

Examinations of Successful Megaprojects Throughout the Globe

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Kilden Performing Arts Centre – The importance of one man Learning project governance from real life experiences

Abstract:

Most texts on project governance and project management portrays the organization as populated by anonymous people in abstract roles like 'project manager', 'sponsor', 'team member'. This paper takes the contrasting position that the project organization is developed by individuals with a specter of competences, strong and weak sides and relations to other people and organizations. The storyline presents a case study from a real-life project developing a new culture institution in Norway over a period of 10 years. Data was gathered ex-post by two researchers through interviews and document studies. The paper first defines key concepts and then presents an analytical framework for the purpose of analyzing the roles in this case story. It gives new insight to the roles as project manager and project executive. The story illustrates the importance of continuity and persistence in the role as project executive. These issues are relevant in future projects given the growing size and complexity seen in projects and the focus on stakeholder value that is prominent in project literature.

Keywords: Project Governance, Project Management, Project Executive, Project Sponsor, Project Promotor, Project Organization, Project Management Roles, Culture Project, Construction Project, Success

Introduction: Background and motivation

Most texts on project governance and project management portrays the organization as populated by anonymous people in abstract roles. This paints a rather gray and dull picture of projects. In this paper I will do no such thing. I take the position that projects are populated with real people. Real people with real names and real faces. People with subjective opinions and history. Individuals with a specter of competences, strong and weak sides. Not least – people with relations to other people and organizations. They are people with motivation and strong affinity to their geographical region and local community. I hope acknowledging this will give life to a colorful story of a project with lots of drama which resulted in a wonderful institution in the regional main city of southern Norway: Kilden Performing Arts Centre (hereafter Kilden¹ – see Figure 1²) in Kristiansand (Norway's fifth largest city). Trying to keep the identity of the project and the people would be impossible, so why even try. The people in this story has made a tremendous achievement, and they are right to be proud of it.



Figure 1 Kilden Performing Arts Centre, Kristiansand, Norway

The story is colorful. It will describe important events that turned the project upside down at times. It will praise the people involved for their ability to handle these situations, but also share critical remarks on things that went wrong along the way. To make sure no one gets hurt by these critical remarks, I will not mention their real names. The point I made earlier was to make sure the reader remembers that these are real people, they have made mistakes and successes through their carrier before, during and after this story – just like we all have.

One main point of this story though, is to highlight the role of one man in particular. The man that made the project possible, the man that “kept the ship floating till they found land” through the crisis. He was not in the most prominent formal positions, but he possessed the force, the continuity, and the smartness that made it possible. Obviously – he could not have done this by

¹ The name Kilden translated to English is “the source” – used in the meaning source of inspiration for life, shared experiences, cultural understanding, and knowledge.

² The Kilden website for more information of the performing arts (in Norwegian): <https://www.kilden.com/>

himself, so his main achievement was probably to get the right people involved. The story is important for two reasons: Firstly, because there are important lessons to be learned by this story. Secondly, because it is a story worth telling, hopefully a good read in its own right. It is written in honor of all those involved in the project, but again – one man in particular.

| Fact box 1: |
|---|
| Norway: Population: 5 328 000 (2019) Capitol city region: Population: 2 593 085 (2015) Capitol: Oslo, population: 681 067 (2019) Sørlandet region: Population: 300 452 (2016) Main city: Kristiansand, population: 111 645 (2020) |
| Kilden Performing Arts Centre: Size: BTA 16.500 m ² , Capacities: Concert hall: 1180 seats, Multi hall: 220 seats, Intimate hall: 100 seats Qualities: Prize winning architecture, excellent acoustics, indoor climate and working conditions. |
| The Kilden project: approximately \$190 million (2012), Timeline: Company established 2002, construction started 2008, opening concert 6. January 2012. |

Figure 2 Fact box - Information used in the continuing text.

This paper relates to project management literature in terms of understanding the role of the project manager, key tasks and relations to other roles in the project organization and on the client side. The paper relates to project governance literature on key issues like governing institutions in projects and the role of the project executive. Literature tend to limit the observations to those that fits with a linear timeline of development and generic role models applicable in 'any project'. This paper makes a point out of being different in that the descriptions are real life situations and people in real positions in a story that did not follow the expected trajectory of planned events.

A detailed case story with a rich context description may hold a wide range of relevant points to learn from. This text gives such a story, but it is not intended to point out all possible learning points. Many points concerning good practices and applications of those are left out. So are many big and small mistakes and events that did not go as planned. The selected few points that are highlighted in the concluding section stands out as especially relevant to the current development in projects' complexity and criticality, and development of nuanced understanding of key roles like project executive and project manager in real life situations.

Thus, the paper sets out to investigate:

- How was the role of project executive performed in this real-life situation?
- How did the project executive role and project manager role interact during the project?
- What particular learning points can be made about real life project governance and project management roles from this specific case project?

Background theory on governance and management, roles and individuals in projects

"A project is a temporary endeavor undertaken to create a unique product, service, or result" (PMI 2017, p 4). In this paper we will look at a project that certainly comply with this definition. Kilden is a unique building, but even more, it created a new organization of a kind that has never been seen anywhere else as far as we know. The project organization was a temporary phenomenon³ that

³ Phenomenon: "a fact or situation that is observed to exist or happen, especially one whose cause or explanation is in question." (Oxford dictionary). It was much more than a team, an organization, a company – but was all of these at some point during the development.

dynamically changed as the story developed. Projects enable business value creation. Business value in projects refers to the benefit that results of a specific project provide to its stakeholders. The benefits may be tangible, intangible or both (PMI, 2017, p 7). Kilden enables significant business value and benefits to stakeholders. More about this later.

“Megaprojects are large-scale, complex ventures that typically cost \$1 billion or more, take many years to develop and build, involve multiple public and private stakeholders, are transformational, and impact millions of people” (Flyvbjerg, 2017). Kilden is definitively not a megaproject according to this definition. However, as everything is relative, it is important to acknowledge the relative size and importance the project has in its proper context. It is a Performing Arts Centre for the South region of Norway (5% of Norway’s population), in Kristiansand (1,6% of Norway’s population). A building project of \$190 million is a megaproject in this regional and local context⁴.

Project governance and project management are two “twin subjects” that both play a significant role in this story. There is no room for or need for a detailed description, but just to set the scene, here are some general remarks:

Project governance *“refers to the framework, functions, and processes that guide project management activities in order to create a unique product, service, or result to meet organizational, strategic and operational goals”* (PMI 2017, p 44). Governance is associated with steering and the owner role. That includes developing strategies and making decisions on a high level. It requires understanding the project outcome in context to assure that the project creates the value it is intended to, and not set out in a direction it should not go. It is also associated with financial obligations, access to resources and the legitimacy of the project. The role of an owner is to mandate the project organization, support and control the activities – ultimately also to be the main risk taker. Ownership has decision-making powers that include starting the project, deciding the scope to be delivered, choose the delivery model, define requirements, accept the delivery and, at any time when that is considered the best strategic choice, to stop the project. The owner is also in the position to accept the delivered product, service or result, to take over responsibility for it, to own and maintain it and to decide who can use it, in the end also to phase out, sell or demolish the result.

Project management *“is the application of knowledge, skills, tools and techniques to project activities to meet the project requirements. Project management is accomplished through the appropriate application and integration of the project management processes identified for the project. Project management enables organizations to execute projects effectively and efficiently”* (PMI 2017, p 10). A project may be managed in three different scenarios; portfolio, program and single project. Kilden may be viewed in all these scenario’s, but the view here is single project.

Project management is developing over time. Once the project was a unique task, then it was a temporary organization, and now it is a way to create value for stakeholders. The stakeholder value perspective in project management has risen over the last couple of decades and is today a main direction in literature. Several special issues (Martinsuo, Klakegg and Marrewijk 2019) and articles in established project management journals have documented this development. Project-related research has increasingly treated projects and project-based operations as vehicles for defining, creating and delivering value (Laursen and Svejvig 2016). Riis, Wikström and Hellström (2019) discuss the complex interplay of links that connect temporary organizations with their permanent parent

⁴ A relevant reference for comparison is the national Operahouse in Oslo opened 2008 at a cost of approx. \$485 million. The regional center represents 40% of the investment to the benefit of 5% of the population.

organization and thus connects to project governance. Martinsuo (2019) illustrates how firms implement radical innovation programs to create strategic value involving a wider business network. The case in this paper also indicates similar characteristics and positions itself in this value-related research.

Key roles in project governance and – management

“Organizational governance structures should consider people, roles, structures and policies” (PMI 2017, p 43). The role of the project manager (PM) is in PMBoK described with the analogy of the conductor, as opposed to the team which is the orchestra. This analogy should fit this story perfectly. The PM may or may not be involved in analysis and coordination prior to formal project initiation, the PM is responsible for coordinating activity and resources in the project. Just as importantly, the PM need to be in close contact to the executive and business unit leaders. PM may also have a role after the project delivery in realizing business benefits from the project (PMI 2017, p. 51).

