytelling through the example of the exhibition Gaskelaante which was produced through the DACCHE project. Daniel started off with explaining the differences between virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR) and mixed reality (MR) and how they all make part of XR – extended reality.

VR = a completely digital environment

AR = a digital layer put on top of the physical environment

MR = a digital layer which interacts with the physical environment

Daniel acknowledged that there are some common fears with using XR – that the devices are complicated to handle, that you can get nauseous from using them or that it creates an isolated experience where you do not get to interact with the physical space or the people around you.

He also acknowledged that there is a big risk of using technology just for the sake of technology being fun – you need to have a story behind it to be really engaging. But on the other hand, museums have a lot of objects in their collections just lying in storage rooms. He took the example of Jamtli, the county museum in Jämtland which has 150 000 objects in its collections – how many stories are hidden there waiting to be told?

Daniel then briefly described the development process of creating the XR part of the Gaskelaante exhibition. Through the use of photogrammetry, several Sámi objects from Jamtli's collections were digitalised and 3D models of the objects were made. These objects were then put into an AR exhibition where you could experience the digital objects as a layer in the physical exhibition space through VR googles. This was used as a stepping stone in the exhibition to let the visitors get used to the digital experience step by step. The next step was to step through a digital portal and be fully emersed in a VR replica of Hansmyra, a site in the area of Gaskelaante on the border of Sweden and Norway. In this VR environment, the visitor got to see the objects in the environment where they could have been both made and used.

In both parts of the exhibition, visitors could interact with both the objects and each other – they could pick up the objects, hand them to each other and look at them together. The whole experience was created with a focus on social interaction where people were invited to create the experience together actively. This also worked – Daniel shared stories of how visitors who did not know each other or even spoke different languages interacted through the objects.

This goes to show that it is possible to make people more connected through technology – you just need to think about it as a developer and storyteller!

Anders Hansson – Landscape as an idea

Anders Hansson, former first archaeologist at Jamtli, spoke on the theme of how we can understand the landscape as a concept. The landscape is a place where many different values and assets come together – cultural, ecological, aesthetic, social and economic.

Our understandings and interpretations of the landscape are shaped by our cultural context. In the Western society, industrialisation meant a break in the connection with nature. Several divisions have influenced how we understand landscapes: a division of work and leisure, of city life and country life.

Anders showed that we are dealing with two different meanings when understanding what a landscape is:

- Landshaft – what the landscape is constituted by concretely and physical
- Landscape – the mental image of that same landscape

These two meanings are intertwined, and each landscape is located on a sliding scale between objective and subjective.

Anders showed how a landscape can be understood through different lenses through the example of the Jämtland mountainous region: it can be understood from a

- military
- industrial
- touristic
- landowner
- Sámi,
- political
- or natural and cultural conservation perspective

to name a few. Descriptions of the landscape in historical sources can show how these different perspectives have developed and changed over time.

How can you capture the different meanings and understandings of the landscape? One way is to work closely together with the people who have the local knowledge and cultural expertise. Anders told of his co-operation with Jan Persson, a Sámi reindeer herder who has combined his knowledge of the land from a reindeer herder perspective with historical knowledge, meaning he can add more layers and understandings to the archaeological remains in the cultural landscape.

Here it becomes clear that language is important – through the naming of places, practices and things different knowledge systems come out in the open. The intangible heritage is an important tool to understand how the landscape has been used and shaped in the past – for example place names and stories of land use.

In the light of climate change and other societal changes, how should we prioritise how the landscape is used? Anders argued that you need to be aware of the different perspectives and stories that the landscape is made of to make informed decisions when choices must be made.

Kate Robb – Are heritage communities empowered? If so, does it last?

Kate Robb, community archaeologist who has been leading Donegal County Museum's work with local communities in the DACCHE project, shared her insights from a long career of community archaeology. How can we empower heritage communities in a lasting and sustainable way?

She started off with defining what a heritage community is, starting from the Faro Convention. The convention puts a bottom-up approach to management and preservation of heritage at its core, also emphasising the meanings and values that people attach to places and objects.

