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COLLECTIVE VISIBILITY, CONCENTRATED LABOR

Pre-Legitimacy Labor under Fragmented Cultural Governance

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Abstract: Cultural organizations operating in fragmented governance environments must sustain legitimacy across multiple evaluative audiences simultaneously. This thesis specifies pre-legitimacy labor as a previously untheorized layer of organizational activity through which collaborative configurations remain visible, recognizable and intelligible enough to be evaluated at all. While legitimacy work scholarship has examined how organizations shape evaluations, the work that sustains the conditions under which evaluation can occur has remained largely unexamined. Drawing on fifteen semi-structured interviews across two recurring collaborative cultural initiatives within Swedish cultural governance, the study employs an abductive, interpretive design to analyze how pre-legitimacy labor is enacted, how it varies across collaborative contexts, and how responsibility for sustaining it is distributed. Three contributions are advanced. First, pre-legitimacy labor is specified as a layer prior to legitimacy work, sustaining evaluability rather than shaping specific judgments. Second, translation work is shown to be a positional phenomenon varying by dominant evaluative interface: vertical and defensive where structural dependence is acute, horizontal and coordinative where established networks reduce vulnerability. Third, a fragility loop is identified in which pre-legitimacy labor is non-excludable but unevenly borne, concentrating among structurally dependent actors and generating latent fragility precisely when collaborative configurations appear most established. For practitioners and policymakers, these findings identify specific intervention points where recognizing and resourcing infrastructural labor can reduce sustainability risks in collaborative cultural governance.

Keywords
Pre-legitimacy Labor; Legitimacy Work; Collaborative Governance; Fragmented Governance; Cultural Organizations; Evaluability

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For those who carry the invisible work behind visible outcomes.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Fragmented Governance and Legitimacy Pressures

Cultural institutions operate in governance environments where authority is dispersed across national agencies, municipalities, regional actors and civil society organizations. This produces heterogeneous and at times contradictory expectations about what cultural organizations should deliver and how their work should be justified (Holden, 2006). Unlike sectors governed primarily through market performance or centralized regulation, cultural governance relies heavily on symbolic evaluation and public justification. As a result, legitimacy becomes a recurrent organizational concern rather than a stable background condition (Belfiore & Bennett, 2008; Gray, 2015).

At the same time, cultural institutions are increasingly assessed according to criteria that extend beyond artistic excellence to include social cohesion, inclusion, economic development and sustainability. These expectations are reflected in cultural policy frameworks and funding practices that link cultural activity to broader societal objectives, including references to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (UNESCO, 2020). The outcome is an evaluative environment in which cultural actors must navigate multiple, partially overlapping frameworks of assessment.

Since evaluative authority is distributed across multiple levels and organizations, legitimacy cannot be secured through alignment with a single dominant evaluator. Instead, cultural institutions must respond to the priorities of different audiences, including public funders, regional and municipal bodies, private foundations, peer institutions and publics, whose criteria may only partially converge (Suchman, 1995; Suddaby et al., 2017).

This fragmented evaluative environment constitutes a governance challenge: legitimacy becomes the mechanism through which organizations secure their position within a field where no single authority structure dominates (Ansell & Gash, 2007). In such contexts, legitimacy becomes a governance mechanism.

Swedish cultural governance illustrates these conditions with particular clarity. The *kultursamverkansmodellen* (the regional cultural collaboration model), currently under active reform (SOU, 2023), distributes authority across national agencies, regional bodies administering *kulturplaner* (regional cultural plans) and municipalities. State cultural expenditure reached 9.1 billion kronor in 2024 but represents a real-terms decline of 2.2 percent when adjusted for inflation, with support for regional cultural activities specifically decreasing (Kulturrådet, 2024). Smaller cultural organizations consequently face not only resource scarcity but intensifying evaluative pressure across multiple, non-aligned governance levels. These are the conditions this thesis examines empirically.

Under these conditions, legitimacy is best understood as a relational and contested accomplishment. Cultural institutions must sustain their position not only through artistic excellence but through ongoing organizational work that keeps activities visible and intelligible enough to be assessed across dispersed evaluative contexts. This becomes particularly important in collaborative arrangements. Here, legitimacy is not anchored in a single organization but depends on the continued coherence and recognizability of a multi-actor configuration.

This thesis operates primarily at the level of the collaborative configuration and the organizations within it, examining how actors enact and sustain legitimacy through shared arrangements. While recognizing that field-level governance shapes the conditions under which cultural actors operate, the analysis focuses on how organizations navigate and sustain their position within fragmented governance environments through collaborative configurations and on what work sustaining those configurations requires.

1.2 Collaboration as Organizational Response and Legitimacy Challenge

Within fragmented evaluative environments, collaboration has emerged as a prominent organizational response. Collaborative cultural initiatives bring together institutions, curators and independent actors under shared platforms, programmes, or temporal frameworks. Such arrangements can enable actors to pool limited capacities, coordinate

public presence and engage collectively with multiple evaluative audiences (Bryson et al., 2006).

Prior research suggests that collaboration can influence legitimacy through several mechanisms. Collaborative arrangements may signal alignment and credibility to external audiences (Castelló et al., 2016), generate mutual recognition among partners through repeated interaction (Human & Provan, 2000) and build procedural credibility through inclusive and transparent governance practices (Mosley & Wong, 2021). For organizations that struggle to secure recognition independently, participation in a recognized collaborative initiative may also provide access to networks and visibility that would be difficult to achieve in isolation.

Collaboration also introduces a distinct legitimacy challenge. When recognition attaches to a multi-actor configuration rather than a single organization, it becomes less clear how the configuration remains stable and assessable over time. Collaborative arrangements must remain coherent, intelligible and continuously present in order to be evaluated at all. Yet, visibility and coordination cannot be assumed but must be actively organized and sustained across dispersed actors.

While existing research has examined how collaboration may shape legitimacy outcomes, less attention has been paid to the ongoing work through which collaborative initiatives remain visible and intelligible enough to be assessed in the first place. This gap motivates the present study.

1.3 Legitimacy Beyond Judgment: From Evaluation to Organizational Work

Classic legitimacy theory conceptualizes legitimacy primarily as an audience-dependent judgment: a generalized perception that an organization's actions are appropriate, desirable, or taken for granted within a socially constructed system of norms and beliefs (Suchman, 1995; Bitektine, 2011). From this perspective, legitimacy is something organizations receive, or fail to receive, through processes of external evaluation.

A practice-oriented strand of scholarship has challenged this outcome-oriented view by emphasizing legitimacy as an ongoing organizational accomplishment rather than a

static verdict (Zilber, 2006; Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Suddaby et al., 2017). This work foregrounds the practices through which organizations actively construct and maintain legitimacy over time, particularly in contexts characterized by ambiguity, heterogeneity and institutional instability. However, this scholarship has primarily examined how organizations shape evaluations through symbolic alignment and strategic framing, paying less attention to the labor required to sustain the conditions under which such judgments can occur at all.

1.4 Research Gap and Contribution

Despite growing attention to legitimacy as organizational work, less is known about the labor required to sustain the conditions under which evaluation can occur at all, particularly in collaborative configurations where visibility and coherence cannot be assumed. This thesis specifies pre-legitimacy labor[1]: the continuous, infrastructural work through which collaborative configurations remain visible, recognizable and intelligible enough to be evaluated at all. The concept names an organizational layer that legitimacy theory has treated as a background condition rather than as an object of work.

Rather than examining whether collaborations are ultimately judged as legitimate, the thesis focuses on how actors maintain the pre-evaluative conditions that make such judgments possible. Empirically, it shows how this labor is enacted through collaboration, how it varies across institutional contexts and how responsibility for sustaining these conditions is unevenly distributed among participating actors.

While the analysis is grounded in Swedish cultural governance, the conditions it specifies are not field-specific. Fragmented evaluative authority, distributed legitimacy across configurations and resource scarcity characterize a broad range of collaborative organizational arrangements, including public-private partnerships, platform ecosystems and multi-partner strategic alliances.

[1] Throughout this thesis, the terms 'work' and 'labor' are used in related but distinct ways. 'Work' follows the established usage in legitimacy work and institutional work scholarship, where it refers to purposive organizational activity. 'Labor' is used when the analysis foregrounds the burden and distributional dimensions of that activity; what it costs and who bears that cost. The central concept is named 'pre-legitimacy labor' rather than 'pre-legitimacy work' because the thesis's core argument concerns how that burden is unevenly distributed across participating actors.

Research Questions

Building on this theoretical positioning, the study is guided by the following research question:

> *How do cultural organizations enact and maintain legitimacy through collaborative configurations in fragmented fields?*

To structure the analysis and clarify the specific dimensions of legitimacy work under investigation, the main question is elaborated through three sub-questions:

1. *What organizational practices constitute the work of enacting and maintaining legitimacy within collaborative cultural initiatives?*
2. *How does this legitimacy work vary across different collaborative contexts and field positions?*
3. *How is the responsibility for sustaining legitimacy distributed among participating actors within collaborative configurations?*

Together, these questions allow the thesis to analyze legitimacy as an ongoing, situated form of organizational work. Rather than assessing legitimacy outcomes, the study focuses on the practices, variations and distributional dynamics through which collaborative cultural initiatives remain available for evaluation in fragmented governance environments.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Foundations of Institutional Legitimacy

Institutional legitimacy refers to the generalized perception that an organization's actions are desirable, proper, or appropriate within a socially constructed system of norms and values (Suchman, 1995). Legitimacy is not an objective attribute but a social judgment formed by relevant audiences.

More recent work conceptualizes legitimacy as a judgment-based and processual phenomenon rather than a stable condition. Bitektine and Haack (2015) argue that legitimacy emerges through ongoing evaluative processes in which multiple audiences assess organizational actions according to heterogeneous criteria. Legitimacy may therefore vary across audiences such as peers, funders, policymakers and publics and must be continuously maintained rather than assumed.

This processual understanding has prompted scholars to examine legitimacy not only as an outcome of audience judgment but as something organizations actively work to construct and maintain (Zilber, 2006; Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). However, legitimacy work scholarship has tended to focus on practices aimed at influencing evaluations, often treating the organizational object being evaluated as already present and coherent. In collaborative configurations, that object itself must be maintained as visible, recognizable and intelligible before evaluation can occur.

Building on this perspective, legitimacy research increasingly emphasizes relational and collective dimensions, with legitimacy constructed through participation in shared configurations rather than residing solely within individual organizations (Thomas & Ritala, 2022). This understanding frames legitimacy as an audience-dependent, processual and relational accomplishment requiring ongoing organizational work.

2.2 Collaboration as a Legitimacy-Bearing Arrangement

Research on collaboration suggests that inter-organizational arrangements can play a central role in how legitimacy is constructed, evaluated and stabilized, particularly in fields characterized by uncertainty and symbolic valuation. Rather than treating

collaboration as inherently legitimating, this literature highlights specific mechanisms through which collaborative configurations may influence legitimacy judgments. Two concepts are particularly relevant for this study, interpartner legitimacy and process-based legitimacy in collaborative governance.

2.2.1 Interpartner Legitimacy and Mutual Recognition

A first line of research emphasizes the legitimacy processes within collaborative arrangements themselves. Human and Provan (2000) introduce the concept of interpartner legitimacy, referring to the mutual recognition that develops among collaborating organizations through repeated interaction, coordination and shared problem-solving. From this perspective, legitimacy is not simply transferred from prominent actors to weaker ones, but co-produced through relational practices that establish credibility and trust among partners.

This concept is analytically useful for examining how legitimacy is negotiated unevenly within collaborative cultural initiatives. Different actors may occupy different positions of authority, responsibility, or symbolic capital and collaboration becomes a site where these asymmetries are managed, reinforced, or contested.

2.2.2 Process-Based Legitimacy in Collaborative Governance

A second body of literature emphasizes that legitimacy in collaborative settings is closely tied to governance processes rather than outcomes alone. Research on collaborative governance argues that legitimacy depends on perceptions of procedural credibility, including transparency, inclusiveness, role clarity and coordination quality (Bryson et al., 2006; Emerson et al., 2012). Mosley and Wong (2021) further distinguish between input legitimacy (who is involved), throughput legitimacy (how decisions are made) and how these processes shape broader evaluations of legitimacy.

This perspective is particularly relevant for cultural collaborations operating in public or quasi-public evaluative environments. Where no single organization can claim authoritative control, legitimacy may hinge on whether collaborative structures are perceived as fair, robust and appropriate.

Interpartner legitimacy and process-based legitimacy together direct attention to how collaborative arrangements produce recognition and credibility through relational and procedural mechanisms. Both concepts assume, however, that the collaborative configuration is already present as a coherent object of governance, leaving underexplored what work sustains that coherence in the first place.

2.3 Ecosystem Thinking and Distributed Legitimacy

Ecosystem perspectives conceptualize collaborative initiatives as configurations of interdependent actors rather than collections of autonomous organizations (Adner, 2017; Jacobides et al., 2018). From a legitimacy perspective, this interdependence means that legitimacy appears as a distributed phenomenon attaching to configurations rather than residing solely within individual organizations (Thomas & Ritala, 2022). Participation shapes how actors are evaluated, not only through individual performance but through positioning within broader collaborative arrangements.

Thomas and Ritala (2022) conceptualize ecosystem legitimacy as emerging through coordinated action and visible alignment among interdependent actors. Legitimacy is co-produced through participation in configurations that audiences perceive as coherent and viable. Crucially, participation itself becomes evaluative: engagement in shared platforms or initiatives signals alignment with collective purpose and field-level recognition. Legitimacy work is therefore embedded in the act of participation and coordination, not limited to outcomes or performance.

This perspective is particularly relevant for cultural fields, where value is symbolic, evaluative criteria are plural and authority is fragmented (Holden, 2006; Bourdieu, 1993). Legitimacy is produced through how actors relate to one another and how collaborative configurations become visible and intelligible to audiences. Ecosystem thinking thus provides a way of conceptualizing collaborative cultural initiatives as legitimacy-bearing configurations. Rather than treating legitimacy as an attribute possessed by individual organizations, the analysis examines how legitimacy is constructed through interdependence, distributed evaluation and participation in shared arrangements.

Ecosystem legitimacy scholarship has productively theorized how legitimacy emerges through coordinated participation, but tends to treat the coherence and visibility of

collaborative arrangements as given rather than as ongoing accomplishments. This leaves underexplored both who sustains the conditions under which ecosystem legitimacy can circulate and whether the labor of doing so is symmetrically shared.

2.4 Cultural Field and Collaborative Governance

How organizations navigate fragmented governance conditions can be understood through strategic action field theory. Fligstein and McAdam (2012) conceptualize strategic action fields as meso-level social orders in which actors interact with knowledge of one another under shared, though contested, understandings of the field's purposes, their relationships and rules.