The PM may fill numerous roles within their sphere of influence. These roles reflect the PM’s capabilities and are representative of the value and contribution of the project management profession according to PMI (2017, p 52). Both leadership and management are needed to be successful, and in the right balance of style and choice of means. Leadership and management are about getting things done, achieving project goals and objectives. Ability to deal with politics, influence, negotiation, autonomy and power is part of this (PMI 2017, p. 62).

The PM collaborates with the sponsor/project executive (PE) – a senior management role in the permanent organization. PMI (2017, p 29) holds the sponsor as accountable for the development and maintenance of the project business case document⁵. Unfortunately, PMBoK shifts between referring the sponsor as an organization, a team or an individual throughout. The sponsoring organization is also known as the owner. In a governance perspective, the project owner’s representative (executive/sponsor) is a key role, just like the project manager is a key role in an operational perspective of the project. One ambition in this paper is to help reduce the ambiguity and potential confusion created by these descriptions of the project sponsor or project executive in project management literature.

APM published a best practice guideline that describes the project sponsor: *“Sponsors are variously titled, according to practice within their organisations, and may be located at different organisational levels. Whatever a sponsor’s level of authority, at a minimum they will be accountable for the project business case, budget, and high-level stakeholder engagement.”* (APM 2018, p 2). Another best practice guideline is Prince2 which uses the term project executive for this role (Axelos 2017).

De Wit and Meyer (2004, p. 595) defined three main functions for Governance:

- a) Forming: influencing the forming of the corporate mission;
- b) Performing: contribute to the strategy process with the intention of improving the future performance of the corporation, and;
- c) Conforming: ensure corporate conformance to the stated mission and strategy.

The first point a) is a leadership role of maintaining direction (clarify vision, mission and strategy). The second b) is a supporting role to put in place the structures necessary to ensure success (secure

⁵ As will be shown later in this paper, the business case document itself is a minor issue, compared to making the preconditions for the business case to become a reality.

resources, define and support policies, processes, roles and responsibilities, arbitrate conflicts, etc.). The third is a monitoring role of make sure the objectives/benefits are achieved (control and monitor, evaluate and approve changes, read and feedback on reports, etc.). All of these are governance functions and associated with the sponsor role or project executive.

Klakegg (2015) identified the link between the PE and the PM as the critical link in the project in order to create maximum value for stakeholders (see Figure 4). There is more than one PE role (Turner 1993); the sponsor acts as owner (responsible) or champion (promotor, advocate). Crawford and Brett (2001) explored the sponsor roles and concluded: *"The role of the project sponsor will ultimately be determined by the nature of the organization and the project type"*. Crawford et al. (2008) identified a wide specter of different ways to fill the sponsoring roles, characterizing them in two dimensions: command and control in the interest of the permanent organization, and support and facilitation in the interest of the temporary organization.

Having effective sponsorship (professional PE role) is crucial for project success (Bryde, 2008). A typical description of the generic sponsor/executive, PE, role would include securing the necessary decisions in the permanent organization (owner organization – often represented by a steering group) for the project to move forward in the right direction (align with strategy), political support and anchoring (handle key external and internal stakeholders), to secure the proper use of resources (control function) and the realization of benefits (support for value creation). In other literature the role as the PMs boss is also highlighted (Briner, Geddes and Hastings, 1990), but this is less relevant here. The relation between the project executive and the PM has also been subject to several studies in project management, e.g. Turner and Müller (2004), Kloppenborg, Stubblebine and Tesch (2007).

Blomquist and Müller (2006) has shown that high performing organizations apply dedicated portfolio management processes and tools in addition to the roles of middle managers to address the requirements stemming from complexity of the organization's environment. Low performing organizations do not, which indicates that the connection between the portfolio perspective and the single project perspective is important, and that the roles that connect projects and the permanent organization are key to success. Another example of research into the organizations' implementation of strategy through projects is Hyväri (2015): She describes the connection between corporate governance (Board of Directors) and project, program or portfolio (P3). Governance is described as a set of policies, regulations, functions and processes, and the roles of top management and organizational project management. Hyväri uses a case company to investigate and illustrate the fact that this area of knowledge needs more research. This paper may be seen as a similar attempt using a single project perspective.

Lately, Zwikael, Meredith and Smyrk (2019) has made an update on roles and responsibilities of the owner that adds confirmation to many of the previous findings. Another recent source that summarizes the current knowledge and puts it systematically into the perspective of the front-end of projects are given by Williams, Wo, Samset and Edkins (2019). These contributions discuss the key roles and their tasks set in a general description of a project.

Scientific literature and other sources on project governance, just like project management literature and the PMBoK Guide (PMI 2017), tend to focus the generic role and not the individual filling it. This can be viewed as a knowledge gap. Here we take the starting point that although the generic roles are interesting as patterns or guidelines, the individual people put into those roles are forming them, interpreting them and filling them based on their own abilities and understanding.

Projects and individuals – links and relations

The APM Special interest group for Governance of Project Management published a small research study in 2011 where they made in-depth interviews with high level executives in six project-based organizations in UK and Norway (Shannon et al. 2011). The result of this study was awareness of the importance of the individual as motivator and controller, the carrier of obligation and accountability. Systems do not work without the effort of individuals to develop, follow and maintain them. Effective organizational culture does not emerge and prosper without contribution of individuals.

Klakegg and Shannon (2013) discussed this further considering the Board of Directors responsibility for the organization's projects. Ultimately, the board of directors is responsible for the well-being of the organization and its ability to reach strategic goals and be sustainable (Solomon 2010). The organization's future depends on making strategic changes to stay competitive and prosperous in a changing world. This might suggest that the chairman of the board should be the most important individual of all in developing a megaproject, given the position "on the top of the pyramid". However, as obvious in today's complex world, steering only from the top is no longer possible, and maybe never was. Governance is complex and relies on both hierarchical and relational mechanisms (Klakegg and Haavaldsen 2011).

Individuals represent the organizational units on an organizational chart (when put into generic roles) and connections between these units always includes individuals. Structures (governance frameworks, management systems, reporting lines, contracts etc.) are dead as they only exist on paper or digital format. Structures can only be brought to life by individuals. This way the individuals are bearers of the relations between organizational units; companies, divisions and teams. Relations between human beings are obviously too complex to cover fully here. We limit the discussion to aspects that come up as a consequence of the chosen analytical framework.

Howell, Shea and Higgins (2005) show that effective championship (sponsorship) behavior is characterized by enthusiasm and confidence, persistence and the capability to bring the right people together. One observation of interest here is made by Andersen (2012): When the owner's representative (PE) is an experienced individual with a tendency to involve too much in how the PM should perform his/her role, this is a threat to the project's success. It may distort both roles.

Other dimensions of organizational life that results of individuals more than of structures are organizational values and cultures. The importance of trust and organizational values in governance of projects has been investigated by Kadefors (2004), Smyth, Gustavsson and Ganskau (2008), Yitmen (2013) and many others. These authors put weight to the formal and informal relations between actors in the project across, beyond and even despite the formal structures mentioned above. Issues like levels of communication, trust and ethics in the organization comes across as vital for performance. Other important aspects are means to regulate behavior in the organization. Focus areas in relationship-based governance typically include non-hierarchical elements like leadership, motivation and incentives, resource allocation, trust and ethics, alliances and involvement of stakeholders, informal relations and communication.

Turner and Müller (2004) studied the relationship between the project owner's representative and the project manager including aspects of communication and cooperation between the project sponsor and the project manager based on principal-agent theory. Crawford et al. (2008) talks about 'governance functions' to open for several project owner representatives to fill these functions, frequently organized in a hierarchy of sponsorship. Their findings can be summarized thus: The sponsor needs senior experience, knowledge, perspective, credibility and authority to fill the role.

The report divides sponsorship in two dimensions: ‘governance’ and ‘support’. These two dimensions can be high or low and thus form a continuum of different sponsorship roles according to the needs of the situation. This is an important recognition: sponsorship must be different in different situations – no one size fits all. It also changes over the project stages (Kloppenborg, Tesch and Manolis, 2014). Another dimension that makes the role challenging and worth further study.

The potential of the project sponsor role is that there is an individual operating as the owner’s representative across all organizational structures, communicating with the parties. Its advantages lie in the qualities of personal communication, the regular following up, the coaching/facilitating, relation to the project (team) members, and the two-way dialogue in exploration of the possibilities of the project. A successful pm-sponsor relation implies development of mutual trust and of exploring win/win potentials, thereby contributing to successful projects.

In project management literature there are several contributions focusing the individual, but in project governance literature we have not yet found studies that explicitly discusses the individual. Klakegg and Shannon (2013) and Shannon et al. (2011) addresses the issue. Klakegg and Meistad (2014) started filling in the project governance literature with focus on the individual. They suggested the role should be formed after the individual, not the other way around like it is done with generic roles. This paper intends to take the next step.

