

Samverkan och gränser

Studier av samverkansprojekt i offentlig sektor

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AKADEMISK AVHANDLING

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- I Löfström, M. (2001) Samverkan mellan offentliga organisationer – att konstruera gränser. *Kommunal ekonomi och politik*, vol. 5/2 s. 69-89.
- II Jensen, C., Johansson, S. och Löfström, M. (2006) Project relationships – A model for analyzing interactional uncertainty. *International Journal of Project Management*, vol. 24/1 s. 4-12.
- III Johansson, S., Löfström, M. och Ohlsson, Ö. (2007) Separation or integration? A dilemma when organizing development projects. *International Journal of Project Management*, vol. 25/5 s. 457-464.
- IV Löfström, M. (2010) Inter-organizational collaboration projects in public sector – a balance between integration and demarcation. *International Journal of Health Planning and Management*. vol. 25/2 s. 136-155.

Abstract

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Collaboration and boundaries

Studies of collaboration projects in the public sector

The collaboration projects studied in this thesis originate from national experiments that took place from the late 1990s to the early 2000s. In those experiments, attempts were made to determine whether collaboration could, as part of the organization of the public sector, generate welfare gains for both the individual user and society as a whole. Other forms of political governance of public organizations were also tested in these experiments. Activities were very often carried out in the form of collaboration projects involving joint evaluation groups and through co-localization. The collaboration projects are about in which actors bring their different rules, values and preconceptions, from their regular activities into a meeting with other activities with different boundaries in order to organize new boundaries. The purpose of the thesis is to achieve an understanding of why collaboration projects encounter difficulties in contributing to lasting integration between government organizations, and the importance of boundaries in the organizing of collaboration projects.

The thesis is based on four articles. The first article elucidates the ways in which different boundaries are constructed when inter-organizational collaborations are being carried out. The second article develops a model for analyzing uncertainty factors in the interaction environment of the project. The third article addresses the problem of implementing, within the public sector, results from development projects in the home organization. The fourth article analyzes the ways in which collaboration projects can help to increase integration between government organizations.

The results from the studies show that the collaboration projects do provide opportunities for trying out new forms of collaboration, but also that the actors in collaboration projects have to deal with multiple boundary-related problems. The construction of boundaries must, on the one hand, regulate the activities being carried out in the collaboration projects, in that the boundaries enable the actors to come together in a common activity. On the other hand, the boundaries in collaboration projects must be part of the home organizations' activities and their boundary constructions. This leads to a complex spatial construction in which different boundaries entail different distinctions and regulations of the relationship to the outside world. In turn, this leads to problems involving the home organizations in the collaboration, resulting in the collaboration becoming confined to only the collaboration projects.

Key words: Inter-organizational collaboration, collaboration project, integration, boundaries, public organization, project discourse, boundary organization, boundary object, vocational rehabilitation, multiple boundaries, structural boundaries, conceptual boundaries.

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