

4. Färgfabriken (Stockholm, Sweden)



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Table of Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| Table of Contents..... | 3 |
| Executive summary..... | 4 |
| 1 Timeline..... | 5 |
| 2 The story of the building..... | 5 |
| 3 The initiative | 6 |
| 4 The Färgfabriken method..... | 9 |
| 5 The area | 11 |
| 6 Adaptive reuse and heritage..... | 13 |
| 7 Community involvement..... | 15 |
| 8 Policies and municipal relations..... | 16 |
| 9 Economic model | 16 |
| 10 Governance | 17 |
| 11 Impact | 19 |
| 12 Interviewees | 19 |
| 13 References..... | 20 |

Executive summary

[Färgfabriken](#) is a platform and exhibition venue for contemporary cultural expressions, with an emphasis on art, architecture and urban planning established in an industrial building built in 1889. The building previously accommodated a paint factory, from which it also borrowed its name. Färgfabriken is run as/by a foundation and was founded in 1995 by Alcro-Beckers AB, ColArt Sweden AB (both owned by [Lindéngruppen](#), a private industrial company) and [SAR](#) (Swedish Association of Architects). Since its creation, Färgfabriken has not only become a key cultural institution in Stockholm, but has also pioneered a model of building inclusive, participatory processes through art and dialogue. Through a cultural agenda that conciliates architecture, arts and urban planning with contemporary societal issues, Färgfabriken remains a significant actor in Stockholm, with a great impact on the development of the surrounding area and on the inclusion of a great variety of stakeholders in decision-making processes.



Picture 1. Färgfabriken. Photo (cc) Eutropian

1 Timeline

- 1889 – the building is built by Helge Palmcrantz, to accommodate the company's production
- 1902 – the paint firm Beckers moves into the building
- 1985 – Beckers is bought by Lindéngruppen, owned by Ulf G. Lindén
- 1987 – Beckers Art Award is established
- 1994 – the paint factory stops its production and Ulf G. Lindén plans to create a cultural venue
- 1994 – first visits by a group of artists and architects to the Beckers building
- 1995 – Färgfabriken Foundation is created
- 1995 – First basic renovation works are done and first exhibition "Triangular" is held in May
- 1996 – Interpol exhibition and first important events about architecture
- 1998 – Stockholm is European Capital of Culture with a major contribution from Färgfabriken
- 2001 – Lindéngruppen sells Alcro-Beckers, the decorative paints business of Beckers
- 2001 – Stockholm at Large exhibition introducing the Färgfabriken method
- 2008 – Jenny Lindén Urnes, the daughter of Ulf G. Lindén takes over the company and the foundation's chairmanship
- 2009 – Ulf G. Lindén dies
- 2008 – Jan Åman resigns as director, leadership change in the organisation
- 2009 – industrial activity ceases Lövholmen, all factories are relocated
- 2010 – Building Blocks exhibition
- 2012-2013 – Stockholm on the Move exhibition
- 2011 – second renovation of the building by architect Petra Gipp
- 2020 – 25th year anniversary, with plans of social exhibition Symbiosis