Organizations rarely operate within a single field; they typically participate simultaneously in multiple, partially overlapping fields, each with its own evaluative logic and accountability structure. Cultural organizations, in particular, often operate across national policy networks, regional funding systems, international partnerships and local engagement contexts (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012). This multi-field positioning is not only descriptive. More importantly, it has direct consequences for organizational vulnerability. Actors operating across multiple strategic action fields are less vulnerable when collaborations break down. Actors operating across multiple strategic action fields possess diversified legitimacy channels: when one collaborative configuration fails, alternative fields continue to provide recognition and resources. Their organizational viability is distributed across multiple arenas, making any single collaboration one channel among many. Actors positioned within fewer fields lack this diversification. For them, specific collaborative configurations function as primary legitimacy infrastructure and withdrawal becomes strategically untenable because no alternative arenas exist to absorb the loss. Field theory therefore predicts that the same collaborative arrangement will produce fundamentally different stakes for differently positioned participants, a structural asymmetry that the empirical analysis subsequently examines.

This structural asymmetry should not be described as accidental but instead field-theoretically produced. The capacity to withdraw without consequence and the capacity to absorb collaborative breakdown are functions of where actors stand within

the broader field topology, not of formal authority, organizational size or stated commitment.

Structural position within and across fields determines both the necessity of collaborative legitimacy work and who bears the cost of sustaining it. Existing field-theoretic literature therefore suggests that legitimacy-related labor is unevenly distributed across collaborative configurations, with actors occupying different structural positions facing different forms of dependence and exposure.

2.5 Organizational Infrastructure, Institutional Work and Translation

2.5.1 Organizational Infrastructure and Enabling Arrangements

Infrastructure refers to durable arrangements that enable and stabilize collective action across actors and over time without determining specific outcomes (Star & Ruhleder, 1996). Infrastructures are embedded, transparent in use (becoming visible upon breakdown) and linked to broader conventions (Star & Ruhleder, 1996). Infrastructure thinking emphasizes that what appears stable and taken-for-granted often depends on continuous, invisible maintenance work (Star, 1999; Denis et al., 2007). Infrastructures do not sustain themselves automatically but require ongoing effort to remain functional, adapt to changing conditions and accommodate new participants. This perspective reveals how seemingly permanent structures depend on continuous organizational labor (Star, 1999; Lawrence, Suddaby & Leca, 2011).

For this study, infrastructure provides a lens for conceptualizing collaborative cultural initiatives not as events or projects but as enabling arrangements that structure the conditions under which legitimacy can be assessed. Collaborative initiatives function infrastructurally when they provide shared platforms, recurring formats and recognizable frames that make cultural activity intelligible and present within a field. This infrastructural function concerns the organization of evaluability (the condition of being available to assessment) rather than shaping specific evaluative judgments. This directs attention to organizational work sustaining visibility, recognizability and continuity over time.

2.5.2 Institutional Work and Legitimacy Maintenance

Institutional work refers to the purposive action of individuals and organizations aimed at creating, maintaining and disrupting institutions (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Lawrence, Suddaby & Leca, 2009). This perspective foregrounds organizational agency, examining how institutions are constructed, sustained and transformed through ongoing practice.

Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) distinguish between creating, maintaining and disrupting institutions. Maintenance work, while often invisible, is consequential for institutional stability (Zilber, 2006; Denis et al., 2007). Building on this foundation, legitimacy work scholarship has shifted attention from legitimacy as an outcome of audience judgment to legitimacy as an ongoing organizational accomplishment (Zilber, 2006; Suddaby et al., 2017). Rather than studying whether organizations are perceived as legitimate, this perspective examines what organizations do to construct, maintain and negotiate legitimacy over time.

Daniels (1987) shows how essential but unrecognized work concentrates among less powerful actors and persists through its naturalization. This is a dynamic that legitimacy maintenance scholarship has not fully incorporated. Infrastructure scholarship similarly observes that maintenance labor becomes invisible precisely to those who benefit from it without performing it (Star, 1999). The present analysis draws on this shared structural logic: that naturalization forecloses explicit negotiation, allowing uneven maintenance burdens to persist as background conditions rather than becoming sites of contestation.

Where infrastructure scholarship foregrounds the material and organizational conditions that enable collective action, institutional work perspectives foreground the purposive agency through which those conditions are sustained, together providing the analytical vocabulary for pre-legitimacy labor as both a structural and agentive phenomenon.

2.5.2.1 Translation as Institutional Work

Translation involves processes through which actors render practices, meanings and logics intelligible across different contexts and audiences, requiring active interpretive effort rather than neutral transfer (Zilber, 2006; Boxenbaum & Battilana, 2005; Nicolini,

2010). Organizations engage in translation as symbolic work, adapting institutional meanings to local contexts while maintaining legitimacy within broader institutional fields (Zilber, 2006).

For collaborative cultural initiatives operating under fragmented governance, translation becomes particularly important. Organizations must render their activities intelligible not to a single evaluative audience but across multiple regimes with partially overlapping or conflicting criteria. Collaborative configurations must sustain intelligibility across these plural evaluative contexts without collapsing into incoherence. This ongoing translational effort sustains the conditions under which collaborative configurations remain assessable across fragmented governance environments.

2.5.3 The Pre-Evaluative Work Gap

The literature on organizational infrastructure, institutional work and translation share a concern with the ongoing effort required to sustain social and organizational arrangements over time. Infrastructure research emphasizes that enabling systems depend on continuous maintenance (Star, 1999; Denis et al., 2007), institutional work highlights that legitimacy is actively reproduced rather than passively held (Zilber, 2006; Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006) and translation studies show that meaning must be continually maintained across contexts (Boxenbaum & Battilana, 2005; Nicolini, 2010).

Taken together, these perspectives suggest that stability is an ongoing accomplishment rather than a given. However, legitimacy research has primarily focused on how organizations influence evaluative judgments once evaluation is already possible, rather than on the work that sustains the conditions under which such evaluation can occur (Suchman, 1995; Suddaby et al., 2017).

This leaves underexplored the precondition of evaluability itself, particularly in collaborative configurations where what is evaluated is a distributed arrangement rather than a single organization.

2.6 Synthesis and Theoretical Positioning

The preceding review identifies three underexplored dimensions that the empirical analysis addresses.

First, legitimacy work scholarship has examined how organizations shape evaluations but has not theorized the organizational work that sustains the conditions under which evaluation can occur at all, particularly in collaborative configurations where the object being evaluated must itself be maintained as visible and coherent. This extends legitimacy theory beyond outcome-focused accounts (Suchman, 1995; Bitektine & Haack, 2015) and complements legitimacy work perspectives that emphasize how actors actively shape evaluations, by foregrounding the enabling conditions that precede evaluative processes (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Suddaby et al., 2017; Zilber, 2006).

Second, research on collaborative governance and ecosystems conceptualizes legitimacy as distributed across multi-actor configurations but does not differentiate how distinct evaluative interfaces structure the organizational work of sustaining that distribution (Bryson et al., 2006; Jacobides et al., 2018).

Third, infrastructure and institutional work perspectives establish that maintenance work is consequential for institutional stability but do not specify how that work distributes across actors within collaborative configurations, nor whether its concentration follows structural dependence rather than formal authority (Star & Ruhleder, 1996; Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Zilber, 2006). Equally underexplored is the counterintuitive relationship between apparent stability and structural fragility: the assumption in distributed legitimacy scholarship that shared visibility implies shared resilience has not been examined against the distributional dynamics of the maintenance work that sustains it.

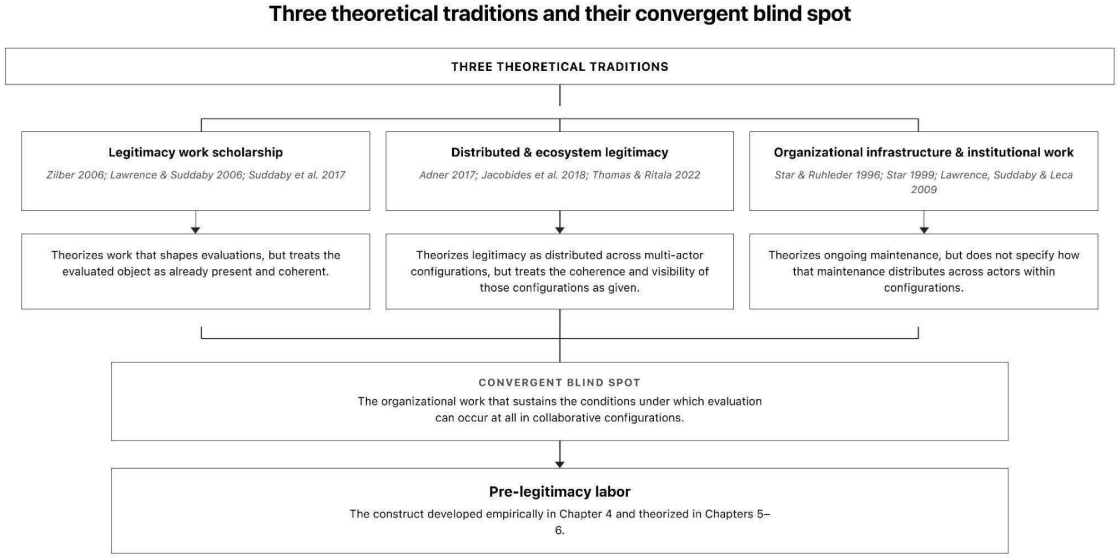


Figure 1. Three theoretical traditions and their convergent blind spot. Each literature illuminates a dimension of legitimacy in collaborative configurations while leaving underexamined the prior organizational work that sustains the conditions for evaluation. Pre-legitimacy labor names that convergent boundary as an object of analysis.

Together these gaps point to a prior layer of organizational activity that existing scholarship has not fully theorized: the continuous work through which collaborative configurations remain available for evaluation in the first place. Figure 1 visualizes this convergent gap. The empirical analysis develops this argument through a comparative study of two collaborative cultural initiatives within Swedish cultural governance.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This thesis adopts a qualitative, interpretive research design to examine legitimacy as organizational work within collaborative cultural configurations. Rather than studying legitimacy as an audience verdict (whether external actors judge organizations or collaborations as legitimate), the study focuses on the practices through which legitimacy is enacted, maintained and stabilized by those directly involved in collaborative arrangements. Such an interpretive approach is appropriate for examining how organizational actors understand, enact and sustain social phenomena that are embedded in everyday practice and meaning-making rather than directly observable as outcomes (Yanow & Schwartz-Shea, 2006; Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2012; Bryman, 2016).

This positioning reflects a deliberate analytical choice. While legitimacy ultimately depends on audience recognition, the organizational work that sustains legitimacy occurs prior to (and independently of) specific moments of evaluation. Interviews with participants engaged in collaborative initiatives do not provide direct access to external legitimacy judgments. However, they offer rich insight into the practices, concerns and efforts through which actors seek to remain visible, intelligible and institutionally viable within fragmented cultural fields. Following legitimacy work scholarship (Zilber, 2006; Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006; Suddaby et al., 2017), these interviews are used to examine the organizational processes that make legitimacy possible, not to reason how external audiences judge it.

By focusing on how actors describe and enact legitimacy-related work, the study foregrounds pre-legitimacy labor as an analytically distinct phenomenon. The aim is not to assess whether legitimacy work succeeds in generating favorable judgments but to examine the organizational effort required to sustain the conditions under which evaluation can occur at all. Bracketing questions of outcome allows the analysis to reveal forms of labor that often remain invisible precisely because they are normalized, continuous and taken for granted by those who perform them. This process-oriented focus is suited to collaborative cultural initiatives, where legitimacy is distributed across

networks of actors and the work of maintaining visibility, coordination and coherence is collective yet unevenly shared. However, this bracketing has methodological costs: it forecloses direct observation of how shifts in evaluability shape subsequent legitimacy judgments, requiring that the sequencing claim be specified theoretically rather than demonstrated empirically. In other words, the analysis can show that actors work continuously to sustain visibility, participation and continuity, but cannot directly observe whether a funder's decision to renew support, or a peer institution's decision to join, follows from that sustained evaluability rather than from other factors.

3.2 Case Selection and Sampling Strategy

This study employs a purposive, theoretically informed case selection strategy designed to illuminate different configurations of legitimacy work within collaborative cultural initiatives. Two cases are selected to enable contrastive analysis of how pre-legitimacy labor is organized and sustained across distinct collaborative contexts, rather than to establish causal relationships between specific contextual variables (Yin, 2018). The aim is analytical generalization, contributing to conceptual refinement in research on legitimacy as organizational work in collaborative settings (Eisenhardt, 1989).

Both cases are recurring collaborative cultural initiatives situated in public or quasi-public evaluative environments, where legitimacy cannot be assumed but must be continuously maintained through organizational practice. Recurrence is analytically relevant because it allows legitimacy work to be examined as an ongoing process across iterations rather than as a one-off event. Table 1 summarizes the structural contrast between cases.

Dimension	Case A	Case B
Geographic Scope	Regional, across multiple administrative regions	Urban, localized across collaborating sites
Dominant governance interface	Public funders & administrative authorities	Collaborators, venues, public funders and professional interfaces
Translation orientation	More vertical and defensive	More horizontal and coordinative
Primary evaluators	Regions, municipalities, funders, audience	Partner institutions, peers, publics, funders
Collaboration structure	Network of dispersed venues under shared brand	Centralised temporal platform coordinating institutional programming
Main organisational challenge	Securing continuity and administrative legibility	Maintaining coherence across heterogeneous actors
Resource context	More dependent on external continuity support	Embedded in existing institutional networks and legitimacy channels
Continuity pattern	Continuity must be actively secured and reported	Continuity emerges through ongoing coordination and repetition

Table 1. Case Comparison Matrix Comparative overview clarifying the empirical logic of the two-case design

The cases share key characteristics: in both, collaboration constitutes a central organizational feature and legitimacy does not reside within a single institution alone. They differ, however, in their geographic scope, governance structure and collaborative format. Case A is a regionally distributed collaboration spanning multiple municipalities and regions, in which coordination across dispersed and institutionally heterogeneous actors is a central organizational challenge. Case B is an urban collaboration organized through a centralized temporal platform, in which a shared programme frame structures participation across institutions within a single city. These structural differences allow the analysis to explore how legitimacy work varies across collaborative configurations without treating collaboration as a homogeneous phenomenon, while holding constant the core condition that legitimacy must be actively maintained rather than assumed.

To protect participant confidentiality, the cases are referred to as Case A and Case B. This restricts readers' capacity to evaluate context-specific details independently, but the structural differences described above (geographic scope, governance interface, resource context) are empirically grounded and shape the analytical comparison. Anonymization is therefore treated as a methodological trade-off between access and transparency. Within each case, a purposive sampling strategy is used to select interview participants directly involved in organizing or participating in the collaboration (Patton, 2015). Interviews focus on actors occupying different functional positions, enabling analysis of

how legitimacy work is articulated, negotiated and unevenly distributed across roles. Rather than assuming shared interpretations of legitimacy, the design is attentive to potential tensions, asymmetries and misalignments between participants. The number of interviews is chosen to balance analytical depth with feasibility and does not aim to capture all participant perspectives exhaustively.

3.3 Data Collection Methods

This study employs semi-structured interviews as the primary method of data collection. Semi-structured interviews are well suited to qualitative, interpretivist research as they enable in-depth exploration of participants' experiences, interpretations and practices, while retaining a shared thematic structure that supports comparison across cases and roles (Bryman, 2016; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Bell et al., 2022). This approach is particularly appropriate for examining organizational work related to legitimacy, as it allows participants to articulate how collaboration is understood, enacted and sustained from within their institutional position.