The role models for innovation – a theoretical frame for discussion

To define a theoretical framework, we will follow suggestions from Hans Georg Gemünden (2014) and look at innovation literature. Gemünden, Salomo and Hölzle (2007) gave a good background and overview. The essence is condensed and repeated here as a tool for the analysis in this paper:

Traditional executive roles in innovation literature resembles those found in project management literature: the champion (promotor), the gatekeeper (controller), and these are found to be critical for innovation success. Further there are ample evidence that the executive and management roles require relevant competence and that this has positive influence on success. In German-speaking countries a new set of roles are developed and characterized as the expert-, power-, process- and relationship promotors (Gemünden et al. 2007, p 408). These roles are defined by the type of barriers they help to overcome, the type of power base on which their influence is grounded, and the type of characteristic value-creating functions they fulfill by their specific behavior (ibid, p. 409).

Table 1 Operationalization of Innovator roles and Project Management (Gemünden et al. 2007, p. 412)

| Characteristic | Operationalization |
|--|--|
| Power promotor | The key person supports the project from a higher hierarchical level. Base: Hierarchical rank of the key person. |
| Expert promotor | The key person promotes the project by his/her high technological know-how. Base: high technological know-how. |
| Process promotor | The key person knows the organizational processes and campaigns for the smooth process of the project. The key person acts as link between decision makers and experts. Base: knowledge of organizational processes. |
| Technology-related relationship promotor | The key person has good relationships with important external cooperation partners. The key person supports the search for external cooperation partners, information exchange with cooperation partners and the collaboration with external partners. Base: External relations to relevant parties. |
| Market-related relationship promotor | The key person promotes the project by his/her market-related know-how. Base: high degree of market-related know-how. |
| Leadership experience of the project leader | Experience in leading previous projects. |

The power promotor has necessary hierarchical power to drive the project, provide needed resources, and to help overcome any obstacles that might arise during the project period. The expert promoter has the specific technical knowledge for the innovation process (here interpreted to mean subject matter knowledge, as many of the challenges are non-technical). The process promoter derives his influence from the organizational know-how and intra-organizational networks, makes the contact between the power- and expert promoters and has the necessary diplomatic skills to bring together the people necessary for the innovation process (here – project process). The relationship promoters have strong personal ties, not only inside, but especially outside the organization – to customers, suppliers and other partners.

Gemünden et al. (2007) analyses the results of a large empirical study (statistical analysis of data from a sample of 146 highly innovative new product development projects) and confirms:

- High degree of innovativeness is negatively related to target cost and budget due to resistance to change, unexpected changes and need to prove suitability for the market.
- All innovator roles, except the power promotor, has significant positive influence and no negative influence on the process targets (quality, time and cost).
- The power promotor seems to have no significant influence on quality, time and cost, even though present in 72 of the cases. The main reason may be that these innovation projects was strategically important, and lack of critical resources was never a critical success factor.
- Interaction between roles are important, and the troika of internally oriented promoters – the expert, power and process promoter perform significantly poorer when technological innovativeness increases.
- The two externally oriented promoters and the experienced project leader increases their positive impacts with increasing technological innovativeness.
- The effect of process promoters depends very much on the kind of innovativeness and their ability to open the organization to externally created innovations.
- Technology and market promoters are needed as boundary spanners for importing external knowledge resources and coordinating partners, for importing customer demands, and exploiting values created by innovating customers.
- Innovators must master organizational and societal change, and changes in competition.

To use this as a framework for discussion, we need to comment on some of the assumptions behind this: The results of Gemünden et al. are from highly innovative product development projects. Product developments are projects – often of a size and complexity like the one found in Kilden. Product development projects have some challenges that are different from Kilden – developing and building a performing arts center. However, Kilden is also an innovation – although moderate in technical terms. Quite a few cultural buildings with similar stages and concert halls are developed before and in parallel with this one. It was one of several built in Norway in the period 2008 – 2018, although one of the early ones. The innovation in Kilden was more radical on the organizational side, merging the activities of many different arts in one organization. Although Kilden is not a radical product development, it is an innovative project and the framework of roles will thus be relevant.

[Gathering and analyzing experiences from Kilden - The methodology](#)

This paper reports on an ex-post analysis of a real-life project based on interviews with the key people involved in the project, and access to the complete archive of project documents. The interviews include 14 individual interviews with individuals in key roles, all semi-structured, all ranging from 1 – 2 hours. Notes were made during interviews by researchers. Four key interviews were fully transcribed and sent back to interviewees for confirmation. Three of the most important

individuals were interviewed 2-3 times gradually more into detail as the interviewers got more intimate knowledge of the project. The project archive comprised more than 3500 single documents – of which only a few are used here as relevant for this study (see list in appendix A). The researchers also visited Kilden several times during the six months period of gathering information from the project, approximately one and a half year after the opening concert in January 2012.

The study reported here could be described as exploratory and qualitative. It aims at understanding the roles of individuals in this specific project and does not intend to prove any findings as normative. At the time of the data gathering, it was part of a bigger and more general study to evaluate to what degree the project was successful and what the parties should learn from it. The general study is reported in Klakegg and Meistad (2014) and Klakegg (2015). The resulting dataset is comprehensive and rich in detail. Some aspects of the project more so because these were found important at the time, others less so due to limitations in time and scope of the study.

At the time of data gathering the author was an employee of a project management consultancy firm which also was responsible for hiring the right resources to work at the project team. The author had no role in the project and was employed by the company just as Kilden was finished. This was still no objective or neutral position, so the research team also consisted of a PhD candidate using Kilden as a study object in her thesis. All interviews were made by both researchers, and notes were compared and discussed after the interviews to make sure the neutrality and balance should be intact. If findings were not balanced it would not be of any use to the PM consultancy either.

After the general study, one theme has been coming back in focus again and again in the author's research into project governance and project management: The importance of people; real people, not generic roles. The interviews were still a potential rich source of knowledge, unexploited for this purpose until now, five years later. There may be both positive and negative effects from letting the material mature for a long time before writing up the final story, but in this case it has probably been positive. It is easier to avoid focusing on details that were intriguing at that time, and since the people are also spread and not so close to the author anymore, it is easier to see the story of individuals in an objective light.

The analysis was done as a manual text-analysis from notes and project documents. Validation of findings is limited to comparison and consideration of similarities and differences found in other literature on project governance and project management.

[Kilden Performing Arts Centre – The story](#)

The project outcome

Kilden Performing Arts Centre is a world class theater and concert hall in Kristiansand, Norway. Finished in October 2011 and officially opened with a spectacular concert event in January 2012. After 5 years of construction the venue stands out as a major success in Norwegian construction. It finished according to approved budget and ahead of schedule with good quality. The most notable result however is the splendid design, excellent functionality and acoustic quality for visitors and performing artists.

In 2014 the ex-post study concluded the building project had been successful in reaching its goals ([N] indicates source document of goals and requirements). Some goals and performance indicators were found to be less well documented and are excluded here:

Over-all level (society/owner level):

- Two long-term political goals are too early to evaluate (sustainability, becoming the region's most important meeting place) [1], [2], [3].
- All goals and requirements from the Architect competition were reached [5], [6].
- All goals and major requirements from the owners were reached [8].
- The main targets defined by the project organization were reached [4], [9].
- The goal of strengthening national attention to Sørlandet achieved [8], [9].
- The goal of attracting international attention achieved [8].
- Develop a more attractive city probably achieved (subjectively) [9].

On user level:

- Excellent acoustics achieved [1], [5].
- Co-creation and co-production between art institutions achieved [2].
- Requirement for comprehensive activity and openness, high level quality of art, reached [1]
- Goal of having viable art institutions is too early to say [2], [3], [7]
- Goal of reaching all ages and wide array of interests is achieved [7], reducing the threshold for attending cultural events [7] potentially achieved, at least for certain groups.
- Goal of creating a wider specter of cultural activity [9] is debated (a large arena centralizes activity), and "a building for all" [9] is impossible to evaluate.
- Goal of reducing investment and operations costs [9] is a) hypothetical because it relates to a situation where all art institutions had invested in parallel and b) obviously not realistic as the investment is huge and the new building will be more costly to operate than the old ones.

On project level:

- The co-location of all art institutions is achieved [3]
- The scope is delivered according to specification and within the maximum area of 16.200 m² [3], [9].
- The project delivered with zero defects documented in the time of delivery in 2011. Only minor technical issues reported by 2014 (some problems with doors, smoke-machine setting of smoke alarms etc.). Quality requirements [8] in general OK.
- The original cost frame decided in 2003 was later increased by 17% [3], [7]. Including cost index compensation up till 2012 the project delivered according to revised budget [10]. However, some functions were taken out and then added with other financing, so there are arguments the budget was somewhat overspent. The cost target as set by the project organization [9] is not achieved.
- The original plan for startup of operations indicated ultimo 2010 [2], [3]. The opening concert was in January 2012. According to original plans, this means a year delay. However, it was delivered 3 months ahead of current deadline at the time of completion.
- The project also reported less accidents than average for the region and national level [9].