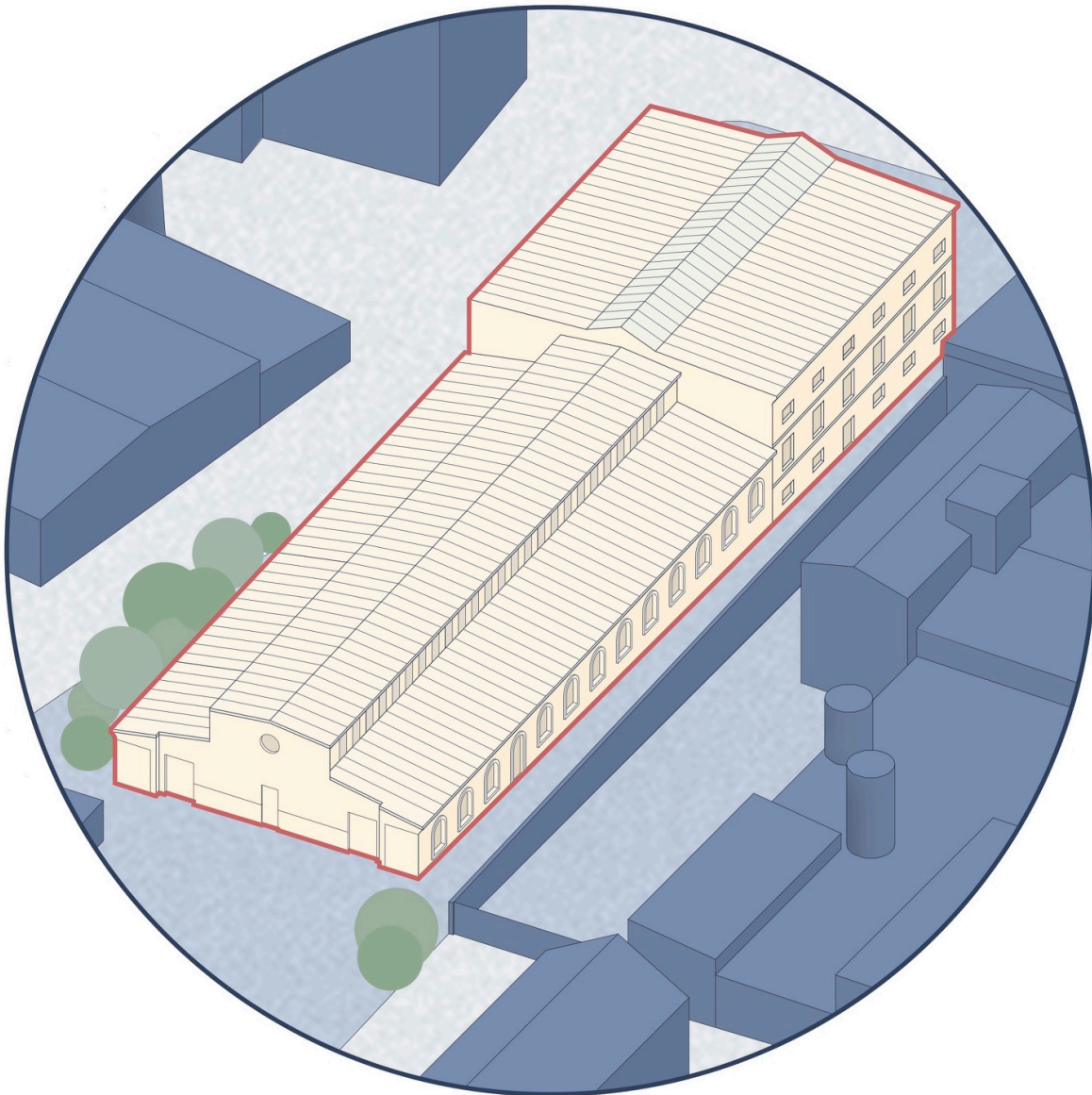
2 The story of the building

Färgfabriken's building was built in 1889 in Lövholmen, an industrial zone in Southwest Stockholm, by Helge Palmcrantz. The Palmcrantz House, as it was called at the time, was specifically designed to accommodate the reaping machine, mower and machine gun production of the Palmcrantz company. In 1902, the paint firm Wilhelm Becker moved its production in the building, leaving a more central area of Stockholm that became unsuitable for industrial production. In 1974, Ulf G. Lindén became managing director of Beckers and in 1985 his company [Lindéngruppen](#), focusing on the long-term development of industrial companies, became owner of Beckers; this ownership also included the company's properties in Lövholmen.

Ulf G. Lindén and the Lindéngruppen were key protagonists in the creation of Färgfabriken. When the paint factory discontinued its production, the art-lover

Lindén began to make plans for a cultural venue. In 1994, when discussions began between a group of artists and architects and Beckers, the building was abandoned, practically a ruin, with its walls standing but without a roof and with trees growing inside the main hall.

“This was just a ruin. The wall was there, this iron construction in the main hall was intact, but there was no roof. Just a ruin. Beckers said we can take over, use it for free, if we can find a sponsor for reconstruction. I thought this would be a suicide mission but we understood that it is architecturally an amazing space.” Thomas Lundh



Picture 2. The Färgfabriken building. Image by Jorge Mosquera

3 The initiative

“We presented an idea to do something else, between contemporary art, fashion, design, architecture, at the same time be very open for partnership.

That time when you were a painter or an artist you didn't want to work with other companies. It was unusual at that time. It was in the papers that we sold our soul." Thomas Lundh

Färgfabriken ("paint factory" in English) was created in 1995, as a result of collaboration between the Association of Swedish Architects (Svenska Arkitekters Riksförbund), Alcro-Beckers, ColArt and a group of artists and architects. In the 1990s, the paint company Beckers, owner of an empty industrial building in Lövholmen, was interested in building collaboration with architects, in order to open up a new market for its products. Coincidentally, a group of artists and architects including Jan Åman, Thomas Lundh and Elizabeth Hatz had been for long discussing the idea to open a space for art activities and reflection on architecture and contemporary art. Through Elizabeth Hatz, then chairwomen of the Association of Swedish Architects, these two ambitions met and the group visited the building in Lövholmen.

