

Nordic Network for Gifted Education network meeting 14-15 Sept 2022.

Attendees:

36, representing FI, DK, IS, NO, SE (see list at end of document)

Discussion groups

- Mixed inter-country groups (2 different mixed groups)
- Country groups (FI; IS; NO; SE; DK)
- Topic-interest groups (STEM, identification, differentiation, early childhood, etc etc)
- Publication groups (journal, edited book, practice ideas, research application, website)

Something shared

- Views on relying too much on ‘once only’ testing as a reliable means of ‘identifying’ ability
- Thoughts on the Swedish egalitarian tradition and how it might have changed / how it might be about to change. (Åsa)
- My concern that the gifted discourse in Sweden is weighed towards problems – gifted children & learners who navigate school well (enough) are more or less absent. I also shared the need to differentiate between ‘above average’ learners and the extremely gifted – these are too often lumped together which makes discussions jumbled. (Johanna)
- KaSo (Communication & Social Competence). A class and a method to aid the gifted children (and all other kids ☺), understand themselves and others. (Helle B N)
- I shared my thoughts about the importance of collaboration and sharing our research in the Nordic countries, so we can do an impact in the area of giftedness. We need to learn from each other and share good examples. For instance, that we can learn from the special education teachers and how they work with inclusion and differentiation. (Sophie)
- I shared my thoughts about my research project and I have discussed the need for subject-specific teaching perspectives in gifted education (Helen)
- I have shared my thoughts and plans for my upcoming PhD work – and I’ve got great feedback as well! (Fredrik)
- We are running an honours programme for nursing students (Nieils & Helle M)
- There seems to exist a gap between research-based knowledge about ‘giftedness’ / need for learning / differentiation in tuition – and the teacher’s practice. From what I hear today, some might think this gap is due to lack of practice proximal research. I however (strongly) believe there to be organizational / psychological issues that need to be addressed. (Annelinn)
- During this event I shared names of professors who do research within the field of higher education that might be inspiring or helpful to a project in Denmark. (Diana)
- I gave examples from my experience as a clinical and educational psychologist. On how I listen and work with the students', parents', and teachers' perspective. I also shared my views on how researchers and practitioners can complement and inspire each other. As well as the necessity for the researchers to communicate in a language and way that makes sense to the teachers, students, parents. We should be better

communicators in society in general. Sharing our knowledge on all kinds of media platforms when given the chance (or take it - be proactive). (Ole)

- Research on teachers knowledge, attitudes and praxis in classrooms. And the influence of the Norwegian greenpaper in school policy (very low). (Gunnvi)
- My pilot study on identification, mapping, acceleration, enrichment and coaching for gifted students. (Jörgen)
- I send the www for our website <https://begavet.org/> (Mia)
- Making a LinkedIn group called "Nordic Network for Gifted Education." Sharing the ECHA website + costs of membership. (Tina)
- The idea of a project to support gifted children in STEM in Denmark, which I am part of and have just made an application for funding for. And some experience from the Copenhagen Honors College which I have earlier been working on. (Lone)
- I have shared with several people the project I am conducting with Gunnvi, and I also discussed school principles' roles in enabling adaptive gifted education. (Gila)
- In groups I shared my research about teachers' perspectives on gifted education. I brought up concerns that differentiation paradigm might not actualized in practice as wanted. Thus, Finnish education system, for example, might look quite ok on paper, but the case might be different when looked from the perspective of practice and actual classroom behaviour. (Sonja)
- The current state of gifted education in Iceland, experiences from the ECHA conference, (Johann)
- I shared our latest research about teachers' competence, planned research with a couple of different PhD students who were struggling with their research design. I think it is important to connect the gifted education research with other education research approach so that giftedness is not only limited in a special approach, but it is in dialogue with other research themes too. (Jonna)
- I shared about publishing and publication opportunities and discussed the possible topics and types of papers that can be published in international journals. (Kirsi)
- I supported PhD students by mentoring and guiding in their process. They received valuable information regarding methods to use in their research and hints about academic writing and career development. I also was able to share about our research and the methods we use. (Heidi)
- I've shared my ideas for PhD topic and work and got lovely responses from everyone.
- My research
- My research on principals' perceptions of gifted ed.
- I shared how I find that in Denmark there's too much focus on talent rather than gifted, that is high-achieving students and underachieving can be left behind. I also shared that I find there's often focus on learning more and that we should also look at learning strategies, And finally that I based a program I sought funding for on these two points.
- Mostly my concern about the lack of knowledge among teachers.