Kilden Performing Arts Centre is not just a building – it is a new organization comprising seven departments spanning from theatre, opera and symphonic orchestra, knowledge exchange, to productions and event organizers⁶. A similar organization was unheard of anywhere else at the time the plans were approved. This was even more decisive for the outcome of the project than the

⁶ According to information on their website, the organization was restructured to four departments in 2019.

construction of the venue itself. According to the owners and operators this is an even bigger achievement.

The evaluation of the project concluded this was a successful project in most perspectives and in most areas of the evaluation. The situation in 2014 – two years after opening – was that Kilden had received several international prizes for its architecture, the house is filled with activities, performances were sold out, and the collaboration in the new organization was blooming. Economy was now so good that functions taken out in the original project was added with own financing. Like most other new cultural institutions built in major cities in Norway, Kilden got approximately \$1,1 million in operational support from local government for operating the centre. In 2015 there was a major debate about VAT-compensation for cultural buildings in Norway. On national level this support was suggested taken away, which would have become a problem for all new institution buildings in the sector including Kilden, but the change was never carried out.

The planning, design and execution process

The story here will be short of details, as a result of limited space. The main points are included to give the reader a realistic impression of the timeline, the processes and strategies during this project development. The process had already started many years before the project existed, as the local theatre, symphony orchestra, the regional opera and other cultural institutions individually had signaled strong need for upgraded or new facilities. The city on the other hand also looked for opportunities for upgrading a central part of the city. Politicians on their side started the process after long debates in 2001 by deciding to build a concert hall and leave the theatre in its current location. This sparked a long line of events that make up the chronological story of this project:

- 2002 – Kristiansand Concert Hall AS (the company – hereafter KCH) was decided [1] and a board established, but there was no money attached. Four original funding parties (owners) were the city, the region and national government, together with a regional foundation. Elected chair of the board was the CEO of a local bank with high ambitions to develop the region. He will be referred to as SAH.
- KCH needed someone to keep track of all information, stakeholders, resources, processes and not least decisions and other processes needed to get the project going. This would be the CEO of the company KCH. To fill this position, they turned to a single individual that both had firsthand experience with the planning and decision-making processes locally and nationally, and knowledge of physical planning and major projects – the city architect. He will be referred to as EA.
- Obviously, a complex project like this needs thorough planning and comprehensive studies. Large questions like scope, location, organization and financing would all require creativity and ingenuity to become a reality. The work, headed by EA, concluded that the keys to make it important enough to succeed was to make it big and unique. This meant it must 1) include locating all the cultural facilities in one place, and 2) organize the activity under one uniting organization. The project is an investment to get more culture for the money and support the development of the whole region.
- The cultural institutions had no tradition for collaboration, and communication was difficult. Someone with firsthand knowledge of how these institutions work was needed to establish necessary trust between them, coordinate and to interpret their needs into a brief that could serve as basis for further planning. The man elected to do this the former Director of the theatre – he will be referred to as GG here.

- 2003 - The brief and other documentation formed basis for applications for financing both locally [3] and nationally [2]. The Ministry of Culture triggered on the signals of collaboration and approved financial support for theater and concert hall at the same level as other institutions had gotten at that time.
- 2004 - KCH completed the project documentation [4] based on the brief and collaborative effort, as well as the promising signals from regional and national authorities. It was politically accepted with a financing model and cost frame. KCH changed name to Performing Arts Centre Sørlandet (PACS) to strengthen the new profile.
- With this formal position secured, it was time to put together some more resources to manage the process. EA did not want to build up a large organization in PACS, so he decided to enter a partnership with a nation-wide project management consultancy company which got the responsibility to hire the best possible individuals for each position in the project management team. The partner company was selected after a competition and they decided to hire a prominent project manager with a PhD in Design management and long experience from complex projects (hospital buildings). He had local attachment to the city. The project manager set up all necessary structure and systems to control and manage the cost, time and quality of the project. We will refer to him as OHM.
- High ambitions were a characteristic quality of this project from the start, and thus nothing occurred more natural to the local initiators than inviting for an open, international architect competition [5]. Goals included architectonic, functional, and sustainability within defined physical and economical frames. The jury, chaired by SAH, was highly competent and included representatives from regional and national cultural institutions as well as the owners. Secretary for the jury was appointed by Norwegian Association of Architects. This was still 2004.
- 2005 - The result of the design competition [6] was announced after evaluating 93 proposals. The jury said (p. 10) *"It has been of utmost importance for the Jury to find a project with a robust concept capable of weathering the storm of changes which – already in this competition phase – seem to be necessary and those which one knows will come."* Further they argued: *"One project stands alone, 69 TUTU, with its overall concept and its clear organization of all spatial groups, it demonstrates – even at this early schematic stage – a potential to accommodate changes without weakening its architecture."* The winning concept TUTU (Figure 1) was described: *"TUTU is based on the concept of a large wooden blanket, formed dynamically with large folds which creates the separation between the world of reality and the world of fantasy. The building captures the spirit of the place and the magic of spectacle in a simple, easily grasped, but at the same time grand, idea. The building will be Kristiansand's new landmark."*
- The winning architects emerged as a group of 4 independent Finnish architect students. They had never done a project before. This of course came as a shock to the jury, the project owners, PACS and the project management team. The solution was to formally establish a company and connect them to a local architect firm to make sure the necessary structure was in place. The process was obviously complex, resource demanding and controversial.
- The design process started, and the expert design team lead by OHM critically examined the concept to optimize choices and reduce area and cost without giving away important qualities or functions. At this point the solution was specified, and cost estimated in detail based on a competitive design-bid-build strategy. New cost estimations and uncertainty analysis was performed to make sure all options were tried, and opportunities utilized.

However, the cost was too high. No optimization process was able to get the cost within the financing limit and cost frame. Neither did the schedule seem to be realistic.

- 2006 – there was a strong conflict building in the project organization. On one side the owners, ultimately headed by EA supported by the board. They needed to keep up the ambitions and was not willing to give up any functions, reduce scope, or go in with more money. On the other side, the project manager supported by his team of experts – they concluded it was impossible to go through with the project. The conflict exploded in local media as OHM was interviewed and suggested the project was over-dimensioned and should be significantly cut and reorganized. Given the controversy of the situation OHM then chose to leave the project.
- A new prominent project manager was assigned to the project. He had solid technical background and a PhD in concrete constructions, as well as long experience in political and technically challenging projects. His position on the Kilden project was identical to the previous project manager – this project, with original cost frame and scope as currently defined is unrealistic. However, his ideas on how to attack the problem was different. We will refer to him as PES.
- Although the project had to operate within strict public sector regulations in terms of procurement, competition, contracts etc. there was room to maneuver within these regulations for alternative strategies. PES involved directly with potential suppliers to make sure he understood what would make the project attractive for them, and he involved directly with owners and other authorities to make sure the possibilities for further options, potential additional financing etc. was checked out. In fact, he did no alterations in the concept and did not suggest any major reductions. Instead he optimized technical solutions, buildability and worked strategically with the decision makers to gain their trust.
- 2007 - The financial crisis hit. Many contractors were tied up in old (well paid) contracts and was worried about the future. They were not going to price their bids low at this point in time.
- 2008 - The design and pre-project continued, the project team and the owners worked closely together finding new common ground for further development. The will to succeed was strong. A combination of feeling of crisis and creative suggestions resulted in that more regional and local owners involved in financing (only minor additional financing) but there were now six owners and financing parties. A garage facility originally within the budget was sold and raised additional funding. Owners was not able to find more financing. A revised plan and budget were set up. New political anchoring was secured [7], the project plans approved, and the budget added with less than 10% (excluding compensation for cost escalation in the planning and construction period).
- The project entered the market after having reduced the planned number of contracts from 42 to 13 – the biggest one expected approximately \$50 million. Originally four contenders for this contract, one left during the process and two others joined forces. The resulting bid was approximately \$70 million. Other bids for contracts confirmed the cost level. It was obvious to all: this could not succeed.
- The project manager convinced the owners to call off this tender and go for a negotiated process instead. This was highly controversial and disputed. Through all these discussions and controversies EA kept the parties aligned and communication open.
- Faced by the new threat of having to give up the grand façade and start reducing functionality, both users and architects was ready to accept alternative strategies and to give

their best in the upcoming process. The owners accepted a new strategy based on partnering-elements and collaborative dialogue.