"For Beckers, it was not so much about collaboration between different fields, architects and other partners. This company, producing paint, just wanted to reach out to architects because they saw the construction industry as a big market for them." Thomas Lundh

Sponsorship: Lindéngruppen's role in facilitating the creation of Färgfabriken is due to the engagement of Ulf G. Lindén, its former owner. When the building in Lövholmen stopped its paint production, Ulf G. Lindén, inspired by his love for art, decided to use the space to create a cultural venue. While Lindéngruppen's sponsorship is a philanthropic gesture and a continuation of the company's engagement with arts through the Beckers Art Award, Färgfabriken as a cultural venue could also help the company reach out to new fields and explore new ideas for its own development. In the meanwhile, the creation of a foundation and the separation of Färgfabriken's daily operations from the company also ensured the curatorial independence of the new cultural centre.

Beckers offered the use of the building for free, if the group finds a sponsor for the building's renovation. Beckers' plan on the longer term was to demolish the building. However, with pressure from the artists, the building received heritage protection from the municipality. The artists' involvement and their capacity to bring in funds convinced Beckers. In 1995, a foundation was created with the participation of Alcro-Beckers (still owner of the building), ColArt and the Association of Swedish Architects, with Alcro-Beckers taking a more important role.

"It was a philanthropy issue, but not only that. We knew that the questions we discussed here both within architecture and society we can use in our business because it opens up ideas and gets another perspective of things. It helps us think about the future and where our businesses can develop." Joacim Björk

Färgfabriken opened in May 1995 with the exhibition Triangular, bringing together artists from Sweden, Mexico and Guatemala, funded by international development aid funds. Färgfabriken's second exhibition, [Interpol](#) gave the organisation nationwide visibility in 1996. It was a group exhibition, but the most memorable event of the opening was a performance by Oleg Kulik, a Russian artist: he acted as a dog on a chain and losing control of his performance, he bit the leg of the vice-

mayor for culture who opened the exhibition. Director Jan Åman called the police and the next day the incident was covered by all media outlets, creating an immediate visibility for Färgfabriken.

"Färgfabriken became famous as a free space: not managed by the city or the government, it was a non-religious, non-political and non-profit foundation." Pernilla Lesse

In the meanwhile, in parallel with its art exhibitions, Färgfabriken began to organise seminars about architecture and urban planning and received additional funding from the municipality to run activities discussing the future of the Lövholmen area. In the first years, Färgfabriken has developed partnership with a variety of ministries, municipal agencies as well as embassies and private companies and also began to attract a wider audience.

"It was quite new for a cultural institution to have very open, transparent collaboration with partners not used to work with the cultural field. And for that we got lot of criticism, mostly from the traditional cultural field, that we were not serious, that we were mixing money with culture." Thomas Lundh

Färgfabriken's breakthrough was partly due to a lack of competition in the cultural scene of the Swedish capital. The city was poorly equipped with art centres and a temporary cultural vacuum created by the construction of the new building of the Moderna Museet gave an opportunity to Färgfabriken to create a new position in this scene. In a context with a few art institutions owned by the state, the city or private banks, Färgfabriken was conceived as a free place where more open discussions can be held with no external control. In 1998, Stockholm was European Capital of Culture and Färgfabriken, as its main partner, became internationally known. In 2001, Lindéngruppen sold Alcro-Beckers, the decorative paints business of Beckers to the Finnish company Tikkurilla but kept the ownership of the Färgfabriken building.

"When Lindéngruppen sold Alcro-Beckers, we were very nervous that they would also sell this building. But they kept the building and continued to support the foundation. It was very important for them." Thomas Lundh

Färgfabriken defined itself as a Kunsthalle, different in its activities from art museums or art galleries. Building its unique profile among art institutions, the organisation also refused to join the star system of art and architecture, and focus on emerging artists and creators instead of established stars. By opening up towards a variety of collaborators, many actors were invited to contribute and shape the organisation.

Kunsthalle: In the founding documents Färgfabriken is defined as a Kunsthalle for contemporary arts and architecture with a focus on creating a communication platform for local stakeholders through the making of workshops and seminars. As a Kunsthalle, Färgfabriken is a space for art exhibitions that, according to the definition, distinguishes itself from an art museum by the lack of a permanent collection and from a gallery by the lack of commercial activity.