Interviews are conducted with actors directly involved in organizing or participating in the collaborative cultural initiatives under study. For each case, between seven and eight interviews are conducted. Participants are selected purposely to represent different functional positions within each initiative, including coordinating or orchestrating roles as well as participating partner organizations. This sampling strategy allows the study to capture variation in how collaborative work is experienced, articulated and distributed across positions within the same configuration.

An interview guide was developed based on the literature on organizational legitimacy, legitimacy work and collaborative cultural governance. The guide consists of open-ended questions addressing participants' accounts of the collaboration's origins and purpose, modes of coordination and decision-making, interactions with funders or public authorities, perceived challenges and experiences of sustaining collaboration over time. While a common thematic structure was used across interviews, questions were adapted to reflect the interviewee's role and proximity to coordination or decision-making processes. Table 2 provides an overview.

Number	Case	Role	Language	Duration
1	A	primary coordinator	Swedish	55 min
2	A	institutional rep	Swedish	48 min
3	A	institutional rep	Swedish	42 min
4	A	institutional rep	Swedish	50 min
5	A	institutional rep	Swedish	45 min
6	A	institutional rep	Swedish	52 min
7	A	institutional rep	Swedish	41 min
8	B	invited curator	English	written
9	B	invited curator	German	60 min
10	B	institutional rep	English	47 min
11	B	primary coordinator	Swedish	43 min
12	B	institutional rep	Swedish	40 min
13	B	institutional rep	Swedish	45 min
14	B	institutional rep	English	50 min
15	B	institutional rep	Swedish	60 min

Table 2: Interview Overview Interviews were conducted between January and April 2026

In total fifteen interviews were conducted and lasted approximately 40–60 minutes. The conversations were held in English, Swedish or German, depending on participant preference. All interviews were conducted online. One interview was carried out asynchronously due to time zone differences, with questions sent by email and responses returned in writing. Prior to each interview, participants were informed about the purpose of the study, assured of confidentiality and asked to provide informed consent, including consent for audio recording. Where recording was permitted, interviews were transcribed verbatim; where it was not, detailed notes were taken immediately following the interview.

3.4 Analysis Process

Interview analysis proceeded through three iterative phases following an abductive approach (Timmermans & Tavory, 2012), moving between empirical material and theoretical concepts:

Phase 1: Initial coding and pattern identification

Transcripts were read multiple times to identify recurring themes related to how participants described collaborative work, challenges and responsibilities. Early codes included: "visibility work," "coordinator burden," "funding cycles," "institutional withdrawal," "solidarity language," "exhaustion," "necessity of collaboration."

Phase 2: Focused coding and cross-case comparison

Initial codes were refined and organized into analytical categories through systematic comparison across interviews and between cases. This phase examined how different actor types (coordinators, institutional partners, organizational representatives) described similar phenomena. Categories included: "making things visible collectively," "translation to funders," "uneven responsibility," "continuous maintenance work," "exposure to collaboration breakdown."

Phase 3: Theoretical interpretation

Analytical categories were interpreted through legitimacy work scholarship, leading to higher-order concepts: "pre-legitimacy labor," "infrastructural visibility," "vertical/horizontal translation," "asymmetrical exposure," "evaluability." This phase involved ensuring theoretical concepts remained grounded in empirical material while providing analytical leverage beyond description.

The analysis follows an abductive logic, iterating between empirical material and existing theory (Timmermans & Tavory, 2012). This movement was not linear: initial theoretical framing drew primarily on legitimacy work and collaborative governance scholarship. However, participants consistently described each iteration of their collaborations as requiring the same effort regardless of how recognized the initiative had become, a contradiction that existing theory could not account for and that prompted return to infrastructure scholarship, eventually generating the concept of pre-legitimacy labor.

3.5 Methodological Rigor and Limitations

This study adopts an interpretivist approach, in which rigor is assessed through criteria such as credibility, transparency and analytical coherence (Tracy, 2010), rather than statistical reliability or generalizability. Credibility is supported through careful case

selection, purposive sampling across different institutional positions and within-case triangulation of perspectives. Detailed documentation of the research process enhances transparency and enables readers to assess the plausibility of interpretations.

Several research ethics considerations require explicit acknowledgment. The Swedish cultural sector is small and structural details such as geographic scope and organizational format could enable identification by knowledgeable readers; anonymization is therefore treated as a minimum rather than sufficient safeguard. Participants known to the researcher professionally are explicitly invited to flag potential conflicts of interest or omit material they consider sensitive. Recording asymmetries across interviews are addressed by transcribing verbatim where consent permits and by taking detailed notes immediately afterward where it does not.

Several limitations shape the scope and interpretation of this study. First, the study relies on qualitative interviews, which capture participants' accounts rather than objective measures of legitimacy or effectiveness. Accounts may reflect strategic framing or retrospective rationalization, meaning the analysis can examine how legitimacy work is understood by those who perform it but cannot verify whether specific practices produced favorable judgments. The analysis therefore treats participant accounts as windows into organizational processes rather than as evidence of outcomes.

Second, the number of interviews per case is deliberately limited to support analytical depth while remaining feasible. The distributional claims in Section 5.3, regarding which actors carry disproportionate maintenance burdens, rest on a limited number of accounts from each positional type and would benefit from empirical strengthening across a wider participant range.

Third, the findings are analytically rather than statistically generalizable. The study refines conceptual understanding of pre-legitimacy labor across two distinct configurations rather than making claims about cultural collaborations in general. The scope conditions in Section 6.5 clarify where the concept applies, treating generalizability as a theoretical claim rather than an empirical one.

3.6 Methodological Reflexivity

The researcher's position in the Swedish cultural sector shapes both the access this study secures and the analytical lens through which the material is interpreted. As a producer at Platform Stockholm, the researcher operates within the same field as the participants studied. This position offers analytical resources: practical vocabulary that does not require translation in interview settings, recognition of patterns that participants treat as routine and sectoral fluency in Swedish cultural funding architecture. It also shapes interpretation in ways worth naming. The concept of pre-legitimacy labor emerges partly from the researcher's own experience of sustaining collaborative visibility under fragmented funding conditions, which functions as an analytical resource and as a potential blind spot. To mitigate over-identification with practitioner framings, neither case is related to Platform Stockholm and participants known to the researcher professionally are explicitly invited to flag potential conflicts of interest or omit material they consider sensitive.

Two further methodological choices warrant explicit reflection. Interviews are conducted in Swedish, English and German based on participant preference rather than researcher convenience since participants articulate complex professional experience more precisely in their native language. This produces an asymmetry in translation fluency: native German allows German interviews to be analyzed without translation loss, while Swedish interviews are translated with the fluency of a non-native speaker working professionally in Sweden. This asymmetry potentially affects how nuance is captured across cases. Also, theoretical sufficiency is assessed pragmatically rather than against a formal saturation criterion. This is appropriate to abductive design, where theoretical sufficiency is judged by whether new material continues to disrupt existing conceptual categories rather than by reaching numerical saturation (Timmermans & Tavory, 2012). Fifteen interviews were conducted, with data collection ending when recurring themes dominated and additional interviews appeared unlikely to substantially extend the emerging analytical categories. This was treated as a pragmatic judgment of theoretical sufficiency within an abductive design rather than as a claim of exhaustive empirical saturation.

4. Empirical Findings

This chapter presents the empirical material from interviews. The analysis focuses on how collaboration, evaluative pressures and responsibility distribution are described and enacted in practice.

The empirical material comprises fifteen semi-structured interviews, approximately twelve hours of audio, yielding 170 coded utterances across eight functional positions and two cases; the full coded matrix is presented in Appendix 4.

4.1 Visibility, Participation and Continuity in Practice

Interviewees across both cases describe collaboration as a practical means of addressing challenges that individual organizations struggle to handle on their own. In particular, they emphasize the difficulty of achieving visibility, the importance of access through participation and the effort required to keep collaborative initiatives going over time.

4.1.1 Making Things Visible Together

A recurring theme in the interviews is that visibility does not automatically follow from artistic quality or activity. Instead, visibility is described as unevenly distributed and difficult to achieve, especially for smaller or geographically dispersed actors. Collaboration is framed as a way to collectively amplify attention and make existing work more noticeable.

Visibility is also described as structurally constrained by resources and scale:

> “Small and medium-sized actors don’t have the financial muscles to be visible in the cityscape in the same way.”
> institutional representative, Case B

In this context, collective formats are described as a way to bundle attention rather than generate entirely new content:

> “We didn’t really need new things to happen, what we needed was a unifying model that takes what is already happening and communicates

it…"
institutional representative, Case A

In Case B, a similar challenge is described in relation to communication capacity and scale. One interviewee explains that smaller institutions often lack the resources for a "final push" in communication, in contrast to larger museums with dedicated communication teams:

"...you pour all of this energy into a project. And then once it's almost done, you find yourself not having that final push, which means actually maybe communicating what it is…"
institutional representative, Case B

Additionally interviewees describe for Case B how the umbrella format creates a point of orientation that makes multiple sites easier to navigate as part of one moment. One institutional representative explains that the initiative generates a clustering effect:

"…then it becomes a small cluster. If you come to […], you know that all these places have something exciting…"
institutional representative, Case B

In Case A, participants describe how the shared format created a navigational frame that made geographically scattered venues approachable. One institutional representative reflects on how the printed materials and shared calendar affected her own movement through the region:

"The printed material for all these different actors […]. I really made my way to this place once and for all […] it's quite far from where I live and somewhat remote... made one actually venture out."
institutional representative, Case A

4.1.2 Participation as Access and Inclusion

Participation in collaborative initiatives is consistently described in practical terms, focusing on access, invitations and inclusion within existing frameworks. Interviewees

emphasize how participation enables connection to networks, platforms and other actors rather than framing it in symbolic or evaluative terms.

From an institutional perspective, being "part of" the collaboration is described as a combination of role and contribution:

> "We are part of the program and then we finance them."
> institutional representative, Case B

For smaller actors, participation is closely tied to access to broader networks and a sense of collective presence:

> "On their Instagram they publish that they collaborate with us and then we all appear there together, it creates a sense of community."
> institutional representative, Case A

Across interviews, participation is framed as a practical condition that enables connection, exchange and shared presence, rather than as an explicit marker of status or recognition.

Some interviewees also describe participation as producing a signal outward, beyond the immediate collaboration. One participant frames joint activity as something that communicates collectively to wider audiences:

> "…all these things we do together become a signal…"
> institutional representative, Case B

In another account, this signal is described as travelling upward toward political and policy audiences:

> "…the signal to the Ministry of Culture and, in extension, the government and parliament…"
> institutional representative, Case A

Interviewees also describe how participation becomes formally traceable through institutional reporting and public writing. One participant notes that the collaboration is included in annual reports:

> "…all of us include Case B in our annual reports…"
> institutional representative, Case B

The same participant also links participation to visibility through external publicity:

> "…there have also been some articles… and then you also get visibility internationally…"
> institutional representative, Case B

A coordinator describes how inclusion in the shared frame affected external perception:

> "These projects ended up in this larger context and I experienced significant interest […] and were thereby lifted to something that became more substantial than if they had just done their project independently."
> coordinator, Case A

An invited participant from outside Sweden describes how external audiences interpret participation:

> "...there is naturally a capital that comes with that association"
> invited curator, Case B

4.1.3 Continuity as Ongoing Organizational Work

Interviewees also emphasize that sustaining collaborative initiatives over time is difficult and resource-intensive. Continuity is described as a challenge rather than an achievement, particularly once initial funding or momentum declines.

One interviewee reflects on what happens after early project phases:

> "I've seen many examples where you receive a lot of project funding at the beginning and then you're expected to keep it going with perhaps a quarter of the resources you originally had."
> institutional representative, Case A

In Case B, participants describe how sustained repetition can generate recognition and anticipation over time. One institutional representative notes:

> "It has almost become a tradition”
> institutional representative, Case B

Another describes how Case B has become part of the regional calendar:

> "...people know it comes every year and plan for it”
> institutional representative, Case B

A coordinator reflects on how perception shifted after multiple iterations:

> "After the third time it started to feel more established.”
> coordinator, Case B

However, this emerging recognition does not translate into reduced organizational burden. Participants emphasize that each iteration requires renewed work:

> “Every time it feels like we're starting from the beginning”
> coordinator, Case B

Recurrence generates field-level recognition without reducing the organizational effort required to sustain it.

4.2 Navigating Multiple Evaluative Contexts

While both cases involve navigation across such contexts, interviewees describe markedly different conditions under which this navigation takes place.

4.2.1 Case A: Navigating Regions, Funders and Administrative Demands

In Case A, interviewees describe an environment characterized by fragmented authority and repeated encounters with regional funding bodies. Collaboration is frequently framed as a practical necessity for engaging with multiple regions and institutions.

One interviewee describes the funding process as repetitive and labor-intensive:

> "We had to go to one region at a time. Like: can we get money from you? Can we get money from you? Can we get money from you?"
> institutional representative, Case A

Funding levels are described as limited in relation to the scale of the collaborative initiative:

> "They still contribute one hundred and fifty thousand […] which really isn't any money in a context like this."
> institutional representative, Case A

Several interviewees also describe frustration with what they perceive as funding priorities that reward media visibility more than substantive cultural work:

> "What we did simply doesn't become as media-impactful […] politics understands glitter and stardom."
> institutional representative, Case A

Geographic positioning is described as compounding these challenges:

> "We are also in a huge media shadow."
> institutional representative, Case A

The application process itself is described as time-intensive and resource-draining:

> "Just applying for all this funding takes a lot of time."
> institutional representative, Case A

Several interviewees emphasize that collaboration is required in order to be taken seriously by regional and national actors. As one participant explains:

> "As an individual actor it becomes very, very difficult. Together you really become more voices and you speak with a stronger voice toward the state, the municipality and the region."
> institutional representative, Case A

Finally, one interviewee describes the need to balance awareness of what political audiences expect with a self-understanding rooted in grassroots orientation:

> "Three regions joined together in a joint application […] but they didn't get it. So instead they applied for project funding from the Swedish Arts Council."
> institutional representative, Case A

Taken together, participants describe Case A as involving repeated cycles of funding work and adaptation to multiple administrative expectations, with collaboration framed as a necessary way to sustain the initiative across regions and institutions.

4.2.2 Case B: Navigating Institutions, Spaces and Professional Logics

In Case B, interviewees describe a different set of evaluative contexts. Rather than repeated regional funding negotiations, the focus is on coordinating across institutions, spaces and professional practices within an urban cultural environment.

Participants describe having to negotiate with host institutions and adapt to their organizational routines:

> "In our case, it required an extra effort to familiarize the cinema team with the dynamics, processes, languages, timelines and needs of visual arts."
> invited curator, Case B

Interviewees emphasize that collaboration involves working across different professional cultures and expectations:

> "It's undeniable that when there are urgent situations, collaborative processes can be slower and delay decision-making."
> invited curator, Case B

Institutional actors describe their participation as aligning with existing mandates rather than responding to immediate funding threats:

> "Our mandate is internationalization […] so when initiatives like Case B come along, we contribute with what is already on our agenda."
> institutional representative, Case B

In this case, interviewees describe collaboration as a way to coordinate existing institutional capacities rather than as a response to acute resource scarcity.