- In short, the new procurement strategy was: What we want to achieve is fixed and the financing is fixed. A list of potential cuts and other measures was set up – this was a fallback position and defined a buffer against cost overrun. The project offered the construction companies a contract based on cost-reimbursement during the procurement stage. The project would contract only as much as it could finance and gave the construction companies options to add more from the list, if they could finance it with by finding reductions that did not reduce the functionality elsewhere. This way, the option was on the supplier side, not on the client side. The risk for the client side was reduced through not making decisions until last responsible moment. After all options were tested and decided, the competitors would recalculate their bids, and the competition for execution would conclude. *“It was all about creating leeway at the same time as reducing risk for all parties”* PES explained in one of the interviews.
- Through this process EA (project executive) and PES (project management) succeeded in establishing a common understanding that the process could realistically continue, although a proper management reserve was not available. This opened for contracts being signed and the construction to start.
- Each negotiated contract included what PES explained as “inverse margins”. For each contract users had identified items they could live without. These were identified in the contract as possible to cancel without a fee, until the last possible moment (a given date). This, combined with the project manager’s effort to develop a project culture always looking for possibilities to improve, reduce cost, and simplify through a systematic partnering process, created a positive drive to succeed, and the room that they needed to maneuver through emerging events. The arrangement worked well, and positively surprising most items was ordered and delivered in the end.
- 2008 – 2011 - Execution of the building project was highly successful, although not without drama and surprises. In terms of progress and cost control, risk management and quality assurance the project was exemplary. Based on structure and systems laid by the first PM and his team and followed up by a successful execution strategy by the second PM and his team. This is also a story well worth telling, but not the focus here.
- Hiring an operation manager that followed the planning, design and construction closely, to make it “his own” was a key to secure that the house would work as expected when it was finished, and the users took over. The philosophy was to “make sure there is someone that needs the house to work on day one”. It had to be an individual with experience and competence to understand what problems would arise. He was hired very early and came from the project manager’s technical team. We will refer to him as TE.
- Parallel to this, through the whole period, the establishment of an organization to fill Kilden with activities and realize the benefits. This was a part of the original idea and started even before the building project was formally decided. The different cultural institutions that formed basis for the project will somehow always end up as unsung heroes in this story. Their activities were the reason for starting the process, and the basis for creating the ripple effect for society in this region that makes it into a viable investment. These institutions (the theatre, symphonic orchestra and the opera) created a new and stronger identity by giving up their old identity and adapted to a new reality during this process. Doing this, while still making great art, is potentially the biggest achievement of all.

- Establishing an organization across different culture institutions was a part of the original idea that made it possible to get financial support. This was a main focus of EA and GG from the start. In the big picture they stand for the continuity in an otherwise dynamic and highly dramatic series of events.
- An interim organization was established early (Kilden Drift). This organization was the new “home” of the existing cultural institutions and the future user of the house. It was set to take over the house when it was finished. Well before the opening, in 2009, a Director/CEO was hired to lead the umbrella organization, later known as Kilden Teater og Konserthus for Sørlandet IKS (TKS IKS) (Kilden Theater and Concert Hall) owned by two municipalities and two regions. The new CEO had a strong name in the culture sector in his own right, well known through media and for previous engagement on international and national level. He had the experience and position to keep institutions with different goals and ambitions together through the transformation. We will refer to him as BB.
- The story about the planning and execution process culminated with a successful opening concert 6. January 2012.
- The success of Kilden was immediate. The visitors loved the shows and critics gave lots of positive feedback. Users got a building that works well for their needs and purposes. Behind the scenes only a few minor issues remained unsolved for some time (some acoustic doors probably the most notable – still a problem two years after the opening). A couple of years after the opening, areas that was taken out during the design process was added at the roof of the building for Kilden’s own money.

All in all, Kilden has a healthy economy, it has lived up to its high ambitions and serves its purpose and delivers value to society as planned. The users are still vital culture institutions, each one and even more together. New cultural productions and offers has reached new groups. Kilden is now established as a cultural hub in the region.

Fact box 2:

Kilden had 187 000 visitors in 2018, across 778 events. This is just above the average for the seven years of its history. The Theater had its best year with 74 000 visitors. Self-produced performances had its best year ever with 116 000 visitors. The visitors span all ages and includes regional tours.

Kilden had 211 permanent staff in 2018, but 269 full-time equivalents were delivered.
 Kilden had annual turnover of approximately \$30 million in 2018, up 4% from previous year.
 Kilden had an investment budget of \$1,25 million in 2018 and a positive equity capital.

Based on the Board of Directors annual report for 2018

Figure 3 Fact box - Outcome of the project.

The story about developing Kilden is a success story in contrast to many project management stories found in media and scientific literature. The point in presenting this story is not primarily to celebrate the success, but to explain the context for the learning about roles that follows. Had the individuals in those roles played their part differently, the process and outcome would not be the same.

The individuals and roles at play

Clarification of roles

The outcome described above is the result of many individuals that made a terrific effort in creating the opportunity and making it into a reality. The process ended up successful despite all the shocks it survived and all the controversy, conflict and uncertainty in decision making. This could only happen if the people involved 1) had defined roles and understanding of their positions and responsibilities, and 2) understood when to depart from these roles and what they could do, and could not do for that matter, when things did not follow the plan or obey the rules as they were defined. The following section will analyze the roles of the individuals, using the framework developed in the theory section. It will confirm some of the principles that are described in textbooks of project management, and to some extent challenge them too.

Generic roles are described in project management literature and widely researched, as indicated by examples in the theory introduction to this paper. Usually, one would find the roles and their organizational connections described in project documents and organizational charts. So is also the case here, an early version [4], and a late version [9], as well as in information from Kilden [13], [14]. Instead of reproducing the original charts, we choose to highlight some observations. Figure 2 indicates the distribution of key roles over time in the Kilden case. Most prominently we notice the shift of project managers during the process, and the continuity in the project represented by chairman of the steering committee, project executive and user coordinator. Further is indicated the “clear cut” shift between a project phase and the permanent culture organization. This was in no sense as clear cut as indicated here.



Figure 4 Generic roles and their distribution over the timeline.

Figure 2 only indicate the timeline and positions of formal roles defined. The purpose of the project was since formal acceptance in 2004 the establishment of a new culture institution that included previous ones and resided in a new physical building that marked the city and region as an attractive and updated, healthy developing place to live. The financial model⁷ did not allow for the same organization to build and use the building – therefor a clear cut and change of name and organizational form was needed upon entering the operational phase. Reality was that the CEO of Kilden was hired to merge the cultural institutions in 2009, and the technical operations manager was hired even earlier. Both following the new building into the new organization and the permanent business situation that followed the opening. These signs of continuity are well worth

⁷ The financial model and the process of financing was a big issue in this project. There were several challenging situations in this process too. Unfortunately, the space does not allow for going into detail. Certainly, an issue for more analysis and discussion in its on right.

noticing for future projects. All too often the handover does represent a huge loss of knowledge and thus gives a lot of extra problems for the new organization.

The shift of project managers is also worth mentioning more in detail. The profile of the two individuals that had the role do not fit the description usually presented in textbooks about project management: PM1 was responsible in an early stage. At feasibility study and early design stages PM1 did not focus the strategic and political issues – he left this to the Chairman and Executive. His role was to secure structure and rigidity to the project. PM2 expressed in one of his interviews that the project would never have succeeded without the rigid structures established in the beginning. PM2 came in at a stage where execution was coming closer. Textbooks would typically describe the role at this stage as one of planning and control. PM2 was nowhere near that. He developed a role as mediator, communicator and negotiator of terms. This should be an eyeopener for all future project managers: Following the recipe from textbooks can only take you so far. Reality out there is complex, and the textbook approach will only be adequate in simple cases. However, this does not mean that textbook approaches are not helpful. On the contrary – it is also a reminder that project managers must never become so “strategy-focused” that they forget the basics of managing the project.

In the project perspective, the roles as Chairman of the Steering committee and Project Executive are the most strategic ones. They represent the owners (investors, financing parties) in different ways. To further clarify these roles and the relationship between them Figure 3 illustrates key roles in the Kilden case. The figure lends symbolism developed by Klakegg (2015) to clarify roles and positions.

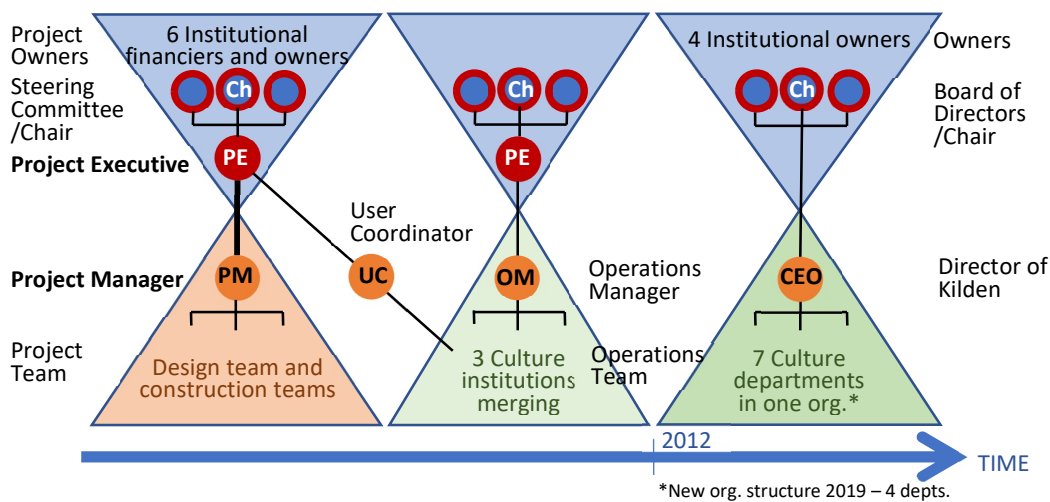


Figure 3 Relationships between roles in Kilden case at two stages (before and after 2012).