In the early 2000s, a few exhibitions brought a paradigm shift to Färgfabriken. The exhibition [Stockholm at Large](#), organised in 2001, can be identified as one of Färgfabriken's main turning points. The event brought together urban planners, project managers and students, to look at the city from a distance. For the first

time in Sweden, such a diverse group of local stakeholders came together to work on issues concerning the development of the city of Stockholm and various towns in the metropolitan agglomeration began to talk to each other. The participants were asked to approach the city through the use of a giant map, specifically created for the occasion. The working session revolved around the question “What would happen if 300,000 more people moved to Stockholm?” Participants were mixed up in thematic groups and were asked to look at different issues relevant to the analysis of the city and the projection of its development. A dramatic situation of urban segregation rapidly came out. For the first time, Stockholm was defined as a very segregated city, with little communication among different neighbourhoods. The results of this participatory workshop were so unexpected that it immediately got the media attention. The public reaction was so loud and enthusiastic that the initiative got very well known in the Stockholm and its model of bringing together different stakeholders was labelled as “the Färgfabriken method” and was brought forward in various cities in the framework of the [New Urban Topologies](#) series.

“We divided people into seven groups, and in each group we invited stakeholders with different backgrounds to collaborate. We had urban planners, project managers from companies and students who were gathering together in mixed groups. To avoid the deadlock of everyday discussions, we put the scenario into the future of Stockholm, 40 years ahead of us.” Joachim Granit

Building upon the media attention created by Färgfabriken’s early activities, the success of the European Capital of Culture season and Stockholm at Large ensured that Färgfabriken would soon become a national cultural brand. Later on, Färgfabriken’s profile has further expanded with some other experiments. In 2010, the exhibition [Building Blocks](#) invited children to commission architects to build their dream houses at a 1:1 scale. The exhibition, giving voice to children in shaping the urban environment, was a great success and was later invited to a variety of countries. In 2012-13, the event series [Stockholm on the Move](#) examined questions about the development of the city of Stockholm. In 2015, [Experiment Stockholm](#) created a laboratory to address the challenges of the rapidly growing Stockholm region.

“We need to aim towards the future and use our amassed knowledge and experience as a force to go forward. We have to be at the forefront of where a cultural institution can be, to challenge the status quo and get new ideas, being this platform where different worlds and interests come together as they have not done before.” Joacim Björk

4 The Färgfabriken method

Following Stockholm at Large and its other events focusing on urbanism, Färgfabriken soon became a reference point for community groups experiencing dynamics of segregation and exclusion in their neighbourhood in Stockholm. Accordingly, the foundation developed an expertise in organizing exhibitions and workshops exploring issues relevant to the surrounding urban context, inviting inhabitants and local stakeholders to participate. The methodology rapidly came to be known as the Färgfabriken method, referring to the organisation’s approach

to build interdisciplinary dialogue around urban challenges. Although participatory and multidisciplinary focus groups might sound like a common practice in today's urban planning and management, Stockholm at Large caught the Stockholm public opinion by surprise at the time. The events triggered a broad interest in collaborative ways of working on urban challenges.

"In a way we are a think-tank. We think it is very important for the development of our future cities and societies to be able to find other angles that help tricky questions emerge." Joachim Granit

Färgfabriken's success is explained by the innovative and intriguing take that the model has on societal issues. The Färgfabriken method explores in different, unexpected and innovative ways how to approach complex issues by putting in place an interdisciplinary and participatory strategy for problem resolution, using art as a starting point and referring to other disciplines such as urban planning and architecture in a collaborative work including a variety of stakeholders, among which the local inhabitants.

"We developed a model that finds its strength in being an open platform where different parties from society can meet around societal issues in a creative way, being in the same room as they never come together otherwise. That is the most exciting part. Färgfabriken is not an art gallery. It's a platform for culture, art and architecture that makes discussing and generating new ideas societal issues wonderfully possible." Elizabeth Hatz

One of the characterising elements of Färgfabriken relies on the ability of invited artists to work in synergistic relation with Färgfabriken, contributing to the making of a better cultural agenda, according to an inclusive, collaborative and transparent decision-making process. Thus, the model is not based on the popularity of the guest artist or expert, but rather on the concept of continuity, aiming at developing exhibitions and projects that stem from a diverse group of people sharing a common vision. Such an approach is favourable to the development of strong collaborations, triggering a much more consistent and long-term local impact, avoiding ephemeral projects that vanish soon.