Kate suggested the definition of a heritage community to be "a collective of individuals with a common goal: to progress social transformation on how we see and feel heritage". These individuals can come from different backgrounds and with different perspectives: locals, young and old, visitors and tourists, academics and students, institutional perspectives such as museums or legislative perspectives from legislators and protection agencies.

She used the example of the Fahan Heritage Group in Donegal who worked together to tackle the threat of stone weathering of a 6th century ecclesiastical cross slab. This group brought together archaeologists, conservation architects, heritage officers and stone masons to name a few – but was led by the local heritage group. Hence, heritage communities are made up of many different individuals with many different stakes and interest. This means that you need to take some time to figure out common goals and objectives of the group.

Kate then reflected on the concept of care in relation to heritage. Kate asked the audience to stop and think about what first made them care about heritage? Central to this notion of care are people and communities. Kate shared that in her work as a community archaeologist she has had many experiences where the often slow and extensive working period has built a sense of trust between her and the others involved. This has created a space for sharing deeply personal and sometimes traumatic stories. This also affects the kind of skills you need as a community archaeologist. According to Kate, a guiding principle of "people first, archaeology second" must be recognised.

How can heritage communities be a force in the protection and development of heritage in the light of climate change? In Kate's view, the custodianship adopted by the local community, the non-professional, for heritage is fundamental. Their knowledge is unparalleled. They observe and see change in a monument or place first. They care. It is because of this level of care that the importance of meaningful engagement with the 'non-professional' cannot ever be over-estimated.

Kate finished with reflecting on how to make empowerment sustainable and long lasting. She does think that empowerment is cyclical. There are waves and troughs. In the light of short project periods and short term programmes, she stressed a need for addressing the "after" of a project right at the beginning.

Gustaf Larsson - Engaging with the Audience in Exhibition Gaskelaante

Gustaf Larsson, exhibition host for the Gaskelaante exhibition at Gaaltije Saemien Museume in Östersund, told of his experiences from being in the exhibition everyday and interacting with the visitors. When starting as a host, he had no prior experience or knowledge of working with XR technology but had to learn everything from scratch. The XR equipment required a staff member being present in the exhibition at all times to help visitors get acquainted with the equipment and understand how to use it.

Gustaf shared about how some of the exhibition parts had been drawing the attention of the visitors more than others – that the XR part of the exhibition really had been the focal point of the exhibition while other parts were not as attractive. He told of how many of the visitors really enjoyed the XR experience and how he had witnessed that the XR experienced helped the objects come to life and to make the visitors feel engaged and active. The staff at Gaaltije have never had so many people laughing out loud in an exhibition before.

Workshops

The participants could choose from four different workshops, connected to four of the themes of Our Shared Future: Heritage, Community, Digital and Climate, and with storytelling as an overarching tool. The workshops lasted for about one hour, and the participants could participate in two workshops after each other.

The **digital** workshop focused on letting the participants reflect on what kind of stories they want to tell and how technology can be used to enhance these stories.

The **heritage** workshop focused on how heritage is a constant act of storytelling – what kind of values are we passing on through heritage? What is it that we actually want to tell and to whom?

The **climate** workshop focused on landscapes and how they hold traces of environmental change over time. The participants got to reflect on landscapes they cherish and how different kind of change is showing in the landscape now and in the future.

The **community** workshop focused on how storytelling can be used as a tool both for charging objects with meaning and knowledge, but also for building trust and openness between people – and in the long run building communities.

Collective reflection

In the final part of the event, everyone had the chance to write themselves a reflection on a postcard which will be delivered to them sometime in the near future.

Then everyone was asked to write on post-it notes **what they carry with them** from Our Shared Futures in relation to the four themes of the conference: Heritage, Digital, Community and Climate. As can be seen below, what really had struck a chord with the participants was the theme of community – at least if you count the number of post-it notes. Several notes mentioned either wanting to engage more in a local community or continue an ongoing engagement. In the notes, we can also see a pattern of wanting to learn and to listen - to get more knowledge but also to see more perspectives beyond the obvious ones.