Figure 3 is not a traditional organizational chart. It is developed to clarify roles and their relations, not least in terms of positioning on the owner side (client) and operational side (supplier). Originally a major point was defining a clear division and role understanding between being the responsible individual on the owner side (project executive) and on the operational side (project manager). Circles in Figure 3 symbolize individual persons, not generic roles.

The project executive is defined in the Prince2 framework (Axelos 2017) as: “The individual with overall responsibility for ensuring that a project meets its objectives and delivers the projected

benefits. The individual should ensure that the project maintains its business focus, that it has clear authority, and that the work, including risks, is actively managed.” This definition fits well here. Prince2 further suggests that the executive is the Chair of the project board (here Steering Committee), but this is not normally the case in Norway. Neither would it be the same role (they may be held by the same individual in some cases).

As indicated in the theory section, other sources often refer to the Project Executive as “the project owner” – this is not correct, as Figure 3 clearly illustrates. Owners are investors that takes the ultimate risk in financing the initiative and will be owning the asset after it is built. Steering committee consist of representatives for the owners and in this case also financing parties and user institutions. Steering committee is the arena for common strategic decision making about the project. The Chairman of the Steering Committee is undoubtedly an important figure, chosen to lead the committee and act as its speaker. Ultimately the person that has to come up with the strategic decisions and financing in this case.

“Project Sponsor” is another word used frequently for a key role, but the word unfortunately has several different definitions. The definition of a sponsor used in ICT-projects focus the role as financing party. ITIL (Information Technology Infrastructure Library) gives a dominant example (Axelos 2019): *“Sponsor: A person who authorizes budget for service consumption. Can also be used to describe an organization or individual that provides financial or other support for an initiative”*. This definition is a mix with the real owner role but note that it does not say “project sponsor” – rather it indicates connection to services. Unfortunately, this use of the word has entered project management sphere as “project sponsor”.

To avoid such confusion, in this paper we use the term Project Executive as the one person appointed by the owners (by the Steering Committee) to be responsible for following the project closely and be accountable for it. The executive function as a key contact point between the owners and the operational resources managed and lead by the project manager. The project is completely dependent on the communication and collaboration between these two individuals, which makes it into the most critical link in the project (Klakegg 2015).

Here we define the executive (the sponsor) as the owner’s representative, the advanced position on the owner side (upper triangle in Figure 4). Scibi and Lee (2015) uses a phrase that fits well here: *“The project sponsor is an individual (often a manager or executive) with overall accountability for the project”*.

Other roles that need a description is User Coordinator. This is not a regular defined role in project management (it is not mentioned in any of the major frameworks like PMBoK, Prince2 etc.). It is, however, an important and common role in construction projects. It is the one link that secure efficient and effective communication between the part of the project organization involved in developing the technical solution (lower left triangle in Figure 4) and those understanding the business and needs of the users – in this case the artists and cultural institutions (lower center and right hand triangle in Figure 4). The user coordinator is vital in identifying and documenting the user requirements.

On the user side during the late project stages, the Operations Manager is head of a team heavily involved in acceptance activities and a key role in following up any technical requirements. This role is responsible for all technical functions of the building. In the permanent situation of Kilden, the Operations Manager (“Technical Chief”) is placed in a staff position under the CEO (not shown in Figure 4).

After 2012, the project is terminated, and the permanent situation is indicated on the right-hand side in Figure 3. In this situation role structures change. There is no longer a project executive and project manager, but the position as head of operations is taken by the CEO of Kilden. As mentioned before, he had already worked with the merger for more than two years at this point in time. From the formal take over, this role is the key to all business aspects of Kilden.

Analysis of the roles against theoretical framework

The above discussion and descriptions of roles is an attempt to clarify some aspects concerning roles and the words used to describe them in project management literature. As is clear from the above, this is not clear cut and would benefit from a more systematic analysis. This is what comes in the following. We will use the framework described by Gemünden, Salomo and Hölzle (2007) as presented in Table 1. It was developed for complex product development but can be used for this project as well. Table 2 includes comments on the roles defined by Gemünden et al. as found in the Kilden case. The analysis is limited to the project stages and does not include the permanent organization Kilden (TKS IKS) after 2012.

Table 2 Kilden case observations concerning roles defined by Gemünden et al. (2007)

| Characteristic | Operationalization |
|--|--|
| Power promotor | The key person supports the project from a higher hierarchical level. Base: Hierarchical rank of the key person. |
| Kilden case: | The Chair of Steering Committee (SAH) was positioned in a power promotor position. However, also the Project Executive (EA) was positioned as a power promotor in relation to other roles and positions as the CEO of the single purpose vehicle PACS – the formal client of all parties delivering services to the project. |
| Expert promotor | The key person promotes the project by his/her high technological know-how. Base: high technological know-how. |
| Kilden case: | This role is complicated to analyze because all key individuals were selected due to their specific competences. This is probably an aspect where the framework for innovative product development is less adapted to a project. However, some indicative observations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Project Executive (EA) was chosen because of his intimate knowledge of relevant planning-, financing and decision-making processes. Towards the owners and the public, he was an expert promotor in this sense. • The User Coordinator (GG) was the translator and coordinator between the users (artists) and the people in design and construction (technical). However, based on interviews with PM1 and PM2 he was closer to the artist side than the technical and thus did not have this position in the design organization. • CEO Kilden (BB) was selected because he was considered international and national capacity and respected expert in the culture sector. He used this position to merge cultural institutions that had little tradition for collaboration. |
| Process promotor | The key person knows the organizational processes and campaigns for the smooth process of the project. The key person acts as link between decision makers and experts. Base: knowledge of organizational processes. |
| Kilden case: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Project Executive (EA) had intimate knowledge of relevant planning-, financing and decision-making processes. He made the crucial decisions possible, was instrumental in the financing initiative and the one individual that stood up as the continuity that the project needed to reach the goals. He was THE process promotor. • Project Manager 2 (PES) did show strong signs of being a process promotor with his strong focus on dialogue and partnering, building trust with owners, financing institutions and potential suppliers. |
| Technology-related relationship promotor | The key person has good relationships with important external cooperation partners. The key person supports the search for external cooperation partners, information exchange with cooperation partners and the collaboration with external partners. Base: External relations to relevant parties. |
| Kilden case: | A quite complicated role as “technology” may not fit in this project context. It has to be interpreted wider. The role was divided between: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Chair (SAH) was a relationship promotor towards and between owners, financial institutions and regulators. • The Executive (EA) also used his position to be a strong relationship promotor. He had almost 360° specter of relations to handle, including owners and financing. |
| Market-related relationship promotor | The key person promotes the project by his/her market-related know-how. Base: high degree of market-related know-how. |
| Kilden case: | It is important to note that this role may be focused on the market for the new product (as is typical in the product development case) and focused on the supplier market, which was more prominent in the Kilden case. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Executive (EA) had this position most prominently in the start of the process. • Project manager 2 (PES) was the one that demonstrated this position most clearly. He used all his external relations and actively promoted the possibilities in this project to attract potential suppliers to the project. • The CEO Kilden took a market related relationship promotor role on the cultural side but must share this position with the three cultural institutions and their leaders too. |
| Leadership experience of the project leader | Experience in leading previous projects. |
| Kilden case: | Both consecutive project managers had strong records of long and relevant experience. PM1 (OHM) had leadership experience in hospital design and public sector development. PM2 (PES) had leadership experience in oil and gas, defense and private sector. |

The message from Table 2 is that it is not easy to fit the roles exactly into the analytical framework. The framework is developed for complex product development and not perfectly aligned with the characteristics of this project. It is still close enough to make useful and interesting observations about construction projects and organization development.

There are several overlaps between the roles. Notably between the process promotor role and the two relationship promotor roles. Process is basically about knowing the processes and the people involved in them, useful to promote facts and the optimal assumptions and preconditions to make a favorable outcome of the decision possible. Technology related relationship promotor uses the same type of knowledge and understanding to attract the necessary information, knowledge and resources to the project. Market related relationship promotor does the same, whether it is approaching potential bidders in the market for the project or communicating with the users of culture events and adventures.

Expert promotor role is difficult in itself, given that this is a complex project with many different areas of expertise – it includes 1000's of products where a product development would focus one – even when it is technically complex and may need contribution from many different technologies. Each special supplier had their own experts that promoted specific solutions. Could they be viewed as expert promotors? The project context raises the question – what should be promoted in this role. A critical perspective would suggest it is not about promoting specific solutions, so the experts from supplier companies are not relevant here. It is about promoting the project as such. The two fundamental parts of this project was to gather all cultural institutions 1) in one place, a new building, and 2) within one organization. This interpretation leaves the role to be filled by the Project Executive (through PACS) and the CEO Kilden (when working through Kilden Drift AS before the opening), and with the User Coordinator as a translating and bridging function. One could easily add this role to the Chair of the Steering committee too, as he was a keen promoter of the project as a development initiative for the region, paired with other initiatives to secure better roads and strengthen the regional university etc. However, SAH took care of this in his position as Power promotor, as he was in fact banker and not expert in either the technical or cultural sides of this initiative to develop society.