"As a cultural institution you can support fancy art but you need to support important ideas." Joachim Granit

The **Färgfabriken method** is the realisation of the founders' vision for the cultural institution with events and exhibitions helping to discuss important societal issues. Involving a variety of stakeholders, organising workshop situations to create exchange between different positions, mediating between different professional and laic languages and supporting such discussions with exhibitions and artistic research has become a trademark format of Färgfabriken's projects. The art context has proven to be fruitful for discussions, liberating ideas and enabling empathy instead of confrontation.

"We create these platforms where people can interact without being in the usual roles of client and municipality. They can be in a creative process because they have some knowledge about the city or urban planning, or something relevant to the project. It unlocks many ideas." Karin Englund

5 The area



Picture 3. Färgfabriken in Stockholm. Image by Jorge Mosquera

In the 1990s, while most of Stockholm was under construction, the Lövholmen area was a “white spot” on the map. Although the area had been an industrial site for over one hundred years and remained such until 2009, the traces of the industrial crisis were visible already in 1995, and after working hours the area was frequented by drug dealers and prostitutes.

“People in the beginning told us we are stupid, no one could come this area, especially in the evening. When we had bigger events here, we accompanied female staff to the metro. Nothing happened but it was a very uncomfortable feeling.” Thomas Lundh

The area surrounding Färgfabriken was gradually provided with basic infrastructure such as decent lighting and a school. Following the introduction of basic but essential public services, it was increasingly easy to attract people to Färgfabriken and the Lövholmen area. Moreover, the major urban changes going on in the city at the time also ignited an interest to regenerate the area. In the 2000s, Stockholm was going through many changes and the introduction of new environmental regulations paved the way for the remaining industrial activities to be progressively relocated further away from the city. As a practical arrangement,

once industries have left Lövholmen, landowners began to offer buildings to artists and designers, protecting their properties from vandalism and attracting a critical mass of art and design activities in the area. Recognising this transformation, local authorities also started to support individual artists with studio grants and Färgfabriken with funding for activities.

“There is something about the potential of this area, like a blank piece of paper, like a canvass. It’s like a magnet for ideas.” Jan Rydén

Partly as a result of Färgfabriken’s attractiveness, this previously industrial and abandoned area was hit by a big wave of change, a kind of an unplanned cultural revolution. Although a big part of the area is still left abandoned, the presence of Färgfabriken and of other small art studios that slowly settled in the surroundings suggests a particular vision for the future development of the neighbourhood. Plans for the area, currently in the state of a suspended construction site, depict predominantly residential complexes, threatening the survival of the cultural initiatives that have settled there. Färgfabriken, together with other actors in the area have been promoting the idea of an organisation to manage ground floor spaces and establish a mix of art and commercial spaces.

“With the right actor you can create a model that would give some hipness for the commercial developer, and studio spaces for the artists. Otherwise they would be just thrown out and the area would become a sanitised version of what you have now.” Jan Rydén



Picture 4. Industrial buildings in Färgfabriken’s surroundings. Photo (cc) Eutropian

6 Adaptive reuse and heritage

In the mid-1990s, Färgfabriken was basically locked in a guarded site, for the surrounding industries were still working. It was dangerous even to smoke a cigarette outside, for chemicals were everywhere in the air. Moreover, the area was not at all connected with the city centre and it suffered from a lack of basic services and an overall decadent environment often linked to drug abuse and poverty. However, the building had quite a charming character and the team accepted the challenge to start working there after the first renovation in 1995.

“When I stood in front of Färgfabriken for the first time I said - wow, it has an incredible character! - with its low façade, the way in which the building meets the water and the topography of the big stone wall. The building looked so robust.” Elizabeth Hatz

When discussions began between the paint firm Beckers and the groups of artists, the building was in such a bad shape that on the longer run, Beckers wanted to demolish it. The building was lacking a lot of basic amenities: it had a dirt floor, no toilets, no system for ventilation, no heating or hot water and its roof was open. The artists who nevertheless recognised the building’s value were reluctant to accept the building’s fate and contacted the municipality’s heritage department, asking for protection for the building. The department understood the danger of demolition and acted quickly, moving the building under heritage protection.