In Case B, participants similarly emphasize the relational value of participation, describing it as addressing professional isolation and creating collegial support:

> "So that you don't feel alone when it's tough and difficult to run your organization, that you have something to fall back on in some way […] It contributes a lot to feeling that you are part of a collegium where there is solidarity."
> institutional representative, Case B

4.3 Uneven Commitment and Responsibility

Across both cases, collaboration is described as valuable and necessary. At the same time, interviewees repeatedly emphasize that sustaining collaborative initiatives requires significant effort. The empirical material suggests that this effort is not evenly distributed across participants.

4.3.1 Continuous Maintenance Work

Several interviewees stress that collaboration demands ongoing coordination and follow-up rather than functioning automatically once established.

One interviewee repeatedly returns to the intensity of the work required to keep the initiative moving forward:

> "I worked incredibly hard that spring."
> institutional representative, Case B

Also, responsibility is described as expanding rather than diminishing through collaboration:

> "Working collectively does not make responsibility or accountability diminish. On the contrary, we believe it increases them."
> invited curator, Case B

One participant describes the prioritization of this work explicitly:

> "It's a step before we can fully concentrate on the public experience. The most labour is establishing this context."
> institutional representative, Case A

4.3.2 Asymmetrical Exposure and Concentrated Responsibility

While collaboration is described as shared, several interviews indicate that the consequences of instability are experienced unevenly. The institutional representative recounts how larger institutions initiated a major project but later withdrew:

> "All these big institutions kicked off this huge project… and then they left. And there I was […] representing one of the very smallest institutions […] left with this whole […] monster in my lap"
> institutional representative, Case A

An organizational representative describes a similar pattern from a broader vantage point:

> "...the first round of Case A, there were a lot of art institutions collaborating […] But these institutions are themselves under so much pressure that they simply haven't been able to manage it […]"
> institutional representative, Case A

This asymmetry is also visible in how coordination work is distributed, particularly between role-specialized larger institutions and role-concentrated smaller actors:

> "I would sit in meetings with, let's say, four people from the communications department of a large museum and I would be the producer, the curator, the communicator, the press agent, which meant that I had all of these roles or responsibilities in that meeting."
> institutional representative, Case B

This account illustrates how coordination burden concentrates among smaller actors even within ostensibly collaborative settings. A related pattern concerns the relationship between existential exposure and commitment:

> "*Eldsjäl*-driven [passion-driven] institutions burn up. Resources affect commitment depending on how strong the threat to existence is."
> institutional representative, Case A

Taken together, these accounts describe how responsibility and effort can become concentrated even when collaboration is formally shared. In Case B, smaller institutions similarly describe collaboration as driven by vulnerability rather than choice:

> "There is simply a vulnerability for smaller art institutions […] for us, there is everything to gain from collaborating."
> institutional representative, Case B

4.3.3 Normalization and Organizational Strain

Despite frustrations, uneven effort is rarely framed as a governance failure. Instead, it is described as part of working conditions in the cultural field.

An institutional representative explains:

> "When there isn't any money, exhaustion sets in within the organization."
> institutional representative, Case A

Even so, collaboration is described as necessary, particularly in geographically dispersed contexts:

> "Collaboration, collaboration, collaboration […] especially in rural areas. It's extremely important that people come together."
> institutional representative, Case A

The interviews suggest a tension between necessity and strain: collaboration is portrayed as indispensable, yet sustaining it requires considerable and sometimes exhausting effort.

Across both cases, collaboration is consistently described as necessary, demanding and unevenly sustained. Actors who depend most on the collaboration's continuation invest most in keeping it functional, while actors with alternative legitimacy channels describe their participation in terms of contribution rather than obligation.

Three patterns recur across cases, roles and organizational types. Collaborative configurations remain visible only through continuous organizational work. That work varies systematically with the dominant evaluative interface. The burden of sustaining it concentrates among structurally dependent actors. These patterns point to a form of labor that existing legitimacy and infrastructure scholarship has theorized adjacent to but not as legitimacy work itself. Chapter 5 develops this argument theoretically.

5. Theoretical Analysis

5.1 Legitimacy as Infrastructural Practice

This section examines how collaborative cultural initiatives operate as legitimacy infrastructures, organizational arrangements that structure visibility, participation and recognition over time. Infrastructure is used here in an organizational sense following Star and Ruhleder (1996), though extended to a prior function their account does not address: sustaining the conditions under which configurations can be assessed at all, independent of evaluation outcomes. In the cases studied, collaborative initiatives function as infrastructures insofar as they sustain evaluability. They make cultural activity more consistently visible, recognizable and intelligible as a shared configuration, independent of the success of any single project or event. Each infrastructural dimension generates a corresponding organizational challenge that pre-legitimacy labor must address, operationalized in Table 3 below.

Types of pre-legitimacy labor

Type of labor	Illustrative practices	Primary purpose
Visibility work	Calendars - shared branding - mapping collaborators - public framing	To keep the configuration present and recognizable as an object of collective evaluation
Participation work	invitations - listings - partner Inclusion - circulation of information	To make the configuration accessible and inclusive for participation and external recognition
Continuity work	Recurrence - format stabilization repeat programming - maintaining routines	To sustain temporal continuity so the configuration appears durable rather than episodic or ad hoc
Translation work	Reporting - coordination across actors reframing activities for funders Aligning vocabularies and expectations	To render the configuration intelligible across different evaluative interfaces and audiences

Table 3. The table operationalizes pre-legitimacy labor by distinguishing types of work, concrete practices and the evaluability-related purpose each serves.

Table 3 operationalizes pre-legitimacy labor by distinguishing four types of work and the concrete practices through which each sustains evaluability in the cases studied. The

types are analytically distinct but empirically overlapping, as the same practice often serves multiple functions simultaneously. Visibility, participation and continuity are examined in the subsections below. Translation work, whose variation across the two cases requires extended comparative treatment, is examined in Section 5.2.

5.1.1 Collective and Relational Visibility

A central infrastructural function of collaboration is its capacity to organize visibility at the level of the configuration. Interviewees describe visibility as unevenly distributed and difficult to sustain for actors operating with limited communication capacity or outside dominant centers of attention. Collaborative initiatives address this by gathering dispersed activity under a shared name, calendar and frame, making it easier to locate, reference and encounter as part of a recognizable whole. Visibility in this sense is not an evaluative outcome. Instead, it concerns the basic condition of being present and perceptible within a field.

In Case A this function is articulated through descriptions of mapping and aggregation. The collaborative format is presented as a way to make visible what already exists across a geographically dispersed region and to render it legible as a coherent cultural landscape. Rather than requiring thematic unity or stylistic coherence, the frame enables heterogeneous actors to appear together and be “on the map” under a shared moment and label. In Case B visibility is concentrated temporally rather than geographically. By clustering events and openings within a limited time frame, the initiative produces a shared point of orientation through which diverse institutions and practices become collectively encounterable in the city.

Collaboration also shapes relational visibility: actors are not only seen more, but seen *in relation* to others through the shared frame. Interviewees describe how the umbrella format changes the conditions under which cultural activity is approached, lowering thresholds for engagement by providing a recognizable entry point and enabling audiences, peers and curatorial networks to navigate multiple sites as part of “one” coordinated moment. This does not eliminate differences in scale, resources, or institutional standing, nor does it guarantee attention. Rather, it stabilizes a shared frame of appearance through which multiple projects can be encountered as connected, even when content remains decentralized.

Taken together, the cases show that collaboration operates as an infrastructural condition for visibility in two complementary ways. Ecosystem scholarship theorizes this configuration-level visibility as distributed legitimacy, where legitimacy emerges through collective processes of coordinated action and visible alignment among interdependent actors rather than residing in individual organizations (Thomas & Ritala, 2022). The collaborative frame produces this distributed effect, though as Section 5.3 demonstrates, the organizational labor required to sustain such collective visibility concentrates unevenly. First, collaboration stabilizes collective presence (making dispersed activity locatable under a shared frame) and second, it produces relational visibility (making activity intelligible through its placement alongside other actors within the configuration). These are pre-evaluative conditions that support evaluability. They make cultural activity available to be assessed, without determining how it will ultimately be judged.

5.1.2 Participation as an Infrastructural Signal

Beyond organizing visibility, collaborative initiatives also structure participation in ways that support evaluability. Being included in a shared programme makes involvement publicly traceable through programme listings, partner names and invitations. In practice, this stabilizes who is "in" the configuration and gives others a recognizable frame through which participating actors can be encountered.

Across the interviews, participants describe the value of participation primarily in relational terms. They emphasize access to networks, collegial solidarity and a shared professional presence. Participation is described as a way to reduce isolation, create mutual support and connect to a wider cultural context that would be difficult to access independently. For smaller or more peripheral actors, being part of a recognized initiative is described as a form of inclusion that extends beyond the reach of any single institution.

Several accounts also describe outward-facing effects with greater specificity. Interviewees articulate how joint activity produces signals that travel to external audiences, particularly policy and funding bodies. One organizational representative explicitly describes participation as creating a signal upward to the Ministry of Culture and, in extension, government and parliament, framing collective participation as

something that makes cultural activity politically legible. Similarly, a coordinator describes how projects placed in the larger collaborative context became more substantial for external observers, suggesting that inclusion in the shared frame changes how individual activities are perceived by funders and collaborators.

Participation also becomes formally traceable through institutional reporting mechanisms. Multiple participants note that collaboration is included in annual reports, creating a documented record of involvement that circulates to funders and policy audiences. One institutional representative describes how this formal traceability extends to international visibility through press coverage generated by the collaborative initiative. An invited participant from outside Sweden describes how external audiences interpret the list of participating institutions as carrying a form of capital, indicating that participation conveys credibility even to those unfamiliar with the initiative itself.

At the same time, the mechanisms through which these signals translate into specific funder decisions or policy responses remain less elaborated in the interview material. Participation in recognized collaborative initiatives produces similar signaling effects, though the precise evaluative consequences remain empirically unclear in these cases. Participants describe participation as producing upward-traveling signals and credibility-by-association, but they do not extensively detail whether and how funders, policymakers, or peer institutions adjust their evaluations based on participation. Participation thus produces traceable signals that travel to external audiences through formal and informal channels, though how those signals are received remains difficult to observe directly.

In both cases, participation functions as a pre-evaluative condition rather than an evaluative outcome. It does not guarantee attention, funding, or acclaim and it does not substitute for later processes of assessment. Its contribution lies in stabilizing the collaborative configuration as something that can be encountered, referenced and potentially evaluated by multiple audiences. The signal-producing function operates by making participation traceable and lending credibility through association, thereby supporting evaluability without determining evaluation outcomes.

5.1.3 Temporality and Repetition as Legitimacy Infrastructure

A further infrastructural dimension of collaborative initiatives lies in temporality. When an initiative returns over multiple editions, it establishes a recurring temporal presence that participants describe as valuable both for maintaining professional contact points and for sustaining recognition of the initiative's continued existence. In the cases studied, however, this temporal infrastructure operates differently at field and organizational levels, revealing a tension between external recognition and internal labor.

At the field level, sustained recurrence can generate anticipation and taken-for-grantedness. Participants in Case B describe it has become almost a tradition, with local actors coming to expect its return and planning their activities around it. One coordinator reflects that establishment became perceptible after the third iteration, pointing to a threshold beyond which temporal presence shifts from novelty to expectation. In Case A, participants similarly describe how recurrence creates anchor points in the calendar and becomes a way to meet colleagues through repeated professional contact.

This field-level recognition, however, does not reduce organizational burden. Recurrence remains precarious rather than automatic, dependent on continued funding, coordination capacity and the practical ability to carry an initiative forward from one iteration to the next. Participants emphasize that maintaining the format's return requires sustained work under resource constraints. In Case A, continuity is described as particularly fragile, shaped by repeated application cycles and the experience that initial project funding often declines to a fraction of original levels in subsequent iterations. Coordinators describe each edition as feeling like starting from the beginning, emphasizing that recurrence does not become easier over time.

This points to a structural tension. At the field level, temporal infrastructure can generate anticipation and establishment: formats become recognizable, actors plan around them and third iterations mark thresholds of perceived stability. At the organizational level, however, temporal infrastructure remains an ongoing accomplishment. What persists is the format's return rather than a stable programme or reduced coordination demands. Each edition is described as variable in content and

composition; maintaining recurrence depends on actors' capacity to mobilize resources, coordinate effort and absorb organizational demands that accumulate across cycles. When this capacity weakens, because funding drops, coordinators become exhausted, or partners withdraw, the rhythm of recurrence becomes vulnerable.

Temporal infrastructure thus operates as both achievement and fragility. Recurrence can establish field-level patterns that create anticipation and recognition, yet the work of sustaining these patterns concentrates among actors who depend most on the collaboration's continuation. This dual character, externally recognizable yet internally precarious, reflects the broader tension in collaborative legitimacy between collectively generated visibility and unevenly distributed maintenance labor.

5.2 Translation work across evaluative regimes

Of the four types of pre-legitimacy labor identified above, translation work receives separate analytical treatment here. While visibility, participation, and continuity work operate as infrastructural conditions that function similarly regardless of field position, translation is shaped by the dominant evaluative interface actors must navigate.

Translation involves the active work of rendering practices and meanings intelligible across different institutional contexts and audiences (Zilber, 2006). As institutional work, translation is not neutral transfer but requires sustained interpretive effort that adapts to evaluative demands. The following analysis examines how translation work in the two cases differs according to the dominant evaluative interface actors must navigate, whether vertically toward funders and administrative authorities in Case A, or horizontally across collaborating institutions and professional practices in Case B.

5.2.1 Vertical Defensive Translation: Case A

In Case A, translation emerges as defensive work oriented vertically toward regional funders, political authorities and administrative bodies. Strategic action field theory shows that actors' positions within fields fundamentally shape their strategic orientations and action repertoires (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012). Actors positioned within fragmented governance fields face multiple evaluators with partially overlapping criteria, necessitating vertical translation toward dispersed authorities. When combined with acute resource vulnerability where organizational survival depends on sustained

funding access, translation becomes defensive rather than aspirational, prioritizing continued fundability over expanded influence or prestige. This positional logic helps explain the vertical defensive translation observable in Case A. Participants consistently describe the collaboration as a means of making a dispersed and otherwise difficult-to-see cultural landscape visible, legible and collectively articulable within fragmented governance structures.

A central function of translation in this case is the conversion of symbolic practice into forms that can be recognized within administrative and funding regimes. Individual artistic initiatives, often embedded in rural or semi-rural contexts, are described as difficult to communicate upward when presented in isolation. Through the triennial, these practices are assembled into a recognizable configuration that can be named, counted and presented as a coherent regional phenomenon. Translation thus operates by shifting emphasis from singular projects to collective scale, allowing cultural activity to appear continuous rather than episodic and infrastructural rather than exceptional.

This aggregation is explicitly linked to survival. Interviewees describe collaboration as necessary to ensure that cultural activity remains visible to regional authorities, municipalities and funding bodies. Rather than competing for recognition, actors frame collective presentation as a way of ensuring that culture is not rendered marginal or dispensable. Translation here prioritizes countability over distinction: showing how many actors exist, how broadly activity is distributed and how it contributes to a shared regional presence. Artistic excellence is not abandoned, but it is subordinated to the need to demonstrate scope, durability and relevance.