In the Kilden case there was also indications that the roles may be found on different levels. For example the power promotor role has different dimensions in it that makes the role recognizable on several organizational levels. Chair of Steering Committee has a different base for his power than the CEO of PACS and the CEO of Kilden. Still, they can all fit the definition of a power promotor in different settings and on different levels. This opens for discussions that might be more natural to analyze using Agency theory (Eisenhardt 1989), but we will not go down that road in this paper. The most prominent powerplay in the story of Kilden is found in the period of time that lead to PM1's exit from the project. The conflicting strategies proposed by PM1 in the strive to reduce cost when the project was shown to be unrealistic illustrates aspects of this role. The Project Executive was first in line to handle the suggestions from the design team to reduce the size to reduce cost. EA had a position that gave him hierarchical mandate (power) to handle the conflict. He strongly promoted the fundamental view that the project needed to keep its original ambitions to be relevant enough to achieve the goals. The question did not have to be elevated to the Steering Committee and the Chair. However, this was on the optional safety valve had not PM1 chosen to leave the project.

Similarly, the role as process promotor can be understood on several levels, just like levels in an organizational chart. What kind of processes, and what is to be promoted? Here the relationship between the Executive and PM2 is of particular interest. EA was undoubtedly the big process promoter throughout the whole project in terms of keeping relevant external parties supporting the

project and finding ways that lead to favorable decisions at a high level in the project. He was a master of understanding what was important to the decision makers. He had been working with municipal administration and political processes for several decades and has good contacts also on national level. His written applications, proposals and reports very often hit the notes with the decision makers. But when it came to the communication with construction companies and potential bidders, technical experts and solution providers, the project manager needed to take the lead. This is only natural as long as the questions at hand is within the PMs mandate and sphere of expertise and influence. With PM2 this went beyond what would normally be regarded as the project manager's responsibility. PES understood from the start when he entered the project that he would have to build trust with the owners, influence the conditions and develop a completely different approach. He also had the competence, relations and political know-how to do so.

As indicated above, none of the roles were only filled by one specific individual in practice. Figure 4 illustrates this. The symbols indicate which individual was formally positioned to fill the different promotor roles. Symbols also indicate which individuals exert real influence in this promotor role. The diameter of this circle indicates subjectively⁸ the range or importance of that influence. The really important issue in this illustration is probably the result that shows individuals outside the formal positions (with a limited mandate to do so) can have tremendous influence in the process as promoters.

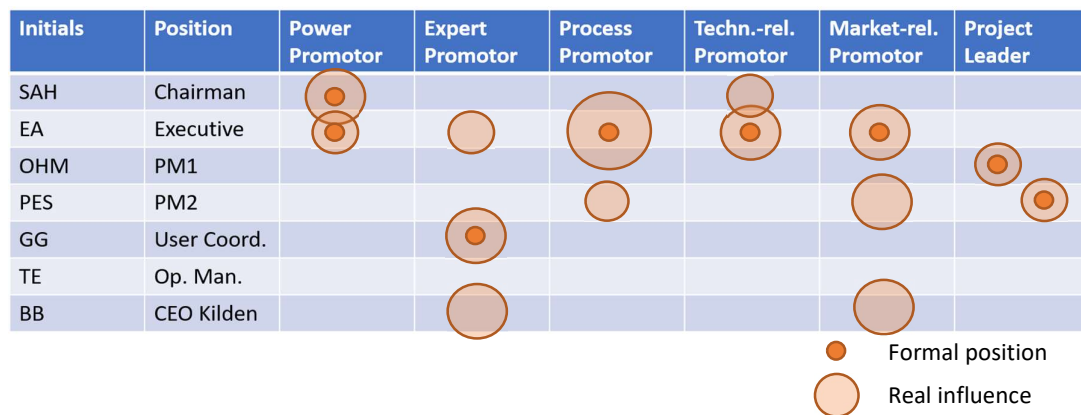


Figure 4 Individuals with formal roles and real influence as promoters in Kilden

Again, it is relevant to remind readers that the analysis in Figure 4 only covers the project period between 2002 and 2012 – not the period before the formal establishment of KCH (with Chairman and Executive), and not after the permanent organization (TKS IKS) took over.

The comments related to Table 2 above is also explanations to the influence indicated in Figure 4. As indicated in the text, there are some additional individuals that could be represented on this chart, but this would only complicate the picture.

Further comments to Figure 4: For the position as Power promotor, we have noted above that this was formalized at two levels. The interpretation as promotor stops at the level of the Executive, even if obviously project managers and operations managers also have formal power through their mandates. They have power in other roles – not as promoters.

⁸ Assessed by the author, no formal measurement is established.

One interesting observation in this case story is the conflict that culminated when the first project manager (PM1) chose to leave the project. He challenged the owners (represented by the power promoters and the whole Steering group) to change strategy and accept a reduced solution to keep the cost down. He lost this battle, and thus left without making a mark as promotor. If he had succeeded, he would be marked with a significant real influence as promotor in Figure 4.

The contrast to the second project manager (PM2) is also noteworthy. PM2 succeeded in making a significant mark as promotor when he came in. He was a significant process promotor beyond what his mandate as project manager calls for. More significantly, he was an important promotor in the market-related sense. He used all his connections and influence to make sure the project should be attractive to suppliers in relevant categories and this way influenced the project's external conditions. This was instrumental in achieving success as a project manager but went beyond normal limitations for this role – he acted as promotor, in close dialogue with the Executive and the owners.

Another interesting observation is the role of CEO Kilden – a position that did not yet exist – but the individual going to hold this position for the first four years of the new organizations life, started more than two years earlier to work with merging three cultural institutions (the theatre, the symphonic orchestra and the opera) into what would be an umbrella organization for all culture activities and operations going on in the new building. His work included market related promotion of the new cultural events and potential in the new collective institution. This was very important, given that the success of establishing this organization was held to be even more challenging and important than the new building. In the eyes of the media and general public, it is fair to say that the building project was the part that drawn most attention.

This leads also to the role as expert promotor. This project had a lot of experts – many of them technical experts promoting the latest and most advanced technical equipment and systems for the new cultural arena. This is not the kind of experts we talk about here. Neither do we look at the many experts in the project management team – most of them highly qualified and very talented in their fields. We are, again, talking about the one thing that made the Kilden project so unique; it should not only build a new astonishing building, but also develop a new and quite unique culture institution. The expert promotors were experts related to the culture activity associated with the new institution. Thus, we must focus the User Coordinator which formally was an expert promotor and had a lot of influence, but again the future CEO Kilden was a central figure, not least due to his established reputation and strong cultural profile in the eyes of most stakeholders.

The Executive was also an expert promotor in the local political sphere. Not through acting as spokesperson or in political debates, but through routing the right information to the right political processes at the right time – in other words in combination with his most prominent role – as THE process promotor. It is hard to make a distinct delineation between the two roles in his case. He also had a position as Technology related promotor, a role with also was partly covered by the Chair. Remember, this role was not primarily about technology in the context of Kilden – it was about access to information and resources of other kinds.

Another question is whether the patterns over time was changing and whether this could have influence on the result. To study this, we will take a closer look at the Executive. Figure 5 draws a subjective picture that gives an impression of what roles the Executive had to play over the 10-year period the project existed. This picture is by no means exact, and the details are excluded. The development is commented on below.

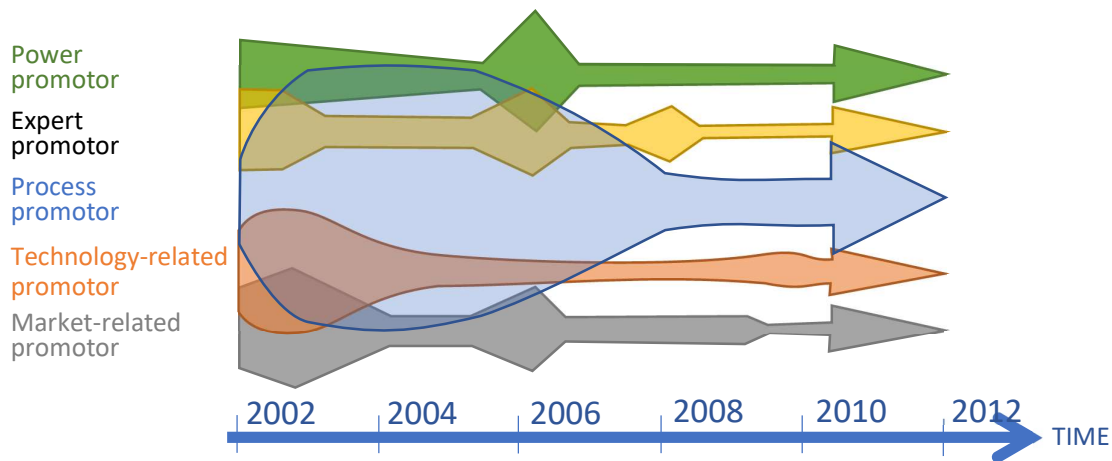


Figure 5 Roles played over time by one man in particular (The Project Executive)

The picture shows clearly that it was not an evenly distributed share of each role at any point in time, and each role changed, both in content, form and intensity over the timeline. This picture also indicates some of the most notable shifts and conflicting periods over the lifecycle of this project.