“We were very lucky. We had the building, we had access to the building, we had the decision from the authorities that it has to be saved.” Thomas Lundh

Through their contacts at the Association of Swedish Architects, the initiators approached Skanska, the large construction company active in the area, and received 600,000 Swedish crowns that allowed a basic renovation of the building: restoring the roof, opening the water system, levelling the floors and installing heating in some of the spaces. The renovation itself was quite a simple and humble action, designed by architects Catharina Gabrielsson and Staffan Henriksson, specialised in industrial architecture. The idea was to make as little renovation as possible, supporting the building and not making fancy things out of it. After the first renovation, although it was already suitable for work, the building was still quite uncomfortable and unwelcoming, with its cold spaces. Nevertheless, Färgfabriken’s raw industrial spaces were an important part of its success.

“If you are a civil servant, you are used to sitting in a controlled environment, a narrow framework. When you come here in this run-down, industrial setting, you are part of this crazy architecture exhibition, there are artists in the room, you are allowed to think much more freely. You have a license to speak more freely.” Jan Rydén

It was more than 10 years later, that the second renovation turned the building into a state-of-the-art cultural venue. Following the leadership change in the foundation in 2009, Lindéngruppen stepped in, stabilised Färgfabriken’s budget and financed the renovation of the building to upgrade the organisation’s facilities. This second renovation was designed by Petra Gipp and was finished in 2011. As a result, the atmosphere of the building has been altered, it became posher. The ground floor gave space to a new restaurant, adding to the financial stability of Färgfabriken.

Färgfabriken's most important space is its large main hall at the 1st floor of the building, characterised by monumental pillars and a raw factory interior, used as the institution's central exhibition space. Next the main hall, two smaller project rooms give space for smaller exhibitions and workshops. The same floor also hosts a shop selling books, catalogues and artefacts related to the institution's cultural programme and the office of the Färgfabriken staff. At the top floor, a spacious and bright loft space hosts a variety of events, talks, workshops and occasionally, is rented out for private events. The ground floor, besides the building's main entrance, accommodates the Färgfabriken Kafé and an additional event space.

The Färgfabriken building is protected and cannot be demolished or altered externally. The renovation had a fundamental role in the protection of the site from demolition. The authorities were quite responsive to the need for industrial heritage protection and immediately accepted to collaborate, allowing the renovation to happen. The presence of strong heritage protection policies was very helpful to the creation of the foundation. Besides protecting its building, Färgfabriken has been acting as a catalyst of debates about and different visions for Lövholmen, engaged in the broader discussion about the area's future, the preservation of its industrial character

"Our vision is to keep much of the historical value of the area. It has so much industrial and cultural history, these are things that should be part of the future of the area and not be replaced by a sterile space." Karin Englund



Picture 5. Färgfabriken's loft space. Photo (cc) Eutropian

7 Community involvement

Once Färgfabriken was launched and its building renovated, the biggest challenge of the organisation was to make people interested in the activities happening there and motivate them to reach an area they would not have gone to otherwise. The media coverage resulting from the success of Färgfabriken's events and exhibitions was definitely helpful in attracting a bigger audience.

**"It is as if we were in a no-go zone and would still have an audience."
Joachim Granit**

Among factories already abandoned or about to close, Färgfabriken has been a catalyst to attract new initiatives in the area and build relationships with them. Continuously reaching out to other art spaces and studios in Lövholmen, Färgfabriken has created a variety of collaborations with different local initiatives. For instance, products from local designers and artworks from local artists are sold in Färgfabriken's shop under the label **"created in Lövholmen!"**

"We try to gather information and make it available for more people, also to be a space for creative ideas about the future. We don't have formal power and are not the ones to plan the area but we're the only ones to be still here at the next stage. We are a gathering point." Karin Englund



Picture 6. A project space in Färgfabriken about Lövholmen. Photo (cc) Eutropian

Since 2007, Färgfabriken has been directly engaged in the discussion about the future of Lövholmen. Following an [exhibition about Lövholmen](#) in 2007 that

explored the possibilities of keeping existing buildings and the industrial ambiance of the area, Färgfabriken has taken the role of initiating, coordinating and hosting a [series of exhibitions, events and discussions](#) about the area's transformation. Recently, the foundation has been granted by the culture administration of the municipality with funding for collecting knowledge about the area, mapping local actors, building networks among them and serve as a gathering point for their discussions. Färgfabriken has kept a space in its building devoted for this discussion where opinions, ideas, feedbacks are collected. An online questionnaire complements this platform in the virtual space.

"We became a brand: interesting, young, with unexpected activities."
Thomas Lundh

8 Policies and municipal relations

Since its foundation, Färgfabriken was intended to be a place for free expression, avoiding any political, religious or any other kind of affiliation. With the foundation's backing, Färgfabriken is more autonomous in setting its own agenda than state-owned or funded cultural centres. However, Färgfabriken's success is also to be found in the support coming from the local institutional and political contexts, which was indeed interested and conducive for the use of culture as an instrument for urban renovation and rehabilitation of industrial sites.