The mapping function of Case A further reinforces this defensive orientation. By systematically identifying and connecting cultural actors across the region, the collaboration produces an overview that can be mobilized in evaluative encounters. This map is not merely descriptive, rather, it functions as evidence. It allows participants to point to the existence of a cultural ecosystem that might otherwise be overlooked, particularly in policy environments where rural cultural activity is perceived as fragmented or peripheral. Translation, in this sense, converts plurality into legibility and fragility into collective robustness.

Crucially, this form of translation does not aim to persuade audiences of the intrinsic value of specific artworks or curatorial visions. Instead, it seeks to make the continued

existence of cultural activity harder to question. By assembling practices into a shared format, the collaboration creates a collective voice capable of addressing administrative and political audiences in their own terms. What translation accomplishes in Case A is not favorable judgment but continued legibility. The collaboration must remain administratively recognizable before any judgment can be formed at all.

Taken together, Case A illustrates translation functioning as vertical defensive legitimacy work. Collaboration enables symbolic practices to be rendered administratively intelligible and politically present, not in order to expand prestige or influence, but to secure continuity and survivability in a field characterized by institutional vulnerability and fragmented authority.

5.2.2 Horizontal Coordinative Translation: Case B

In contrast to Case A, translation within Case B is oriented primarily horizontally across institutions, spaces and professional practices rather than vertically toward political or administrative gatekeepers. Translation can operate coordinatively when it enables cross-context collaboration through alignment of heterogeneous practices, timelines and professional vocabularies (Nicolini, 2010). Unlike the defensive conversion of cultural activity into administrative evidence observed in Case A, translation in Case B functions coordinatively: mediating across institutions, venues and curatorial logics to enable mutual intelligibility among collaborators without requiring standardization or upward justification. While participants describe ongoing attention to funder expectations, the dominant translation work involves coordinating diverse actors, venues and professional cultures within a collaborative frame.

Interviewees consistently describe Case B as an open and flexible structure rather than a prescriptive institutional framework. Translation here does not involve converting cultural activity into administrative evidence, but rather enabling movement across curatorial, spatial and professional registers. The initiative allows projects to be situated across non-traditional venues, disciplines and institutional boundaries, requiring continuous negotiation between artistic intentions, site-specific conditions and local knowledge. Translation thus operates horizontally, facilitating communication and alignment among actors with different competencies rather than vertically toward funders or authorities.

This orientation is particularly visible in how participants describe autonomy and responsibility. Curators emphasize freedom, experimentation and the ability to shape projects according to situational demands. While coordination across multiple institutions and spaces introduces complexity, interviewees often frame this complexity as productive, generating outcomes through dialogue, negotiation and shared problem-solving. At the same time, participants describe ongoing funding uncertainty and the need to justify continuation, even when the dominant practical work of translation concerns alignment across collaborators rather than repeated re-articulation toward regional authorities. Translation supports this process by enabling mutual intelligibility between actors without requiring standardization or aggregation.

In this context, legitimacy is described as circulating through process credibility rather than demonstrable scale or impact. Case B is described as legitimate because it convenes trusted actors, operates through established professional relationships and maintains curatorial openness. Translation helps sustain this credibility by mediating between external perspectives, such as invited international curators and local institutional knowledge. Rather than defending cultural activity against evaluative scrutiny, translation here allows for experimentation while maintaining coherence.

What distinguishes this case is not an absence of external evaluative pressure, but where participants locate the main translation effort. Interviewees describe recurrent funding uncertainty and occasional explicit or implicit expectations from funders regarding framing and partnership composition. However, the most elaborated accounts of translation focus on making heterogeneous collaborators and venues workable as a shared configuration, aligning timelines, routines and professional vocabularies within a limited temporal window.

5.2.3 Comparative Synthesis: Translation and Structural Position

Juxtaposing the two cases suggests that translation is not inherently defensive or coordinative, nor is collaboration universally oriented toward legitimacy protection. The cases suggest that the orientation and direction of translation are shaped by structural position and evaluative vulnerability. In Case A, where cultural activity operates under conditions of institutional fragility and fragmented regional governance, translation becomes vertical and defensive. Collaboration aggregates dispersed practices into

administratively legible forms, enabling cultural activity to withstand evaluative pressure from multiple regional authorities.

In Case B, by contrast, translation unfolds within a context where legitimacy circulates more easily through established networks. Here, collaboration does not serve primarily to shield cultural actors from external scrutiny but to coordinate multiplicity, enable experimentation and mediate between different professional and spatial logics. Translation facilitates movement rather than defense, aligning actors without requiring consolidation or continuous external justification.

Translation work is shaped by structural conditions and field positions, not by collaborative form alone. Collaboration adapts to the conditions under which it operates.

The following discussion abstracts from these case-level patterns to specify the two-dimensional logic that underlies them, distinguishing the dominant evaluative interface where translation effort concentrates from the orientation that translation takes in response to it.

5.3 The Uneven Distribution of Pre-Legitimacy Labor

Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) identify maintenance as a distinct category of institutional work aimed at preserving and reproducing existing institutional arrangements, though maintenance work often remains less visible and theorized than creation or disruption. In collaborative configurations, maintenance work extends beyond sustaining the collaboration itself to sustaining the conditions under which the collaboration remains evaluable: its continued visibility, recognizability and intelligibility to relevant audiences.

This section examines the cost side of collaborative legitimacy by focusing on the work required to keep collaborative configurations operational over time. It shifts attention away from moments of evaluation or recognition and toward the ongoing practices that sustain the conditions under which legitimacy can circulate at all. Drawing on interview material from both cases, the analysis shows that legitimacy does not self-sustain once collaboration is established. Instead, it relies on continuous infrastructural labor that remains largely invisible, normalized and unevenly allocated across participating actors.

5.3.1 Legitimacy Maintenance as Infrastructural Labor

Across the interviews, collaboration is consistently described not as a self-sustaining arrangement but as something that must be actively held together. Legitimacy does not circulate automatically once a collaborative initiative exists; rather, it depends on ongoing efforts to coordinate actors, align expectations and maintain shared structures over time. This work appears in the empirical material in practical and understated terms.

Participants describe a wide range of activities that fall under this maintenance work. These include organizing platforms and programs, sustaining communication between dispersed actors and aligning timelines and institutional logics. A recurring task is repeatedly rearticulating the purpose and relevance of the collaboration to different audiences. Importantly, this labor is not oriented toward producing immediate recognition or evaluation outcomes. Instead, it sustains the organizational conditions that make such evaluation possible in the first place.

The invisibility of pre-legitimacy labor creates a structural problem. When maintenance succeeds in sustaining evaluability, the labor required becomes normalized and concentrates informally among actors most dependent on the collaboration's continuation. This normalization is central to how uneven maintenance burdens persist without becoming an explicit site of conflict or negotiation. Participants speak matter-of-factly about the time, coordination and relational effort required to sustain joint initiatives, suggesting that such work has been internalized as a condition of participation rather than articulated as a distinct responsibility. Infrastructure scholarship shows that arrangements become invisible precisely when they function smoothly, receding into the background of organized activity (Star, 1999; Daniels, 1987).

5.3.2 Asymmetrical Exposure and Concentrated Responsibility

Responsibility for sustaining collaborative configurations tends to concentrate among those actors who are most exposed to the consequences of their potential failure. Uneven commitment within collaborative initiatives is thus closely linked to asymmetrical exposure rather than to formal authority or size alone. Table 4 shows this distribution.

Distribution of pre-legitimacy labor across actor positions

Actor position	Visibility work	Participation work	Continuity work	Translation work	Concentration risk
Multi-field anchor institutions	**Contributory** Aligns with existing communications infrastructure and reach.	**Contributory** Participation fits existing mandates and strategic priorities.	**Episodic** Engagement is intermittent; withdrawal possible without existential cost.	**Distributed** Legitimacy work is spread across multiple channels and institutional roles.	**Low**
Field-embedded medium institutions	**Active (embedded)** Visibility work is active but absorbed within institutional routines.	**Coordinative** Participation reinforces network position and professional standing.	**Sustained (cyclical)** Sustained through recurring programs and collaboration cycles.	**Horizontal** Primarily horizontal mediation in professional vocabulary and norms.	**Medium**
Structurally dependent smaller actors	**Concentrated (burdensome)** Collaboration is the primary visibility infrastructure.	**Necessary** Participation is constitutive of organizational viability.	**Existentially necessary** Cannot afford to step back; discontinuity threatens organizational survival.	**Hybrid (vertical + horizontal)** Must translate both upward (defensive legitimacy) and across (coordination).	**High**
Coordinators / orchestrating actors	**Concentrated** Coordinator role itself concentrates visibility labor.	**Concentrated** Participation and coordination collapse into one role.	**Concentrated** Continuity carried by default through coordinational function.	**Concentrated** Absorbs all translation interfaces and legitimacy boundaries.	**Very high**

Table 4. Distribution of pre-legitimacy labor across actor positions. Concentration follows structural exposure rather than formal authority or organizational size. The categories are analytical rather than mutually exclusive; specific actors may occupy more than one position simultaneously.

Smaller and more peripheral institutions consistently describe collaboration as necessary rather than optional. For these actors, participation provides visibility, recognition and access to networks that are difficult to secure independently. As a result, the continued existence of the collaborative configuration is directly tied to their organizational legitimacy and, in some cases, to their capacity to attract funding or sustain activity over time. When collaboration falters, these actors face immediate and tangible risks. This heightened exposure translates into a stronger incentive to invest time, energy and care into keeping the collaboration functional.

Larger or more established institutions, by contrast, are positioned differently within the field. As discussed in Section 2.4, multi-field positioning provides diversified legitimacy channels that reduce dependence on any single collaborative configuration. Actors operating within fewer fields lack this diversification, making specific collaborations their primary legitimacy infrastructure and withdrawal strategically untenable. Participants describe this dynamic in terms of existential threat rather than organizational size: commitment intensifies precisely where the consequences of collaborative breakdown are most severe, and exhaustion follows when that intensity cannot be sustained.

This contrast is visible in the interview material. In Case B, one institutional representative from a larger organization describes participation as fitting existing mandates rather than as constitutive of their position: "our mandate is internationalization… so when initiatives like Case B come along, we contribute with what is already on our agenda." The framing is contributory rather than dependent.

Participation is something added to an existing agenda, not something the organization's legitimacy depends on. In Case A, the same dynamic appears through its consequences: when larger institutions withdrew from a collaborative project, the responsibility concentrated among the smallest actor, who described being "left with this whole monster in my lap." The contrast reflects where each actor stands in the field. Collaboration is one channel among many for some, and the primary channel for others.

This field-based understanding of differential exposure helps explain why responsibility for sustaining collaboration concentrates among smaller actors not because of their size per se, but because of their structural dependence on the collaborative field as a primary legitimacy arena. Their organizational survival and legitimacy are directly tied to the continued functioning of the collaborative initiative in ways that larger, multi-field actors' survival is not.

Pre-legitimacy labor concentrates in proportion to structural dependence, not in proportion to visibility, size, or symbolic capital. Across interviews, this asymmetry is rarely framed as unfair or problematic; it is treated as a structural condition of operating within an uneven cultural field. Research on interpartner legitimacy shows that mutual recognition among collaborating organizations develops through repeated interaction but is not uniformly distributed across participants (Human & Provan, 2000). This uneven recognition combines with differential field positioning to shape how responsibility for maintaining the collaboration concentrates among more exposed actors. Responsibility accumulates where dependence is greatest, not because roles are formally assigned, but because exposure makes withdrawal *riskier* for some actors than for others. Smaller institutions often describe taking on coordinating roles, absorbing uncertainty, or compensating for gaps in capacity as a matter of necessity rather than choice.

5.3.3 Normalization, Fragility and the Limits of Pre-Legitimacy Labor

The concentration of pre-legitimacy labor among more exposed actors is rarely articulated as a governance problem within the collaborations studied here. Instead, interviewees often describe uneven effort as a normal feature of working conditions in resource-constrained cultural settings. Smaller or more vulnerable actors recount taking on coordinating tasks, absorbing uncertainty and compensating for gaps in capacity as a

matter of necessity rather than choice. This dynamic resonates with the feminist labor scholarship of Daniels (1987), whose analysis of invisible work in voluntary organizations is echoed in infrastructure scholarship (Star, 1999). Essential but unrecognized work concentrates among less powerful actors and persists precisely because its naturalization forecloses explicit negotiation.

Institutional maintenance scholarship shows that the work of reproducing and sustaining institutions becomes normalized and routinized rather than explicitly negotiated (Denis et al., 2007). In collaborative configurations, this normalization enables short-term persistence by absorbing maintenance demands informally, but creates latent fragility when actors carrying disproportionate burdens experience resource loss or exhaustion.

The interviews tend not to frame this normalization as a source of conflict. While some participants express frustration with uneven effort, most treat the concentration of maintenance work as a background condition of operating in resource-constrained cultural fields, something absorbed rather than contested. What the material shows, then, is not a collaboration under visible strain but a collaboration whose durability depends on the sustained capacity of a small number of actors who cannot afford to step back. The collaborative configuration persists because those most exposed to its breakdown keep it functional. That persistence is real, but it rests on a narrow organizational base.

This is the empirical pattern the following chapter takes as its analytical object. The question it poses is what this pattern implies for how distributed legitimacy scholarship has understood the relationship between collaborative visibility and collaborative resilience.

6. Discussion & Theoretical Implications

This thesis has addressed the question of how cultural organizations enact and maintain legitimacy through collaborative configurations in fragmented fields.
Three sub-questions structure the analysis:

1. What practices constitute this work? Four types of pre-legitimacy labor (visibility, participation, continuity, and translation work) sustain evaluability as an ongoing infrastructural accomplishment.
2. How does it vary across contexts and field positions? Translation work varies by dominant evaluative interface, taking vertical and defensive forms where structural dependence is acute and horizontal and coordinative forms where established networks reduce vulnerability.
3. How is responsibility distributed? Pre-legitimacy labor concentrates among structurally dependent actors, generating a fragility loop in which collaborative configurations become most vulnerable precisely when they appear most established.

The following sections develop the theoretical implications of these findings.

6.1 Re-specifying legitimacy work: Pre-legitimacy labor and sequencing

This thesis refines legitimacy work by specifying pre-legitimacy labor as the organizational work through which collaborative configurations remain evaluable. *Evaluability* refers to the condition of being available to assessment: the configuration is sufficiently visible, recognizable, intelligible and continuous for relevant audiences to form judgments at all. In fragmented cultural fields where evaluative authority is dispersed and value is symbolically assessed, evaluability cannot be assumed as a stable background condition.

Legitimacy work scholarship usefully shifts attention to what organizations do to construct and maintain legitimacy over time. This scholarship has productively examined symbolic and interpretive work through which organizations construct and negotiate legitimacy (Zilber, 2006), as well as the ongoing effort required to maintain

institutional arrangements once established (Lawrence & Suddaby, 2006). However, this work tends to focus on practices aimed at shaping or maintaining evaluations while treating the organizational object being evaluated as already present and coherent. In collaborative configurations, that object is itself produced and maintained through ongoing work. Pre-legitimacy labor names and theorizes this "conditions layer."