Something learned

- Several very interesting ongoing research projects. I learned that there is (still) big differences in the attitude towards ability / high ability – what it is, how it is being catered for etc. I thought more people would be aligned to the 'model' I have got to know and that I agree with now. Perhaps most importantly I became acquainted with

several others with connecting interests that I will hopefully connect with more in the future. (Åsa).

- I learned about the Danish gifted school and specifically the social & emotional training for 'all' learners, including the gifted, and how a fairly limited program intervention can have a real effect! (Johanna)
- Though we have been active on this topic for a bit longer in Denmark than the rest of Scandinavia, I learned that the challenges in the area are pretty much the same for practitioners and researchers. (Helle B N)
- I learned a lot obviously, but mostly how quickly and effective these relatively short meetings are, to make connections, brainstorm, give each other input and even start to work together in books or journals etc. (Sophie)
- I have gained a stronger insight to Nordic countries differing challenges, which can result in strengthened collaboration (Helen).
- I've learned that it's not just in Sweden that gifted and talented children are stigmatised and marginalised. I've also learned that there are many other researchers in the Nordic countries with interests similar to mine (Fredrik).
- This is a diverse group, blend of people working politically as well as empirically on gifted education. I belong to the empirical group (Niels).
- I now have reason to question the matter of creativity being systematically suppressed in school. Also I am intrigued by the cultural relative terms on the giftedness subject. (Annelinn)
- I learned more about a lot of things! What might be smart to think of when planning for and writing articles for example. I really enjoyed getting to know other people working in the field of gifted education. (Diana)
- I learned that all Nordic countries are in the same boat. Those of us whom have done this for many years have all experienced the highs and lows. How the view on giftedness changes over time in the mindset of the primary actors - from the local networks close to the child to the national administrative and political level. (Ole).
- Learned: the strength and energy from fellow researchers and sharing various ideas. (Gunnvi)
- * Something learned: That other persons in the field also experience difficulties in reaching through governmental policies to lift giftedness as an important subject that needs much attention and funding. (Jörgen)
- That even though we have a hard time in Denmark concerning research and educating ourselves at the University level - we have quite a few private initiatives and also Danish literature on Gifted Children compared to the other Nordic countries. That teachers everywhere (still) have the same challenges concerning providing for the gifted in their classrooms. That they are (still) frustrated and feel alone. They need support. That we should get the information that IS there should get out to other journals etc than just keeping it the same circles. (Tina)
- Since I am fairly new to this field, I learned a lot. Introduction to theory and research as well as views from people working in practice is all very valuable to me. As well as info on ECHA and other organisations. In one group session I got an interesting reference from Johan how to assess creative ability in math, which is very useful to me. (Lone)
- I have learned a lot more about how the Scandinavian countries cater for gifted, and how the cultures are very much alike concerning policy, research and practice. (Gila)