At the time of Färgfabriken's opening, the organisation's members approached the Ministry of Culture for funding. Not being a museum or a private gallery, Färgfabriken was initially not eligible for funding but later, changes in eligibility rules gave the organisation access to about 800,000 crowns (about 80,000 in today's euro) per year.

The foundation also entertains a good relationship with the municipality of Stockholm and receives regular funding for its activities. However, this relationship lacks more concrete projects, a clearer vision and more consistent funding for longer term collaboration between the municipality and Färgfabriken.

"Municipalities pay enormous amounts to consultancies. With Färgfabriken, instead, they get a lot of value out of being a partner in an exhibition, just by confronting new audiences, a mix of different people."
Jan Rydén

Despite the lack of municipal ownership in the area, municipal regulations can have a strong impact on the future of Lövhölmén. Zoning regulations demand that new residential areas have active ground floors. This gives an opportunity for more diversity in the future development of the area, and the chance to Färgfabriken to coordinate efforts to keep artistic production in the neighbourhood.

9 Economic model

At the early years of Färgfabriken, its founders explored a **variety of funding sources** to help run its activities. The first exhibitions, for instance, were covered by Development Aid funds that had a cultural exchange dimension as well as by the Swedish Institute, focusing on cultural collaboration. Färgfabriken's economic

model has been consolidated in the past decade but a big part of the foundation's budget is linked to **grants and sponsorship**. The building used by Färgfabriken is owned by Lindéngruppen. As such, the foundation depends on a lease of the space that is usually renewed every three/four years. As of today, Lindéngruppen is Färgfabriken's main sponsor, contributing around 3 million SEK (285,000 euros) to the organisation.

"There are rich philanthropists who want to do something good and they give money but are not involved. Then you have cultural people who receive the get money and spend it. It's never a real collaboration. We want to bridge that gap between the business and the cultural centre." Joacim Björk

The rest of the budget is made up of **public grants** coming from the government (amounting to one million Swedish crowns, or 93,000 euros), from the city (amounting to 800,000 Swedish crowns, or 75,000 euros) and from the region (amounting to 450,000 Swedish crowns, or 42,000 euros). Some activities are financed by EU funds through international collaboration networks.

Besides this combination of private engagement and public funding, the foundation has been engaged in looking for ways to receive more support from third parties. As an example, the image of the foundation is with time becoming more and more comprehensive of a diversity of subjects that are approached within exhibitions and events.

"This is the strategy: creating an image that includes many stakeholders, corresponding to common subjects, yet including various positions, interests and expertise." Joachim Granit

As a matter of fact, the projects exhibited at Färgfabriken are rarely "standard" art projects. It is important that the foundation does not only rely on the art world for sponsorship, but from other sectors too. This is the main reason why the initial focus on arts and architecture was eventually enlarged to include urban planning. In this sense, when the foundation decided to add urban planning as one of the main subjects tackled, there was a real need to draw attention from a larger variety of actors and stakeholders. By opening up their interest to urban planning, a lot more funding became available and pertinent, from a variety of European sources as well as in partnership with the [Swedish Institute](#). Hence, as projects exhibited at Färgfabriken are very diverse, the kinds of stakeholders they build partnerships with are too.

10 Governance

Färgfabriken's governance follows the classical organisational structure of a foundation. The organisation's operations are overseen by a **board**. The board is made up of nine people. Jenny Lindén Urnes, daughter of Ulf G. Lindén and owner of Lindéngruppen, is the director of the board. In addition to her, two architects, one former politician, one famous artist and a banker constitute the board, reflecting the need for a multidisciplinary approach and the making of the foundation as a complex network of bringing together a diversity of interests, occupations and visions. The board meets four times per year and mainly controls the financial side of the organisation, rather than the agenda. The latter is almost entirely left to the Färgfabriken staff to define.

„We wanted to build a board to be a supporting body backing Färgfabriken. It's a delicate balance. You can overpower if you have demands, you can kill it. We wanted to avoid that. Could we do something for art and architecture but leave it very open and free for the team to work?"
Elizabeth Hatz

The **Färgfabriken foundation board** provides Färgfabriken with support, advice and quality control. It assures that the organisation has the necessary resources and independence in making its cultural agenda, a proper separation between the ownership of the building and the organisation's activities. Despite the separation, the board is engaged in a dialogue with the Färgfabriken staff, supporting its programming and networking, and having an external, critical but friendly view over the organisation's operations.