Pre-legitimacy labor denotes sustained efforts that keep a collaborative configuration coherent enough to be encountered and assessed across plural evaluators. It includes practices such as maintaining a recognizable collective frame, structuring participation, sustaining temporal recurrence and translating activity across evaluative regimes. Analytically, the configuration is not treated as agentic; it is the arrangement through which participants maintain evaluability.

To prevent conceptual slippage into "coordination in general," pre-legitimacy labor can be identified by its primary orientation. Pre-legitimacy labor can be observed when work is directed toward sustaining the configuration's:

1. **Recognizability** (shared name/frame; being "a thing" others can reference)
2. **Traceability** (who is included; program listings, partner visibility, reporting)
3. **Continuity** (recurrence; the capacity to return over time)
4. **Cross-audience intelligibility** (translation between evaluative regimes)

This distinguishes pre-legitimacy labor from (a) legitimation strategies aimed at shaping a specific evaluation (impression management, narrative framing for a decision moment) and (b) operational coordination that does not primarily serve evaluability (e.g. internal task allocation unrelated to public intelligibility or continuity).

A related objection is that pre-legitimacy labor simply relabels the coordination costs inherent in any multi-actor arrangement. The distinction lies in orientation rather than activity type. Coordination costs describe resource expenditure on operational alignment, while pre-legitimacy labor specifies work oriented toward sustaining evaluability through recognizability, traceability, continuity and cross-audience intelligibility. The same activity can involve both. A planning meeting may address operational logistics and sustain the configuration's visibility simultaneously. What makes work identifiable as pre-legitimacy labor is not the task itself but what its absence would forfeit. The test is what kind of breakdown would follow if the work stopped. If

removing the work would make the collaboration less operationally aligned, the work is coordinative. If removing it would make the collaboration unrecognizable or unintelligible to its audiences, the work is pre-legitimacy labor.

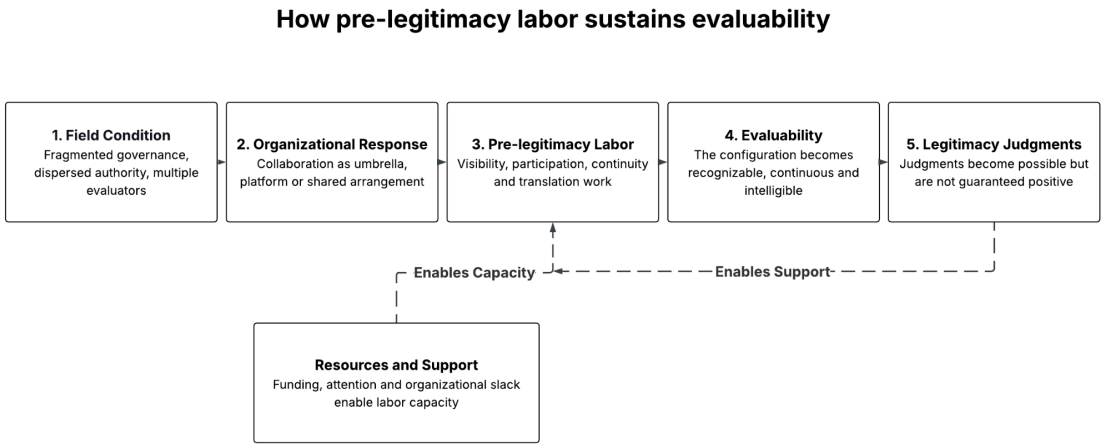


Figure 2. Pre-legitimacy labor (visibility, participation, continuity, translation) sustains evaluability under fragmented governance, enabling legitimacy judgments. Resources enable capacity; evaluability can attract future support.

Conceptualizing pre-legitimacy labor also supports a sequencing claim, best understood as analytically separable layers rather than a strictly linear timeline. Infrastructure scholarship demonstrates that maintenance work precedes and enables infrastructure use rather than merely following from functional success (Star, 1999). Similarly, pre-legitimacy labor operates at a prior analytical level. The work of sustaining evaluability precedes and enables legitimacy judgments, making evaluation possible without determining outcomes. First, actors sustain evaluability through pre-legitimacy labor. Second, on the basis of these maintained conditions, legitimacy judgments can be formed, contested and translated across audiences. This relationship is enabling rather than deterministic: evaluability makes evaluation possible; it does not guarantee favorable judgments or stability. In practice, evaluation can also feed back into evaluability; positive attention, funding decisions, or reputational shifts can strengthen (or undermine) the capacity to sustain the configuration.

This sequencing claim illustrated in Figure 2 is best understood as a theoretical specification rather than an empirically traced path. The interpretive design adopted in this study captures how participants describe and enact pre-legitimacy labor, but does not directly observe how shifts in evaluability shape subsequent legitimacy judgments by funders, peers, or publics. Tracing that pathway empirically would require a

longitudinal, multi-method design combining participant accounts with documentary analysis of evaluative moments and observational data on judgment formation, an approach signaled in Section 6.5 as a productive direction for future research. The contribution offered here is conceptual rather than causal: a specification of what evaluability requires and why it matters. Treating this as a scope condition rather than a deficiency clarifies what the study can and cannot claim.

Another possible objection is that pre-legitimacy labor is simply a sub-type of legitimacy maintenance work, already theorized by Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) and Zilber (2006). The distinction lies in what counts as success. Legitimation strategies succeed when a specific judgment moves in a desired direction. Pre-legitimacy labor succeeds when the configuration remains encounterable as an object of assessment, regardless of the direction of subsequent judgments. The four criteria specified above operationalize this success condition: recognizability, traceability, continuity and cross-audience intelligibility describe what a configuration must minimally sustain to be available for evaluation at all.

6.2 Translation work as a positional phenomenon: Differentiated interfaces under evaluative pluralism

This section refines translation as a legitimacy-relevant practice under evaluative pluralism. Legitimacy research recognizes that organizations must render themselves intelligible across multiple audiences and logics. Translation scholarship recognizes that the work of rendering practices intelligible varies across contexts rather than following uniform patterns (Zilber, 2006). Strategic action field theory provides the analytical vocabulary for understanding how this variation follows from actors' structural positions within and across fields (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012). However, neither literature has systematically specified how translation varies by the dominant evaluative interface actors must navigate. The contribution here is to show that translation work in collaborative configurations is not uniform. It concentrates around a dominant evaluative interface: the arena where participants absorb the greatest ongoing effort, where misalignment most threatens continuity and where accountability pressures are most intensely experienced.

The analysis distinguishes translation along two dimensions, summarized in Figure 3, a direction dimension running from vertical (toward external evaluators such as funders, administrative bodies and political authorities) to horizontal (across collaborators, including institutions, venues and professional logics) and an orientation dimension running from defensive (sustaining fundability and continued operation) to coordinative (aligning heterogeneous actors so the collaboration can function as a shared initiative).

Although the dimensions are analytically separable, they tend to co-vary in the cases studied. Where translation effort concentrates upward, it also tends to be defensive and where it concentrates across collaborators, it tends to be coordinative. The analytical point is therefore not whether the dimensions vary independently in principle, but where translation becomes dominant in practice and what it must accomplish to sustain evaluability.

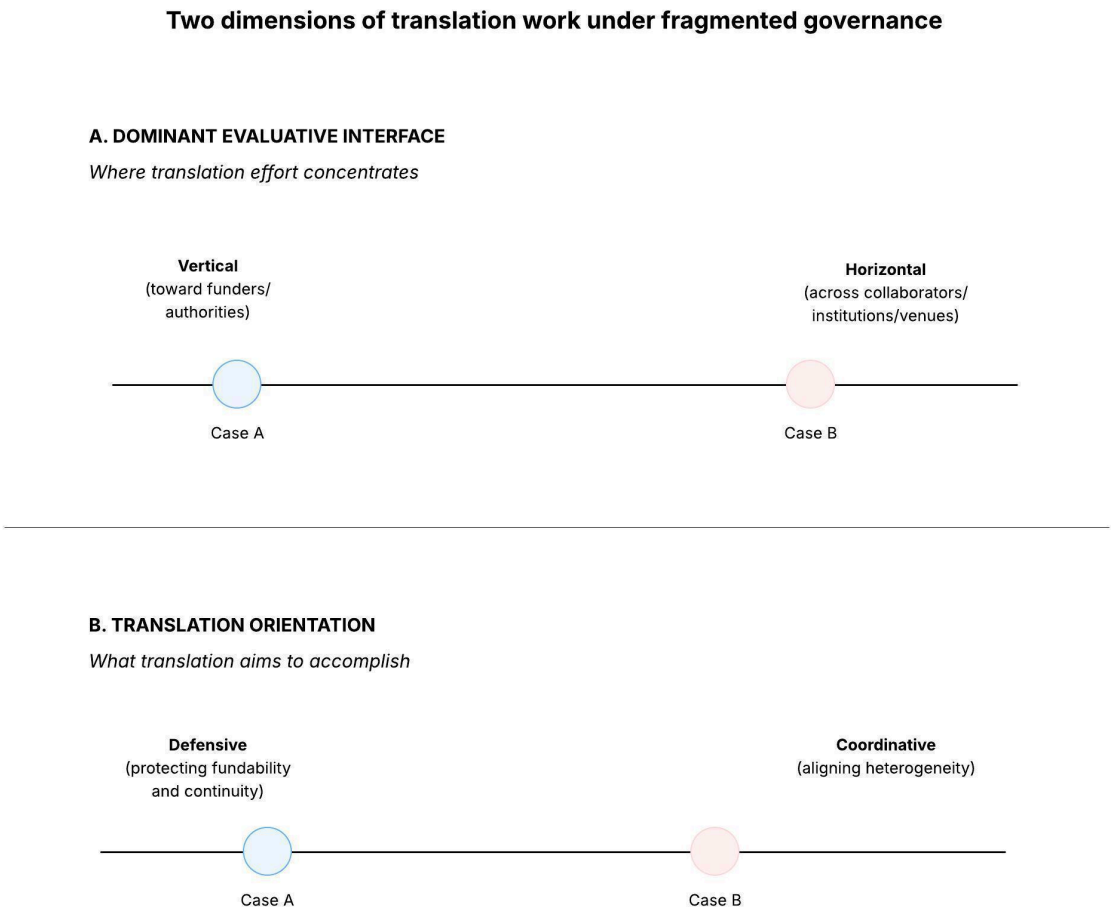


Figure 3. Two dimensions of translation work. Case A occupies the vertical-defensive quadrant; Case B occupies the horizontal-coordinative quadrant. Marker placement reflects dominant patterns rather than pure types.

In collaborations with a vertical dominant interface, translation tends to be defensive. Under fragmented authority and recurring application cycles, participants must repeatedly convert dispersed cultural practice into administratively legible representations: collective scale, mapped presence, coherent framing and evidence of continuity. Translation here is less about persuading audiences of the intrinsic value of particular works and more about sustaining the conditions under which cultural activity remains fundable and institutionally present.

In collaborations with a horizontal dominant interface, translation tends to be coordinative. Where collaboration is enacted through multiple hosts, spaces and professional practices, the main translation burden involves making heterogeneity workable: aligning timelines, routines, vocabularies and expectations across partners so that the configuration holds together as a recognizable shared frame. External evaluative pressure can still exist (including funding uncertainty), but translation effort is absorbed primarily in cross-partner coordination rather than repeated justificatory engagement upward.

An interface-based view enables comparison across collaborations without collapsing cases into "secure" versus "threatened." Instead, it directs attention to where evaluative demands are primarily encountered and what translation must accomplish to sustain evaluability over time. Strategic action field theory explains how actors' structural positions within and across fields fundamentally shape their strategic orientations and action repertoires (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012). Applied to translation work, this positional logic determines whether translation is primarily vertical and defensive toward evaluators or horizontal and coordinative across collaborators. The contribution is to show that translation is not a uniform organizational practice but a positional phenomenon shaped by the dominant evaluative interface actors must navigate.

6.3 The Structural Tension in Collaborative Legitimacy: Collective Visibility, Concentrated Labor

Distributed legitimacy scholarship (Thomas & Ritala, 2022; Adner, 2017) holds that collaborative configurations generate visibility and evaluability that individual organizations could not sustain independently, and the cases studied here confirm this.

Both configurations produce shared frames of appearance, collective signals that travel to funders and peer networks, and temporal presence that accrues to participating actors regardless of their individual contribution to sustaining it. What the literature has not examined is the assumption embedded in this account. That the distribution of visibility benefits corresponds to a distribution of the maintenance work required to sustain them.

The empirical material developed in Section 5.3 does not support that assumption. Visibility in the cases studied is collective, but the labor required to sustain it concentrates among a limited set of actors, and that concentration follows structural dependence rather than organizational size, formal authority, or visibility within the configuration. The result is a collaborative arrangement that can appear increasingly robust from the outside precisely as the organizational base sustaining it narrows, since the actors most invested in the configuration's continuation are also those least positioned to reduce their commitment when capacity declines.

What the analysis identifies here is therefore not simply an asymmetry in contribution, which collaborative governance research has documented in other forms, but a specific relationship between apparent stability and structural fragility. The configurations studied are not most vulnerable when they appear precarious. They are most vulnerable when the normalization of maintenance work has proceeded far enough that the labor sustaining the collaborative frame has become *invisible* to those who benefit from it without carrying it.

As shown in Section 5.3, this asymmetry follows structural dependence rather than formal authority. Actors operating across multiple strategic action fields possess diversified legitimacy sources and can reduce dependence on any single collaboration, whereas actors operating within fewer fields rely on collaboration as a primary legitimacy infrastructure (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012). This difference in dependence explains why pre-legitimacy labor concentrates among structurally vulnerable actors, for whom collaboration is not optional but constitutive of visibility and legitimacy, an asymmetry not fully accounted for in ecosystem accounts of distributed legitimacy.

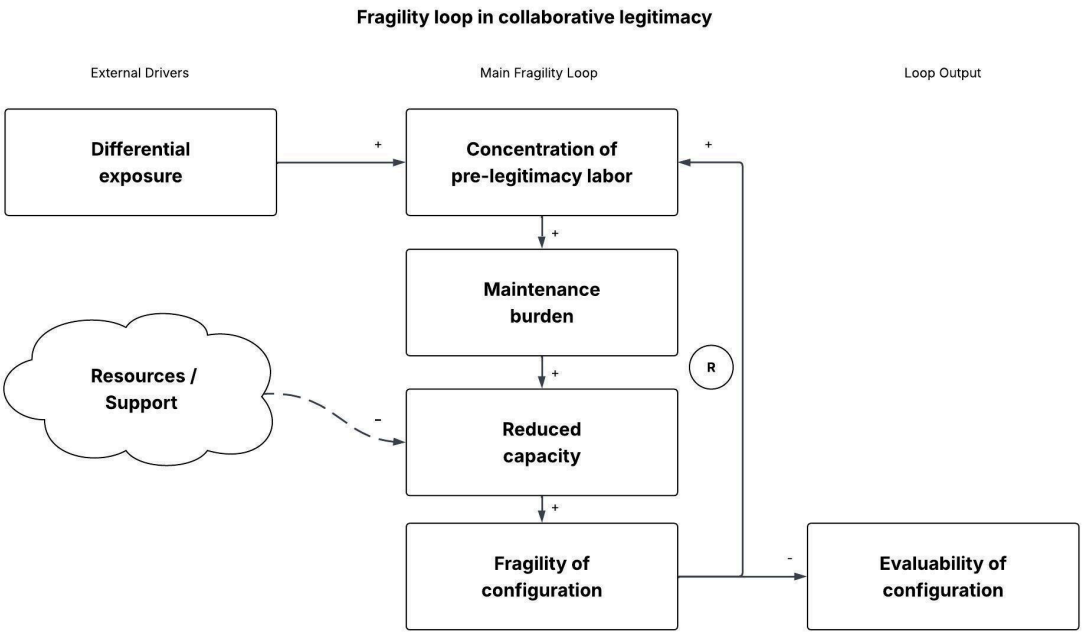


Figure 4. Fragility loop in collaborative legitimacy

Figure 4 illustrates the resulting fragility mechanism. Differential exposure concentrates maintenance burden among dependent actors, increasing strain on organizational capacity. Because these same actors face the highest exit costs, declining conditions cannot be offset through withdrawal, producing a reinforcing dynamic in which reduced capacity further intensifies labor concentration.