- I enjoyed all the conversations. As I have used Dai's Paradigms of gifted education in my work, I got new ideas and insights when having discussion with him. (Sonja)
- The many things being done/attempting to get funding for in the Nordic countries that I did not know about! Very valuable to extend my network and share knowledge & resources with others. (Johann)
- I learned names of books that I need to read to understand the theoretical framework and ontological approaches of gifted education. (Jonna)
- I learned cultural differences in communication and other differences among researchers in Nordic countries. (Kirsi)
- I learned that the Finnish education system still has a lot to develop regarding students with high abilities. I learned a lot from other country contexts. I also was able to connect with multiple researcher that are interested in the same topics as I am. (Heidi)
- I've learned about others' work, their struggles and successes. What research has been done, and what's lacking. Also differences and similar problems in the different countries.
- That there is a great interest for research in giftedness in Sweden, Norway, Finland, Denmark and Iceland.
- There is research going on in the group. There is interest in collaborating.
- An interesting point from Johanna: is it possible that identification can be seen as a way for teachers to ease their conscience? If the child is labelled gifted they might feel they can use that as an excuse not to attend to them. Also a discussion on a word for the group in Danish 'elever med særlige læringspotensialer'. We use 'særlige forudsætninger' now but it seems distant to teachers (and maybe parents).
- The importance of words. The word 'gifted' is loaded with maybe not-so-positive feelings. This is a risk that we, as researchers and advocates for gifted children, contribute to segregation by using the 'wrong' words. We really need to find a common vocabulary that works in our own Nordic languages.

What next?

- I am happy to be a sounding board to anyone who wants to connect with me or just feedback on anything written. I would also be delighted to explore the opportunity to co-write an article with another researcher. I have written quite a few debate articles (school-related) so if anyone would like any feedback on that I'd be happy to help. (Åsa)
- The social-communication intervention really triggered my interest. What if we could pilot/implement it in a Swedish context? I will think about this as a research proposal (my current research is on social-emotional learning interventions, so this would fit in nicely! I will lift this in my research group (Applied Developmental Sciences). (Johanna)
- I'd love to participate in networking or make a presentation about the KoSa instrument in gifted education (Helle B N)
- We are setting up a special interest group (early years). Cross-national collaboration. Partnership with Finland in the early years area (for my PhD thesis), tips and tricks, input and much more (Sophie)

- Collaboration within science and technology, which feels terrific, and good examples which could be developed further. I seek practice-connected content in my research, and plan to contribute to this within gifted education (Helen).
- I am going to keep in touch with several of these people, first and foremost via email and maybe it can lead to me visiting them and vice-versa. (Fredrik)
- I will consider publishing with the group. I will contact some Swedish professors. (Helle M)
- I will visit the journal mentioned. I will consider publishing with the group. I will contact Swedish colleagues. (Niels).
- I will work harder on using my experience from teaching AND my organisational psychology education when discussing these issues. Also I got an idea for an activity for my association (lykkelige barn) – ‘meet a scientist’ – for teachers, preschool teachers, school leaders. (Annelinn)
- I got to meet and to get to know a contact person for a future doctoral student research project. We established a first connection which I value and think might be helpful to find respondents (schools, teachers and students) that are interested to take part in this study (Diana).
- We need to have a common understanding/definition of the concepts in the gifted area. For example what is asynchrony? What is twice exceptional? What is a psychiatric diagnosis? How do we understand the social-emotional well-being of the child (as well as the cognitive and personal).
- Being aware of "teachers' mindset" - how they easily change over time. A child can easily be stigmatized. We need research that combines practice and theory. So that the research can be transformed into useable strategies and methods for teachers and parents - to the benefit of the child/pupil/student. I would like as much as possible that we make the children active participants - listening to their points of view - not least in the implementation phase. Living in this post-modern society, we easily get overwhelmed with information therefore we need a "red thread"-consistency in the way we produce new knowledge so as to follow "the tides in society". (Ole)
- Things that can occur after and how: possibility of research publishing book/ journal. Applying for fundings with Finland and Sweden. (Gunnvi)
- * Things that can occur after: Collaboration with Gila Hammer Furnes from Norway about lessons that fuse mathematics and crafting. Cooperation with Sophie Rudström Fernqvist around identification project. Cooperation with Helen Brink around identification, enrichment and coaching. Especially for mathematics and Tech. (Jörgen)
- We focused on the possibility of setting up a website for the Network. Making the information concerning the initiatives ie the book and other publications easy for new interested people to find. (Tina)
- I will contact the people from the STEM group to learn more about their work. And if we get funding for our project, we will use the contacts we made, to get advice. (Lone)
- I am discussing with Jørgen Bjørklund from Enter skolan if we should conduct action research at his school with the theme «Aesthetics, science and Bildung» (Gila)
- I continue writing and studying. I think we need to contact more people in Finland and connect researchers and advocates. I was happy that there was 5 Finns. (Sonja)
- I might pick up on a research project that has started but has been delayed - possibly contribute to the NNGE book that is planned. I will share some resources on

identifying creativity in mathematics that I got at the ECHA conference after a conversation I had. (Johann)

