

*Jens Thorhauge*

## Ten common sense statements

### 1. **There is a need**

Everyday we see a great need to deal with our cultural heritage in contexts that reflect our own lives and give us a deeper understanding, a new perspective and hopefully inspiration to continue our own lives.

### 2. **No single model for co-operation**

'State of the art' of co-operation between ALM-institutions indicates: that there is no *one* way of organising it, and despite many good examples we still lack convincing strategies which can be translated into action.

### 3. **Our division of labour is deep-rooted**

The organisation of our cultural heritage in three different types of institutions, archives, libraries and museums, is of course not "God-given", but it does express a universal division of labour based on areas, organisation structures, working methods and tasks that has proved extremely effectual, but is now being challenged by the opportunity for a new interplay which better reflects the coherence of real life.

### 4. **The hybrid cultural institution**

The future cultural heritage and information institution is hybrid. The challenge in this concept is manifold, but the basic point is that any institution should be a real presentation of a specific cultural heritage, offering specific stories and at the same time being an e-entrance to a seamless virtual presentation of a much broader national, European and global cultural heritage.

### 5. **The nature of the pressure on ALM**

There is a dual pressure on ALM-institutions to improve co-operation and networking. On the one hand the pressure is political and economic. A good deal of efficiency-thinking becomes apparent here. But also an eagerness to exploit the possibilities of ICT which will induce ALM-institutions to match the needs of the knowledge society. On the other hand there is a much more diffuse pressure from the grass roots, the users who need 'content' for many purposes, inspiration and entertainment being the most common, research the most serious.

## **6. Growing challenges**

Political pressure on ALM-institutions is here to stay as it stems from the fact that the cultural heritage increases in scale, objects, titles. At the same time the heritage 'grows older' and large parts of it need costly preservation. A special challenge is collection of the new virtual, cultural heritage, but also the heritage from the industrial society is an unsolved issue. Along with these immense tasks we face a demand for a completely new presentation and dissemination of our collections and a demand for creativity in story-telling that calls for either much more generous budgets and/or completely new prioritisations.

## **7. A new understanding of cultural heritage**

An understanding of the societal importance of cultural heritage is thriving in the knowledge society. Our competitiveness is linked to that which we do best, and our competencies are rooted in our culture. With globalisation, each of us in Europe faces the same challenge, but our backgrounds are different. The demands for innovation which we are facing, can only be met by taking as our point of reference the nations' unique competencies and possibilities which are inextricably associated with the cultural heritage.

## **8. Common responsibility for innovation**

Rethinking is needed at all levels and - if possible - simultaneously. The EU-effort is useless if it does not correspond with national strategies and actions. And national strategies are likewise worthless if they do not provide proper and action-provoking answers to the real problems and visions of the institutions at local, regional and national level. But national bodies carry the greatest responsibility for presenting the problems as well as possible strategies – both for the political and the professional level.

## **9. Elements in national strategies**

National strategies must mirror national conditions and needs. Core elements incorporated could relate to organisation and division of labour, hybrid institutions, funding for innovative projects, creating frames for networking and new partnerships, offering programmes for competence-building, and offering national support in creating seamless e-access.

## **10. The European challenge**

The European challenge is to create a much broader co-operation between national bodies, but also between institutions at all levels to create a deep-rooted professional understanding of the common challenges, resulting in a vision common to the ALM-institutions and which in real life will carry into effect the intentions described in EU manifestos, strategies, programmes and projects.