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Chefs' Table session

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Table Host: Jeroen de Boer & Bertus Douwes

Title: FryskLab: How Makerspace and Informationspace are connected

Introduction

Stop lending, start sharing! (David Lankes)

Why are libraries and makerspaces/FabLabs seeking to get inspired by each other?
What are their shared values and what are results of their partnerships?

FryskLab is a mobile FabLab, developed by Bibliotheekservice Fryslân. To our knowledge it is the first library-powered FabLab in Europe. FryskLab creates an healthy interest in technology and maker skills, hereby stimulating digital literacy. Users of the lab will be able to use tools and skills to design and remix their personal environment and share these with others. With FryskLab being mobile it brings resources, possibilities and new ways to work to locations which need it the most (schools, small villages, companies etc.) With FryskLab we especially focus on a strong collaboration with education. In this session we will tell you about our project, but are also more than open for discussion about this new development.

Discussion

How a library and a FabLab can work together and be locally relevant.

FryskLab: is trying to make libraries and Maker spaces working together
It's a very recent development.

FabLab = Fabrication Laboratory

It's a concept by a US professor at MIT who started a couple of lessons years ago, titled: How to make (almost) everything. This series of lessons proved to be very popular. Then he wanted to bring digital fabrication to the people who

can't afford some products. Why not make them yourselves. That was the origin of FabLabs.

You also have maker spaces and hacker spaces. Virtually the same as FabLab, but FabLabs are connected to each other. Anyone can create a maker space without others interfering. Being a Fablab means you are certified in a global network.

Nicholas Schiller: Hacker Values = Library Values

--> Library Bill of Rights, a statement from 1953:

providing access,
freedom of information
advocacy
inquiry
openness

for hacker ethics he used: Book "hackers" by Steven Levy
Schiller then concluded that at least in terms of access, public openness, sharing... collaboration between libraries and hackers can be very fruitful.

Advocacy:

libraries: medialiteracy; hackers: affiliated with digital rights groups like the EFF (<https://www.eff.org/>) or Bits of Freedom (<https://www.bof.nl/>)
Edward Snowden as latest example of a hacker, advocating

collaboration:

both libraries and fablabs need the community

library as platform:

David Lankester is a library scientist from the US; he says that Library should be a platform for community learning and information".

Access to knowledge

Also David Weinberger promotes the library as platform idea. knowledge is not only to be found in the official sources, but also in user generated content: what do people say about a movie or book? it also counts.

But how can we bring this concept to the rural province of Friesland?

How can that be relevant for a rural area like Friesland?

--> attach it to local themes like watertechnology, sustainable energy and

(digital) craftsmanship

--> bring it to the schools, teach them how to do it

Practically, it is done by bus, like it was done since long: Friesland was the first province in the Netherlands which had a mobile library.

The phenomenon of digital fabrication was brought to the library.

It had to be a FabLab, because it also gives the benefit of already existing connections of the global FabLab network. That required being certified as a FabLab by officials

FryskLab visited a FabLab conference and there it was pointed out that there is no standard for fablab projects. That was surprising for the FryskLab, it should have been there already. So they tried to develop a linked open data network for all the FabLab projects in the world. So FryskLab will develop one!

It will be called:

FryskLab LOD (Linked Open Data) Knowledge Base:

will be developed from January on

because FabLab as makerspace is inseparable of FabLab as information space

1. development datamodel
2. triplestore database
3. data FryskLab
4. user interface
5. user interaction

So why develop FryskLab?

Some problems like:

children in Friesland are generally poorer than children from other provinces
high-tech companies however ask for qualified personnel, so FryskLab is
bringing the skills to the children

21st century skills: sharing, creativity, problem solving, ...

all these elements are really well grounded in the FabLab concept
They are bringing the FabLab to the schools.

With whom:

with local government, local companies, ...

The personnel working in the FabLab is seen as "the new books". Within the FabLab there are no books, it's the combination between online content and what the FabLab personnel is teaching the children. There is no library personnel working at the FabLab (yet) but specialized qualified people - but the library staff is positive about the FabLab and they see that it is necessary to reinvent their own way of working as well. Also part of the project is to give professional support to the library personnel as well.

So how is it done?

Schools can invite the FryskLab, but there are also prescheduled visits. The bus will be at one school for one week. In the first couple of days the children will design and invent things. The last stage is that the FabLab itself is brought to the school and things can be 3D printed (for instance).

There are fairly easy to use 3D modelling tools, even for children. But it all starts on paper.

A concept like new craftsmanship and digital fabrication can be embedded in the history lesson. Example: put an old history map on the table. Children had to make the buildings alive, which was done by 3D models of the houses which were then printed with a 3D printer.

All that is done has to be within the curriculum. In order to make it very easy for a teacher to make clear that this is really part of the main educational program. The teachers are enthusiastic, but have to convince the headmaster and school inspection as well...

"There is a link between the old craftsmanship and the new craftsmanship: all tools were new tools in the time they were invented. But the steps to create something are the same nowadays."

FryskLab is not a library, but a service provider for libraries. Other libraries (in other provinces) can use the same concepts and ideas. Education is the main focus.

They are also experimenting with Business Models, because now they are financed by governmental funding.