- I hope I could co-author some research papers about playful learning and gifted children in ECE with some participants of the meeting. (Jonna)
- I am mostly interesting in publishing and will publish and help others to publish. (Kirsi)
- We are starting collaboration regarding research and data collection. We are going to apply for some mobility funding. We will stay connected ♥ (Heidi)
- I've gained new perspective, new friends, and people to share and get help with in my upcoming work. A network to rely on. And opportunities for future work associations.
- Research collaborations in the form of writing.
- Possibilities to publish in a journal together. Nice to have met people in NNGE, will make it easier next time we meet, when we know each other a bit.
- I didn't mention this to anyone, but if we get funding for the part-time program, if someone would like to come and visit the program – both to learn from it and give feedback. Discussion with Johann about him potentially picking up where Meyvant and I left on researching a precious program in Iceland.
- Co-writing and publishing together with new people, which is really nice. ☺

Other comments

- Thank you very much for the opportunity (to attend the network meeting) (Åsa)
- Thank you SO much for arranging and facilitating this (Helle B N)
- I'm glad I came along, because it has been super interesting and the time on board was very well spent. (Fredrik)
- Great conference, very creative and inspiring. (Annelinn)
- A well organised, inspiring and fruitful conference. It was amazing to meet all of you so deeply dedicated to gifted education. I have already planned a project together with Gila Hammer Furnes from Norway, she really liked the fact that I work in a school with an aesthetic orientation. I'm looking forward to that collaboration. I'm also planning to do some collaboration with Helen Brink and Sophie Rudström Fernqvist at KAU. We shared some interesting thoughts and ideas. (Jörgen)
- Thank you for at good conference ☺ (Mia)
- Thank you for a great meeting. (Lone)
- Thank you for the wonderful seminar!! (Gila)
- Thank you for the great seminar! (Jonna)
- All the best. Ps. thank you, thank you and thank you for organizing this and also for including us! I appreciate it so much! (Heidi)
- Teachers need to think about how they form groups in teaching. If students are working on projects that rely on knowledge or projects that need to be graded, the highly gifted children need to work alone or with children at the same level.
- Lovely, joyful, giving, friendly, fantastic days.
- Thanks for the inspiring days! Looking forward to meeting again soon!

Reflections from Prof Margaret Sutherland

- Feeling of connection – Shetland is closer to Bergen than Edinburgh
- Changing world, changes in EU

- Education can't solve the world's problems but we need to be part of the solution
- 'Nordic values' seem important to others too
- A network is an amazing opportunity.
- A strength of the network is that it includes people from wider research disciplines.
- Crucial to collaborate with the wider education field beyond gifted education, for example sharing about gifted into other disciplines and subjects. Link to the Nordic Educational Research Association
- Our aim is to make ourselves redundant because all of education embraces principles and it is embedded into the work of all teachers
- Build on your strengths, but do not compete.

Reflections from Prof David Dai

- Gifted education is not just for those who are labelled gifted
- Research is a fundamental institutional memory
- Think about sustainability
- Critical assessment
- Teacher and principal perceptions
- Vision building
- Needs assessment
- Capacity building
- Teacher preparation and learning
- Resource building
- Network support
- Implementation

Reflections from Ole, Denmark Coordinator

- Need down-to-earth theory
- Combine practical experience with theory
- Capacity building
- Need more than books and journals, need other ways to communicate and get society to listen
- Words and discourses change all the time
- Need flexibility, not narrow approaches

Reflections from Gunnvi, stand-in Norway Coordinator

- Research is important, but teachers do not read research. We need to find better ways to communicate.
- We need joint research work with teachers and schools, bottom-up research
- Can share contacts with Norwegian National Talent Centres
- We can do important work with our teacher education students and newly graduated teachers – these educators have a different (more open) attitude to the responsibility for teaching gifted students.