From the beginning, there was only two roles in this game included in the analysis here: The newly established company had a board (known here as the Steering Committee) and the Chair had one key task: To get hold of the one man with competence, experience and contacts to do it. He hired EA as Executive, and this is where the chart in Figure 6 starts.

From the start EA had all roles and the one that soon stood out as the dominant one was the role as process promotor. He was chosen for this task due to his qualifications to be an effective process promotor. This role dominated as long as it was necessary to secure the right direction and progress of the development. Then the development allowed it to become less dominant, as PM2 took an active share in this promoter role following his new execution strategy in 2007.

The power promotor role was shared between Chair and Executive (although on different levels). This role was most prominent in the period when the concept was challenged by PM1 and his design team. At this stage EA played a vital power promoter role and won. The history would have been very different with another outcome. Apart from this period EA played the power promoter role quietly and with little visibility. The Chair had a more visible position in his power role.

The role as expert promoter was important for EA in each of the three periods when the concept was challenged. First from the start when it was vital to convince everyone that this was the right thing for this city, the region, and society at large. Next, to convince the concept and size of the building was still the right thing after using power promotion to keep the concept unchanged in 2006. And finally, in the period where the architectural concept was challenged again due to financial reasons and they had to consider dropping the grand façade to make it realistic. In these periods new and old stakeholders needed to be convinced that the project was going the right way and still was worth investing in.

The role as technology related promotor, in the meaning chosen here, focused on getting information and resources to secure that the project could be developed further. This role was distinctly most intense in the start, but then turned into a matter of consistency and continuity as the project developed further. One particularly important aspect of EA's role was his ability to get the best people and the right resources to help the project forward. This is addressed in the role as

technology-related promoter. The role was revitalized towards the end of the project to make sure the new cultural institution came to a good start, technically and financially.

Finally, some comments on the role as market-related promoter. This role was important to EA in the beginning, as it was vital to convince the culture establishment and politicians that this was the right thing to do. EA was not the culture expert at all, and this led to hiring another very important person early – the former theater director as user coordinator. This reduced this role for EA. He would have to act in this role again in the 2006 crisis, but not so much in the 2007 crisis as the simplification of the façade would not have reduced the cultural qualities, only the architectural aspects were at play. Later, when the future CEO Kilden came onboard towards the end of 2009, EA reduced this role to a minimum.

Concluding remarks and learning points

The idea from the beginning was to write a colorful story that highlights the fact that it is individuals, real people with all their strengths and weaknesses, that makes good projects (as well as bad ones of course). Normally the texts on project management focus only generic roles and suppress the individual aspects. Here, some individual aspects are taken into the light, and some of the colors are shining. Not all, since this material was much too comprehensive to cover in full detail. Obviously, this is not the whole truth about Kilden. Many details are left out. There are much more to this story than there is room for here.

The start of the paper includes a brief theory section that places this story in the terrain of project governance (primarily) and project management (secondary). The theory section concludes with an analytical framework by Gemünden, Salomo and Hölzle (2007) that includes five distinct promoter roles that explain the role as “project owner”, “project sponsor” and “project executive” better than most other sources. Unfortunately, this framework is not well known in the project management community.

The story about Kilden Performing Arts Centre is, on the surface of it, a success story about developing and building a new culture institution in a Norwegian city. The project was delivered with all functionalities, on time and just slightly over budget in October 2011. The outcome has proved to be a great success and has delivered both new business opportunities, strengthened social infrastructure, international acclamations for architecture and acoustics, and great cultural experiences for spectators. All major goals are achieved.

We set out to investigate three questions, and the first one about how the role of project executive is performed in real life is answered through the description of the story. Answer to the second question about interactions between the project executive and the project manager is also found there. This leaves the third question about learning points to be answered here.

This paper has gone behind this success story and shown that this project had lots of challenges and could have become a failure in many different ways, had people acted differently, and had events played out differently. The intention was to highlight the

different roles that people play in governing a large, complex project like this, and not least to show more in detail how individuals give this game different qualities and colors. We learned that:

- Project Manager competence profiles over the project period did not follow typical “textbook best practice”. The first PM was a master of structure and developed systems and management frameworks that was vital in controlling cost, time and quality. This is a typical execution role of project management, although it was in the early phases. The second project manager was a political player that understood how to pave the way for success by challenging on a strategic and political level. This is a typical early phase project manager profile, although this was actually in the execution phase. The learning point is following textbooks can only take you so far. The role as project manager (and any other role) need to be developed to fit the project (goals), the situation (context), and not least the individual that shall fill the role in real life.
- The role as project executive/project sponsor is key to success in any project. The Kilden case has proven this beyond doubt. We have studied in-debt and over time how the Executive in this case was the personification of the project itself, without taking any of the most visible positions in the project. EA made the necessary decisions possible, he promoted the concept to all relevant stakeholders, and he represented continuity whenever there was turmoil in the project. Challenges that hit the project, externally or internally, was handled professionally and effectively from start to end. In interviews he shared his experiences, good and bad, and made clear he had also made mistakes and had his doubts at times.
- We have also learned about the importance of persistent owners over time. There was no doubt about the facts on the table in the critical period in 2006-07. The project was too expensive and unrealistic with the premises and assumptions made at the time. There was a long list of good arguments to reduce the ambitions and build something smaller, more affordable. The owners did a lot of initiatives to make the concept even more attractive for financing but failed in increasing funding significantly. Still they stood firm with the plans. This initiative was big enough and important enough to bleed for. Luckily, they did not have to, as the new execution strategy was successful and delivered more than could be expected. For this they are in debt to PM2.
- This leads to a learning point about the influence of crisis on the development and execution process of a project. In most cases a crisis like the ones in 2006 and 2007 would be negative for the project (it will obviously be negative to some parties). In the bigger picture, these challenges and turmoil that followed in their trail before solutions was found was a situational parameter that stimulated creativity, innovation and persistence in the people involved and the project organization. Rarely has a project organization been so strong as the one that came out of these critical situations. As explained by one of the interviewees: *“I have always been frustrated at some point in later projects – why can we never seem to recreate the feeling and the culture we had back then”*.

- Finally, a learning point about the importance of visionary, ambitious objectives. With less ambitions, there would have been less funding from the start. The unique ambition to merge the cultural institutions were instrumental in triggering national funding. The cause must be important enough to make it worth fighting for. This stimulates creativity and persistence like we have seen here. And the cause must be a common, shared one. These results are created when good forces pull in the same direction. Yes, there was critical voices in media and locally that felt this was not the best way to spend limited cultural budgets, but the vision was compelling enough to convince both politicians, professionals and most of the general public. It is not possible to hit high if you aim low. Based on the feedback on cultural events in Kilden and the remaining high level of visitors, it seems clear that the vision and ambitions are met, and the purpose of the project is fulfilled.

This story and the learning points extracted here illustrate that textbooks need to be supplemented with rich real-life examples to help professionals understand how to handle the dynamics and complexity of real life. More examples are needed. Not least, we need more research into the influence of the actual individuals involved in projects through different roles and positions.

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The author would like to dedicate this paper to EA, one man in particular has learnt this author a lot about the role as Executive. This paper is an attempt to share some of this with a wider audience.

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Appendix A: List of project documents used here

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- [2] Søknad om tilskudd (2003)* Application for financing.
- [3] Bystyrevedtak (2003)* Political decision in City Council.
- [4] Prosjektdokumentasjon (2004)* Project documentation.
- [5] Arkitektkonkurransen (2004) Invitation to international design competition for new performing arts center.
- [6] Evaluering av arkitektkonkurransen (2005) Evaluation of the international design competition.
- [7] Bystyrevedtak (2008)* New political decision in City Council.

- [8] Kravdokumentet (2009)* Requirements from the project owner/steering committee.
- [9] Styringsdokument (2010)* Steering document (updated several times during the project).
- [10] Rapport til KD (2012)* Report to Department of Culture from the Kilden project.
- [11] Faktaark (2012)* Fact sheet from the project organization.
- [12] Sluttrapport (2012)* Final report from the project organization.
- [13] Brosjyre (2012) Information brochure from Kilden Performing Arts Center.
- [14] Brosjyre (2018) Information brochure from Kilden Performing Arts Center.
- [15] Årsmelding Kilden 2018 (2019)* Yearly report from the Board of Directors for 2018.

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