Taken together, these findings challenge assumptions in ecosystem and network governance literature that distributed visibility implies distributed resilience. What the empirical material revealed here was more counterintuitive than expected: the fragility is greatest not in configurations that appear precarious, but in those that appear established. Recurring formats generate field-level recognition but that recognition does not reduce the maintenance burden that sustains it. If anything, the normalization of uneven labor makes the fragility harder to see. The concept of pre-legitimacy labor emerged because the interview material consistently pointed to work that participants treated as unremarkable background: the invisible, continuous labor of sustaining collaborative visibility that neither participants nor existing scholarship had fully named as a distinct organizational phenomenon.

While collaboration can enhance collective legitimacy, it does not necessarily distribute the labor required to sustain it. Without attention to maintenance distribution,

collaborative configurations may, counterintuitively, reproduce a structural fragility even as they appear externally robust.

6.4 Scope Conditions and Theoretical Boundaries

Pre-legitimacy labor emerges from the governance condition established in Chapter 1: dispersed evaluative authority that makes legitimacy a recurrent organizational concern rather than a stable background condition. The concept is most analytically applicable where four conditions are present.

1. **Fragmented evaluative authority.** Legitimacy is assessed by multiple audiences with partially overlapping or conflicting criteria rather than by a single dominant evaluator. Where evaluative authority is concentrated or stabilized through formal mechanisms, the continuous work of maintaining evaluability becomes less organizationally necessary.
2. **Symbolic rather than market-based evaluation.** Value is determined through interpretation, recognition and positioning within a field rather than through objective performance metrics. Where market mechanisms or formal regulatory standards stabilize evaluability, the continuous infrastructural work of maintaining intelligibility becomes less organizationally urgent.
3. **Distributed legitimacy across configurations.** Legitimacy attaches to collaborative arrangements rather than residing solely within individual organizations. Where legitimacy remains organizationally bounded, as in purely instrumental collaborations, the maintenance burden does not distribute across configurations in the same way.
4. **Resource scarcity and institutional precarity.** Participating actors face differential exposure to resource loss or institutional breakdown. Where maintenance work is professionalized and adequately compensated, the concentration of pre-legitimacy labor among vulnerable actors is less pronounced.

Together, these conditions describe a governance field in which evaluability cannot be assumed but must be continuously produced and in which the costs of that production

distribute unevenly across structurally exposed actors. This is the field condition that makes pre-legitimacy labor both necessary and analytically visible.

Beyond cultural fields, these conditions may characterize social entrepreneurship ecosystems, community health collaborations, grassroots advocacy networks and participatory research partnerships. The concept is less applicable where evaluability is institutionally guaranteed, where legitimacy is organizationally based, or where resources are sufficient to professionalize maintenance work.

6.5 Limitations and Future Research Directions

Several limitations shape the scope and interpretation of this study:

1. **Empirical scope.** Two collaborative initiatives within Swedish cultural policy contexts enable depth but limit transferability. Comparative research across governance regimes would clarify how policy structures shape pre-legitimacy labor.
2. **Methodological constraints.** Interview data captures how participants understand legitimacy work but does not directly observe organizational practices. Future research could combine interviews with ethnographic observation or document analysis.
3. **Temporal limitations.** Interviews capture collaboration at specific moments. Long-term studies could reveal how pre-legitimacy labor evolves and under what conditions collaborative infrastructures become institutionalized or collapse.
4. **Outcome bracketing.** The sequencing claim (evaluability → judgment) remains theoretically proposed rather than empirically demonstrated. Tracing that pathway empirically would require a longitudinal, multi-method design, identified as a direction for future research.
5. **Distributional dynamics.** The study identifies concentration among exposed actors but does not examine redistribution mechanisms. Action research could explore whether formalizing maintenance roles alters patterns of burden and sustainability.

6.6 Conclusions and Implications

This thesis advances three theoretical contributions, each extending an established line of scholarship in legitimacy theory, collaborative governance and cultural policy. These contributions are cumulative rather than separate. Pre-legitimacy labor specifies the organizational work that sustains evaluability, translation positionality explains how this work varies across evaluative interfaces and the fragility loop demonstrates its structural consequence: collective visibility can coexist with concentrated organizational vulnerability.

6.6.1 Theoretical contribution

Contribution 1: Pre-legitimacy labor as a layer prior to legitimacy work

The first contribution specifies pre-legitimacy labor as a previously unnamed layer of organizational work prior to legitimacy work itself. Legitimacy work scholarship has productively theorized how organizations shape, defend and negotiate legitimacy judgments, but has tended to treat the evaluated organizational object as already present and coherent. In collaborative configurations operating under fragmented evaluative authority, that coherence cannot be assumed. Maintaining it requires continuous organizational effort that existing scholarship has left unnamed. Pre-legitimacy labor is distinguished from legitimation strategies, which seek to shape specific judgments, and from operational coordination, which targets task execution without orienting toward evaluative availability. The contribution is sequential in character: pre-legitimacy labor establishes the conditions under which legitimacy judgments become possible at all. This is addressing the gap identified in Section 2.6 where legitimacy work scholarship has treated the evaluated object as already present without theorizing the work that makes it so.

Contribution 2: Translation as positional and interface-specific

The second contribution demonstrates that translation in collaborative configurations is not a uniform organizational practice but a positional one, varying systematically with the dominant evaluative interface actors must navigate. Translation scholarship has theorized rendering work as variable across contexts. This thesis specifies how that variation is structured. Two analytically separable dimensions distinguish translation

orientations. One is direction, running from vertical (toward funders and administrative bodies) to horizontal (across collaborators). The other is orientation, running from defensive (sustaining fundability) to coordinative (aligning heterogeneous actors). These dimensions co-vary empirically. Translation that concentrates upward tends toward the defensive. Translation that concentrates across collaborators tends toward the coordinative. The contribution is therefore not that translation varies but that variation follows structural position.This addresses the gap identified in Section 2.6 where distributed legitimacy scholarship has not differentiated how distinct evaluative interfaces structure the work of sustaining collaborative visibility.

Contribution 3: The fragility loop in distributed legitimacy

The third contribution identifies a structural mechanism in distributed legitimacy that prior scholarship has not specified. Distributed legitimacy scholarship has argued that legitimacy in collaborative configurations attaches to the configuration itself rather than residing within individual organizations. This thesis confirms that descriptive claim. Visibility and temporal presence accrue to all participants regardless of their contribution. But the thesis contests an embedded assumption: that distributed visibility implies distributed resilience. The empirical material shows the opposite. While visibility is collective, the labor required to sustain it concentrates unevenly, following structural dependence rather than formal authority or organizational size. The result is a reinforcing mechanism in which maintenance burden concentrates among actors least positioned to absorb it, progressively eroding the organizational capacity on which evaluability depends. The counterintuitive consequence is that collaborative configurations may appear most robust precisely when they are structurally most fragile. This addresses the gap identified in Section 2.6 where infrastructure and institutional work perspectives have not specified how maintenance labor distributes across actors within collaborative configurations.

These three contributions are cumulative rather than parallel. Pre-legitimacy labor names a previously unspecified layer of organizational work. Translation positionality shows how one dimension of that layer varies systematically with structural position. The fragility loop traces the structural consequence of uneven labor distribution within that layer. Together, they specify what an analysis of collaborative legitimacy must address that current scholarship has left unexamined.

6.6.2 Empirical contribution

Empirically, the study demonstrates two patterns prior scholarship has assumed away. Translation work varies systematically by dominant evaluative interface. It is vertical and defensive where structural dependence is acute, and horizontal and coordinative where established networks reduce vulnerability. Pre-legitimacy labor concentrates among actors most dependent on collaboration for legitimacy, tracking structural vulnerability rather than formal authority or organizational size. This displaces the assumption that collaborative arrangements naturally distribute benefits and burdens equally.

6.6.3 Practical implications

The fragility loop developed in Section 6.3 specifies how these dynamics reinforce one another. The following interventions each address a specific mechanism in that loop.

1. **Recognize pre-legitimacy labor as a distinct funding category.** The Kulturrådet reform proposes simplifying annual reporting. This is precisely the moment to argue that simplification should not collapse coordination, continuity, and translation work into invisible overhead. A concrete proposal would be a designated cost line within *verksamhetsstöd* (operational support) for collaborative coordination work, distinct from project deliverables, accountable in process terms (was the work sustained) rather than output terms (what did it produce). This works within existing budget frameworks because it reallocates within current grants rather than requiring new funds.
2. **Use the four-year *kulturplan* window to formalize collaborative infrastructure.** The reform extends *kulturplan* validity from three to four years. This creates space to recognize collaborative initiatives that span planning cycles. A concrete proposal would be a category within *kulturplaner* for multi-organizational collaborative infrastructure, with coordination compensation built in. This addresses the project-funding-cliff problem interviewees describe directly. Case A's coordinator describing each iteration as starting from scratch is the exact pattern this would address.
3. **Fund continuity, not only projects.** Recurring formats matter for field-level recognition but lose viability when project-based funding declines after initial

phases. Multi-year resourcing reduces the reduced-capacity feedback in the loop and protects temporal continuity as a legitimacy infrastructure.

4. **Help dependent actors diversify their legitimacy channels.** Differential exposure operates as the external driver of the loop. Reducing this exposure requires policy instruments that help structurally dependent actors cultivate alternative legitimacy channels through coordination across regional *kulturplaner* or by integrating smaller actors into national networks. This reduces the concentration of pre-legitimacy labor at its source.

The contribution offered here is conceptual. It specifies a layer of work that has been theorized adjacent to legitimacy without being theorized as legitimacy. The redistributive question is how this work might be shared, recognized and resourced. That is the next analytical horizon.

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Appendix

Appendix 1. Interview Questions

1. How would you describe the position of *Case A / Case B* within the cultural landscape you operate in?
2. What made participation in this initiative meaningful or relevant for your organization at this point in time?
3. To what extent did the collaborative structure shape what you could or could not do as a participating organization?
4. How clear was your role within the overall initiative, and who did you see as having the main responsibility for the program as a whole?
5. When participating, who did you imagine would be paying attention to your involvement, and did that matter for how you acted?
6. Did participation feel low-risk, high-risk, or something in between for your organization?
7. How did participating in this initiative differ from working independently or within a single institutional framework?
8. Looking back, what do you think this collaboration made possible that would have been difficult to achieve otherwise?
9. "Who do you feel you need to convince, justify to, or be understandable for when you participate (peers, region, funders, politicians, publics)?"
10. What would happen if this collaboration didn't exist anymore?
11. Does this initiative change how cultural activity is *seen over time*?
12. Do funders or policymakers treat this differently than individual projects?
13. What risks does this collaboration help you manage?

Appendix 2. Initial Email Sent to Interviewees

Hi [...],

I hope you're well. My name is Lou Mouw. I'm a curator/producer at Platform Stockholm and currently writing my master's thesis in Business Administration at SSE (Handelshögskolan), focusing on how collaborative initiatives in the art field are organized and sustained in practice.

I'm looking at Case A/Case B as one of my cases, and [...]'s role as a participant of previous editions is at the core of my interest. I'm interested in how collaborations like Case A/Case B are framed and carried at an institutional level, how responsibilities are shared, how the structure has evolved over time, and how the collaboration is positioned within the field.

I was wondering if you would be open to a short conversation (around 30 minutes) where I could ask a few reflective questions about [...]'s perspective on Case A/ Case B as a collaborative framework. This is strictly academic research and everything would of course be treated confidentially.

If you're open to it, I'd be very happy to adapt to a time that suits you.

Best,

Lou Mouw

Appendix 3. Use of Generative AI

In line with SSE's *Guidelines for Students Regarding Generative AI and Thesis Writing, generative AI,* generative AI tools (specifically large language models) were used in a supportive role. The primary tool used was Claude (Anthropic), accessed via claude.ai and terminal between January and May 2026.

Claude was used for grammar and language improvement, rephrasing sentences for clarity, and shortening overly lengthy passages to meet word count requirements. It was also used as a sounding board during the revision process, to identify structural weaknesses, test whether arguments were clearly expressed.

The tool was not used to generate analysis, develop theoretical concepts, conduct or interpret interviews, or produce the original thesis draft. All analytical reasoning, empirical interpretation, and theoretical positioning are the author's own. All AI output was critically reviewed, substantially modified where necessary, and integrated only where it strengthened arguments already developed through independent work. The author takes full responsibility for all content in this thesis.

The main risks identified in using generative AI included over-reliance on stylistic suggestions potentially shaping argument presentation, as well as the risk of inadvertently smoothing analytical distinctions. These risks were mitigated through iterative review, ensuring that all substantive analytical decisions remained author-driven.

The use of generative AI provided insight into how iterative phrasing and structural testing can support clarity without replacing analytical judgement. It also highlighted the importance of maintaining clear boundaries between language refinement and conceptual development in qualitative research writing.