Reflections from Mara, Sweden Coordinator

- We, including the coordinators, need to know more about what is happening so that we can send it out
- Newsletters reporting interesting events and sharing experiences within the network ... but this takes time and coordination.

Reflections from Kirsi, Finland Coordinator

- Great to have 5 people here from Finland
- Our strength is research and connection to teaching
- Need to educate the teachers and future researchers
- International connections

Reflections from Jørgen

- Great to have nearly 40 people here sharing with each other.
- This is a historic event
- Language

Reflections from Valerie, network coordinator.

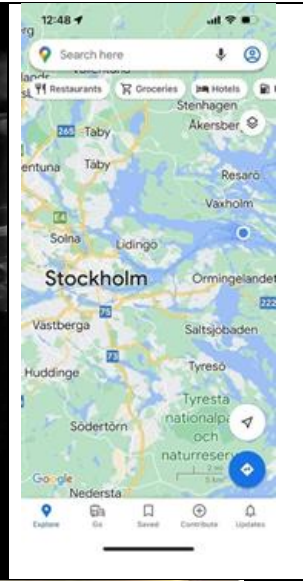
- Thank you everyone for engaging, including the network coordinators and the international guests
- The event was supported via funding from Vetenskapsrådet, for the purpose of developing a Nordic research network. We have a responsibility to use the funding wisely.
- 'Research' can mean different things to different network members, some engage in empirical research, others read and share research, others identify areas of good practice
- Disseminate info about the network, info shared at the meeting, build new contacts.
- 2023 network will focus on applications for members to visit each other within the Nordic region. 2024-5 will be a gifted education conference.

Further networking

- Here is the registration information for ECHA <https://echa-site.eu/membership/> (thanks Caroline!)
- Here is the link to our brand new LinkedIn NNGE (easiest might be to log in to LinkedIn site and search 'NNGE') - thanks Tina and Susanne for setting this up! https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:6976168805462851584?updateEntityUrn=urn%3Ali%3Afs_feedUpdate%3A%28V2%2Curn%3Ali%3Aactivity%3A6976168805462851584%29
- NNGE website <https://www.kau.se/en/giftednetwork>
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Snapshot memories ...







Attendee list in Country Groups

<p>Denmark (n=9-10) Ole Kyed (Denmark coordinator) Nina Troelsgaard Jensen Tina Refning Larsen Susanne Hoff-Clausen Niels Sandholm Larsen Helle Mathar Lone Djernis Olsen Helle Brejnholt Neiiendam Mia Vinkelman <i>Lilja Kristinsdóttir (to Iceland discussion group)</i></p>	<p>Sweden (n=17) Mara Westling Allodi (Sweden coordinator) Jörgen Björklund Fredrik Ardenlid Åsa Melander (<i>lives in UK</i>) Lena Ivarsson Caroline Sims Sophie Rudström Fernqvist Anna-Carin Holmgren Linus Hultstrand Johanna Stålnacke Helen Brink Fanny Mossberg Diana von Börtzell-Szuch Gisela Priebe Ann-Cathrine Sandström Viktor Gardelli Valerie Margrain</p>
<p>Norway (n=3) Annelinn Skjong-Børsting Gila Hammer Furnes Gunnvi Sæle Jokstad</p>	
<p>Finland (n=6) Kirsi Tirri (Finland coordinator) Sol-Britt Arnolds-Granlund Camilla Svens-Liavåg Sonja Laine Heidi Harju-Luukkainen Jonna Kangas</p>	
<p>Iceland (n=2) Jóhann Örn Sigurjónsson (Iceland coordinator) Lilja Kristinsdóttir (<i>lives/works in Denmark</i>)</p>	
<p>International (n=2) David Yun Dai (New York) Margaret Sutherland (Scotland)</p>	