2008 brought an important change in the organisation. The founder Ulf G. Lindén's daughter Jenny Lindén Urnes became owner of Lindéngruppen and chairwoman of the Färgfabriken Foundation. Her background in art helped her to understand the challenges in front of Färgfabriken and take leadership in addressing them. When it turned out that Färgfabriken's director Jan Åman mismanaged the foundation's money, generated financial difficulties within the organisation and created an atmosphere of distrust among his colleagues, he was immediately removed by the board. To stabilise the situation, the relationship between Färgfabriken and Lindéngruppen was formalised.

The building now hosts two organisations, Färgfabriken as the cultural organisation overseen by the foundation and Färgfabriken Events that manages the restaurant and other commercial events. Färgfabriken's everyday tasks as well as the design and the management of the exhibitions happening at the *Kunsthalle*, are made possible by a team of **five employees**. Pernilla Lesse and Joachim Granit share the role of leaders since 2009. A collaborative leadership is very telling of the way in which the team of Färgfabriken has decided to work, one that rejects any strongly hierarchical management structure. The two leaders are supported by project managers, who ensure the monitoring of exhibitions. Karin Englund is the project manager for urban planning exhibitions, Elsa Isaksson works as a project coordinator and Emilia Rosenqvist is in charge of art exhibitions. New additions to the team are slowly made but this strongly depends on the financial resources the foundation disposes of. The communication tasks are equally shared among the members of the team. There is a strong bond among staff members that is based on an inevitable need for collaboration and transparency, especially given the vulnerable and financially dependent situation the foundation has to deal with. Such a bond is not only reflected in the relationship among staff members but also at the board level.

A workplace like this is a team, and over the years the team acquires skills, abilities and methods that are very strong and creative. We never hired a new director as the knowledge was there in the team." Elizabeth Hatz

11 Impact

Since its creation, Färgfabriken had a strong influence on the **surrounding area's transformation**. The mere presence of a cultural venue meant a lot for the renovation of the surrounding area. At the beginning, when the foundation was launched, the area was a really uncomfortable place to work in as a cultural initiative. During the first exhibitions, people thought it was absurd that such a centre was established in such a far away and disconnected area. However, in little time, the city started having interests to ameliorate the urban context around with streetlights, public transport and even a school opened. Moreover, when some of the neighbouring factories closed, various buildings became incubators for small companies and studios for artists. Many activities in the foundation are in a way or another related to the surrounding neighbourhood, have impacted its recent development and are still playing a crucial role for the design of future plans. In the past decade, Färgfabriken has essentially become a gathering point to discuss the future of the Lövholmen area, taking a position to keep working spaces and cultural venues in the future development besides the inevitable residential complexes.

"I think the whole area of Lövholmen and more recent industrial buildings offer such incredible opportunity to have another way of living and thinking. Färgfabriken has a role and responsibility to tell the stories of these sites, the topography as well as the negotiation between the building, the city, the water and the climate that such constructions show." Elizabeth Hatz

Besides its impact on its immediate surroundings, the foundation has influenced the way urban planning dilemmas are discussed in Stockholm. Färgfabriken played an important role by raising awareness of the need for infrastructural development through its debates, and the **Färgfabriken method** brought a lot of different actors to debate on the same topic around the same table. Such a working dynamic is very interesting since it saw collaborations and conversations happening between stakeholders that would have not met otherwise. Moreover, it made people aware of a diversity of working logics and environments.

Färgfabriken staff has been keen on sharing their experiences and contributing to the creation of similar venues. The organisation's model has been reproduced in other contexts as well. Between 2008-2011, the organisation was engaged in creating Färgfabriken Norr (Färgfabriken North) in Östersund, North Sweden, helped by EU funding, but this experience was discontinued after Färgfabriken withdrew from running the venue and wanted to give over the operations to the municipality. Since 2012, through the New Urban Topologies project, another version of the institution has been operating in Mostar, Bosnia and Herzegovina, built up by Färgfabriken and its local sister organisation.

12 Interviewees

Joachim Granit, artistic director of Färgfabriken

Pernilla Lesse, managing director of Färgfabriken

Thomas Lundh, co-founder of Färgfabriken

Elizabeth Hatz, co-founder of Färgfabriken
Jan Rydén, former curator at Färgfabriken
Karin Englund, curator at Färgfabriken
Joachim Björk, board member of Färgfabriken

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