Down below, you can read all the messages from the post-its for each theme. Together, they summarise in a beautiful way the feeling of community, action and care that the participants brought to Our Shared Futures. As we hoped, the event both became a final celebration of the DACCHE project but also a stepping stone into the future.

Heritage

<p>The importance from learning from the past and seeing patterns and parallels</p>	<p>Actions have a deeper meaning – make your heritage live!</p>	<p>Deepen my interest and knowledge in Swedish pagan culture</p>
<p>Actually start learning historically used crafts like making my own shoes with thread from an animal</p>	<p>I will register in my village's heritage association</p>	<p>Make, share and tell stories</p>
<p>Tell and spread the words and knowledge</p>	<p>I want to connect with older generations to learn from them</p>	<p>I will write stories about my own heritage and share them with whoever who will listen</p>
<p>LISTEN</p>	<p>Who does the story speak to? What story do we all as humans connect to?</p>	<p>Ask more often: Who tells the story? (Who has the power)</p>
<p>The knowledge of transforming a reindeer foot into several things creates trust in a crisis</p>	<p>I will work more with intangible heritage</p>	<p>Continue my participation</p>

Community

<p>Holding a space for a good sauna experience for others to feel the power of communal experience</p>	<p>Co-create events to keep alive the culture of sauna and bathing in the city</p>	<p>Spread the stories and rituals of the heritage of sauna bathing with others</p>
<p>Personal but “light” or “uncharged” topics like your name can lead to deeper conversation</p>	<p>Play</p>	<p>Better communicate the value of time, togetherness and strength for action</p>
<p>Reflections about our role as museums in the work with democratic resilience (I will bring it back to my colleagues)</p>	<p>Power of numbers <3</p>	<p>Meeting makes bigger stories</p>
<p>Create a brave space in my museum for community</p>	<p>Invite and dare to speak</p>	<p>I will look for a heritage community and see how I can contribute to their work</p>

Encourage people to find their community but also create brave spaces

I'm gonna expand and grow my community

Think more small and local

Listen more to understand, not just to know but to connect

I will continue to develop and lead not-for-profit organisations and projects for community development

Continue to contribute with my time and energy through neighbour community, preschool and yoga classes

I wanna make a queer museum!

**Pitch ideas about the public transport system: activity buses that take children or adults to activities (those that live far from the city).
Personalised bus routes**

Remember the feelings of positivity this gave me and use it to try and build actual communities in my life that are about climate action

I will gather people who I know care about the same things to be creative together

Open up and be vulnerable to create deeper relationships

I will do volunteer community work

Climate

<p>I am the change I want to see (Openness and trust) I start the conversation</p>	<p>Explore sustainability in museum exhibition</p>	<p>Besjåla saker / give things a soul</p>
<p>I will read stories to my daughter</p>	<p>Co-working for knowledge and inspiration for action</p>	<p>"pick up trash" as a symbol for action</p>
<p>I will keep our house simple, modest</p>	<p>Help shape a better future</p>	<p>Bring more perspectives and different needs into the development activities</p>
<p>There is no word for nature!</p>	<p>Share small acts of climate action every day</p>	<p>I will make <u>my</u> difference and be more hopeful it will be part of <u>the</u> difference that is needed</p>
<p>Make, share, tell stories</p>	<p>Try to tell people that we humans are also part of the "landscape" and value it</p>	<p>Preserving with changing conditions</p>
<p>Give the climate more stories</p>	<p>Listen to other peoples perspectives on nature</p>	

Digital

Pitch an idea to someone about a game where you save the earth through building a sense of community. With real places around the world. Using XR or maybe two versions of game.

Choose a story before tech. Tech is not the "goal"

Technique as a tool to enhance, not replace

I tried XR for the first time at this conference and it was fun! So à I want to seek out opportunities to try new tech

Have more faith in digital stuff

I will reflect on my own digital footprint and research how I can make changes to reduce it

Accessibility for learning history

Make it for everyone - reach out

A different way of communicating about sustainability