Appendix 4. Empirical Quote Matrix

	Quote	Code	Characteristic	Type of legitimacy work	Case	Cited (section)
1	*Case A was a kind of decisive factor for [...] forming and getting started.*	Triennial as catalyst for organisation	Field-level institutional formation	Continuity	A	
2	*It's important that it doesn't just become a triennial every three years but that things also happen in between.*	Inter-edition activity	Sustaining presence between iterations	Continuity	A	
3	*This will be a good test to see how it works and what the interest that bubbled up three years ago can become now.*	Recurrence as live test	Iteration as field test	Continuity	A	
4	*First round we received quite substantial funds from Postkodlotteriet and we don't have that this round. Now it's up to all individual actors to apply for money.*	Loss of central funding	Resource decline across iterations	Continuity	A	
5	*It's about these white spots in [...] with great distances and that it's important to connect them.*	Connecting dispersed actors	Mapping the landscape	Visibility	A	
6	*For us, becoming part of [...] and breaking new ground at Case A was hugely important to reach out.*	Joining for outreach	Network entry as visibility move	Participation	A	
7	*It's going to be a bit of a generational shift now so the gallery continues to survive.*	Generational succession	Organisational survival framing	Continuity	A	
8	*It's that you don't communicate with each other. If you could find strength in each other by collaborating on programmes and doing things together…*	Coordinating dispersed activity	Communication coordination	Visibility	A	
9	*That you market yourself together, it becomes one big leaf where all this is happening.*	Joint marketing	Bundling attention	Visibility	A	

10	*It's locally anchored, many know about it. But marketing yourself in this very context I would say is important.*	Joining recognised frame	Branding for new audience	Visibility	A	
11	*There we can't take for granted that they know who we are.*	Audience awareness gap	Visibility constraint	Visibility	A	
12	*We feel our role in this is still clear: that we come with a perspective from an art association that has existed long but struggles to be relevant in its present.*	Articulating institutional position	Self-positioning within frame	Participation	A	
13	*Just because we haven't been visible enough, people thought we had a lot of money and didn't want to collaborate. So having a longer history can attract different stamps.*	Managing perceptions through participation	Reputational repair via inclusion	Participation	A	
14	*Case A is about collaboration between different actors in [...], so for us it becomes very clear.*	Collaboration as primary purpose	Collaborative configuration	Participation	A	
15	*We had to apply for funds from […] to be able to participate. We don't get any funds from Case A for doing this; we pay a membership fee and then we can participate.*	Self-financed participation	Cost of inclusion	Participation	A	
16	*Themes can be a bit problematic because you want to work in your own practice and then you become boxed into a theme.*	Negotiating thematic frame	Aligning practice with overarching theme	Translation	A	
17	*On their Instagram they publish that they collaborate with us and then we all appear there together, it creates a sense of community.*	Joint social media presence	Shared digital visibility	Participation	A	*4.1.2
18	*Case A has built up a network of contacts during these three years that we can also draw on.*	Inheriting collaborative network	Network access through participation	Participation	A	
19	*The art museum nearby has really succeeded in rejuvenating its members. If we can also exchange experiences there, that's very important.*	Peer learning through frame	Inter-institutional exchange	Participation	A	

20	*The printed material that was for [Case A] was very fine… I really made my way to this place once and for all… it's quite far from where I live and somewhat remote.*	Printed materials enabling navigation	Physical wayfinding through shared frame	Visibility	A	*4.1.1
21	*We have also discussed having some kind of panel discussion with cultural politicians in connection with [Case A].*	Engaging cultural politicians	Political audience engagement	Translation	A	
22	*I'm also an important part in this, in how to spread it culturally-politically.*	Spreading politically	Vertical communication	Translation	A	
23	*It was the first edition. I have only seen parts personally, but it feels like it landed very well.*	Reflecting on first iteration	Field-level reception	Continuity	A	
24	*It was focused on the geographical context and felt well-anchored to the place.*	Geographic anchoring	Place-based legibility	Visibility	A	
25	*[...] is a very large landscape divided into three regions. It's a good way to try to create some exchange and cohesion among [...] art actors.*	Coordination across regions	Inter-regional coherence	Visibility	A	
26	*It feels more like a bottom-up movement. Not just a collaboration between institutions but many other actors too.*	Bottom-up character	Distributed authorship	Participation	A	
27	*It's perhaps important outside all metropolitan areas. In rural environments it's nice to have a collaboration where together you safeguard art.*	Joint defence of culture	Territorial safeguarding	Translation	A	
28	*If you ask someone else they think there are too few [actors]. We are quite scattered. So it feels important to have a common project that unites the institutions.*	Uniting scattered actors	Joint forum for dispersed field	Visibility	A	
29	*Otherwise you forget what's on the map. Having all actors gathered in an event you can map across the whole area.*	Shared map of activity	Mapping the landscape	Visibility	A	
30	*Many free actors participate, many artist-run, perhaps temporary initiatives. So it gives a possibility to meet at different levels.*	Multi-level encounters	Cross-format meeting	Participation	A	

31	*In Stockholm there are incredibly many networks all the time. That's not really like that here.*	Network scarcity locally	Comparative isolation	Participation	A	
32	*I'm intendant for [...]s konstarkiv… so for me it's super-relevant because it's about the same as what I'm supposed to do.*	Mandate alignment	Mandate-fitting participation	Participation	A	
33	*It feels like a big potluck (knytkalas) — everyone brings their heart-issues and processes to this common forum.*	Potluck contribution model	Voluntary configurational input	Participation	A	
34	*Many makes for a wide and diverse outcome. More than what [...]s konstarkiv can do alone.*	Multiplicative breadth	Configurational amplification	Visibility	A	
35	*Through the projects being interconnected, the audience perhaps moves in different ways or discovers other places.*	Cross-site audience movement	Distributed publics	Visibility	A	
36	*It's quite decentralised. I am ultimately responsible for my own programme.*	Decentralised responsibility	Distributed authorship	Participation	A	
37	*Many were quite skeptical about the theme — it's very current but perhaps a theme that's hard to attract new art visitors with.*	Theme as risk	Theme audience-fit tension	Translation	A	
38	*Definitely, I expanded my network through these dialogue meetings.*	Network expansion	Inter-institutional contact-building	Participation	A	
39	*It's a way to secure the infrastructure a little, the bigger the infrastructure, the harder it is to take money away from such things.*	Infrastructure as defence	Infrastructural framing for survival	Translation	A	
40	*It feels like Case A is something that can lay a fairly large part of the cultural infrastructure. So it's a project one can understand as a defence.*	Triennial as defensive infrastructure	Vertical defensive framing	Translation	A	
41	*Resistance is part of this year's theme.*	Theme as resistance	Defensive thematic framing	Translation	A	

42	*[Case A is part of] a bottom-up tradition in [...]. The legitimacy comes from this tradition.*	Bottom-up legitimacy	Field-historical anchoring	Continuity	A	
43	*Case A began as an application from three regions to get [...]. That's [...]*	Origin in failed Manifesta bid	Antecedent project legacy	Continuity	A	
44	*When that funding ended after three years it was as if the air went out, there was no real plan for continued financing.*	Post-project funding gap	Continuity collapse risk	Continuity	A	
45	*We needed a completely different type of engagement. We formed [...] [as] a district and ran the triennial from there.*	Reformation under pressure	Organisational restructuring for continuity	Continuity	A	
46	*Some of the larger institutions backed out of the room. The regions had to withdraw — they were now grant-givers and could no longer drive the triennial.*	Larger institutions withdraw	Asymmetric withdrawal	Continuity	A	
47	*Suddenly we who were left were sitting with this huge project in our laps. All these big institutions kicked off this huge project… and then they left. And there I was [...] representing one of the very smallest institutions [...] left with this whole [...] monster in my lap.*	Concentrated coordination burden	Disproportionate exposure after withdrawal	Continuity	A	*4.3.2
48	*I worked incredibly hard that spring.*	Intensity of maintenance	Coordinator labour intensity	Continuity	A	*4.3.1
49	*We needed to anchor the triennial much more locally. The 'top-down' got a lot of criticism.*	Local anchoring as response	Reorientation toward grassroots	Visibility	A	
50	*We did mapping over [...], what artists, what artist-driven places exist, where can we step in?*	Mapping the landscape	Inventory of dispersed actors	Visibility	A	
51	*From those conditions and the short start-stretch I think it became a very fine programme that took place in many ways out in the bushes.*	Dispersed public presence	Geographic spread of programming	Visibility	A	
52	*The best way to convince artists is to give them money.*	Material engagement	Resource as recognition	Participation	A	

53	*These projects ended up in this larger context and I experienced significant interest [...] and were thereby lifted to something that became more substantial than if they had just done their project independently.*	Contextual lift through frame	Configurational amplification	Visibility	A	*4.1.2
54	*Our approach was completely necessary. I don't think we'd have gotten funding to redo nya [...].*	Necessity of repositioning	Strategic re-translation	Translation	A	
55	*Convincing the regions — this local and regional anchoring became very important. We had projects in all three counties.*	Cross-regional credibility	Distributed regional presence	Translation	A	
56	*We wanted the bigger institutions to remain, they gave the project legitimacy, a certain aura.*	Anchor institutions	Borrowed legitimacy	Participation	A	
57	*We know they have bigger muscles even if they say they have no time, no people, no money.*	Resource asymmetry	Capacity differential	Participation	A	
58	*We had to go to one region at a time. Like: can we get money from you? Can we get money from you? Can we get money from you?*	Region-by-region applications	Repeated funding negotiation	Translation	A	*4.2.1
59	*They had different structures, different organisation. Some had knowledgeable people; others sent an economist who didn't understand.*	Varied evaluator competencies	Heterogeneous evaluative interface	Translation	A	
60	*I'm an old journalist, I'm pretty good at political structures — but this was overwhelming. So many parties not in sync.*	Navigation overload	Fragmented evaluative architecture	Translation	A	
61	*Politics understands glitter and stardom. What we did simply doesn't become as media-impactful.*	Political language gap	Mismatch with mediatic logic	Translation	A	*4.2.1
62	*We are also in a huge media shadow.*	Geographic media disadvantage	Spatial visibility constraint	Visibility	A	*4.2.1
63	*Just applying for all this funding takes a lot of time.*	Application labour	Time cost of vertical translation	Translation	A	*4.2.1

64	*They still contribute one hundred and fifty thousand [...] which really isn't any money in a context like this.*	Inadequate ongoing funding	Fragile resourcing	Continuity	A	*4.2.1
65	*Three regions joined together in a joint application [...] but they didn't get it. So instead they applied for project funding from the Swedish Arts Council.*	Retreat to project mode	Stepping down evaluative ambition	Translation	A	*4.2.1
66	*When you lose funding you start looking after your own house.*	Inward turn under pressure	Withdrawal under scarcity	Continuity	A	
67	*For their funders it's enough they show very fancy verksamhet and good visitor numbers in their venues. We pulled the audience to all sorts of places.*	Evaluation criteria mismatch	Differential metric exposure	Translation	A	
68	*Big institutions don't see their role as motors or catalysts in these processes. The demand is not strong enough from their funders.*	Weak structural pressure on anchors	Asymmetric incentive landscape	Continuity	A	
69	*This is some kind of necessity to keep ourselves relevant — to have these tentacles out into society. But it's not free.*	Cost of relevance work	Maintenance as overhead	Continuity	A	
70	*When there isn't any money, exhaustion sets in within the organisation.*	Exhaustion under scarcity	Strain accumulation	Continuity	A	*4.3.3
71	*I can't say 100% today that I think Case A will survive.*	Continuity uncertainty	Existential precarity	Continuity	A	
72	*There's frustration that it didn't fully telavise itself.*	Communication shortfall	Reach gap despite effort	Visibility	A	
73	*[...] — they want a lot of activity to report. They can support grant-seeking but can't influence decisions.*	Structural disconnect from decisions	Reporting-without-leverage	Translation	A	
74	*There's a strong flood of expectations but no help to be had.*	Isolation under pressure	Demand-without-support	Continuity	A	
75	*I've seen many examples where you receive a lot of project funding at the beginning and then you're expected to keep it going with perhaps a quarter of the resources you originally had.*	Funding trajectory decline	Continuity under reduced resourcing	Continuity	A	*4.1.3

76	*But I don't think any of those around it feel any kind of obligation to show any kind of care.*	Absence of reciprocal care	Asymmetric obligation	Continuity	A	
77	*Bigger regional awareness up north — Luleå, Västernorrland: 'we have to make ourselves attractive for people to want to live here.' [...] is generally not like that.*	Regional motivation differential	Comparative political receptivity	Translation	A	
78	*[...] was started partially because of Case A.*	Triennial-driven organisational formation	Catalysing institutional infrastructure	Continuity	A	
79	*Now we have one triennial in our backpack and can do a more adequate evaluation of what was good or bad.*	Learning across iterations	Iterative reflexivity	Continuity	A	
80	*As an individual actor it becomes very, very difficult. Together you really become more voices and you speak with a stronger voice toward the state, the municipality and the region.*	Joint voice for vertical engagement	Aggregated upward representation	Translation	A	*4.2.1
81	*Collaboration, collaboration, collaboration — especially in rural areas. It's extremely important that people come together.*	Collaboration as imperative	Survival imperative in periphery	Participation	A	*4.3.3
82	*It's an instrument to take out — 'these are us in these regions who work with culture.' Mapping is super-important.*	Map as evidence	Inventory as defensive tool	Visibility	A	
83	*It's still such a new project. People in the field probably know about it but knowledge isn't great outside the field.*	Field-internal recognition only	Partial penetration	Visibility	A	
84	*We have all reasons to collaborate with each other and try to make ourselves more visible.*	Joint visibility strategy	Collective signalling	Visibility	A	
85	*There's a kind of social cement created between actors. We collaborate and bicker. The knowledge deepening is hard to put a finger on but real.*	Relational sediment	Collegial bonding through repetition	Participation	A	

86	*Almost phenomenologically — how do I take this on smoothly, putting [the actors] on a mental map at all. It's hand-craft kind of knowledge.*	Tacit coordination knowledge	Practical mutual orientation	Translation	A	
87	*Different institutions have almost class-based differences. Vandalorum has lots of money, different ownership form, different profile.*	Institutional heterogeneity	Class-like asymmetries within frame	Participation	A	
88	*The first round of nya [...] — there were a lot of art institutions collaborating. But they're themselves under so much pressure that they simply haven't been able to manage it.*	Anchor institution withdrawal pattern	Pressure-driven disengagement	Continuity	A	*4.3.2
89	*Eldsjäl-driven institutions burn up. Resources affect commitment depending on how strong the threat to existence is.*	Burnout among the most committed	Exposure-driven engagement	Continuity	A	*4.3.2
90	*The smaller institutions had bigger incentives to grab onto bigger contexts.*	Exposure-driven dependence	Asymmetric stake in collaboration	Participation	A	
91	*The more visible we are, the more chance that decision-makers and funders see we're important.*	Visibility as funding lever	Vertical signalling	Visibility	A	
92	*To survive collaboratively we need to take bigger space and legitimise ourselves in society where this knowledge form has incredibly low status.*	Status work through collective scale	Field-status defence	Translation	A	
93	*Case A integrates and stretches out a hand — creating common context with smaller actors.*	Integrative function	Horizontal bridging	Participation	A	
94	*It's one moment for institutions to give a bit more eld.*	Triennial as motivation pulse	Energy of the moment	Continuity	A	
95	*It offers a perspective shift — sometimes we need to be forced into a wider perspective.*	Perspective forcing	Frame-induced reflexivity	Translation	A	
96	*It's a step before we can fully concentrate on the public experience. The most labour is establishing this context.*	Pre-public infrastructure work	Pre-evaluative labour priority	Continuity	A	*4.3.1

97	*Because the triennial is treårig [three-yearly], it takes extra long.*	Slow rhythm of recurrence	Extended temporal cycle	Continuity	A	
98	*We knew quite a lot about Case B because we had been in contact with [Case B host] since long before we were invited.*	Prior network ties	Pre-existing relational anchoring	Participation	B	
99	*There's a guest-curated programme and the spaces were ones we proposed; then there's a larger circle of Stockholm institutions decided by the Case B host organisations.*	Layered curatorial structure	Multi-layer participation framing	Participation	B	
100	*It depends on what's going on in those institutions during this time, whether it makes sense to subsume that under the programme. I find this a pretty good idea.*	Subsuming existing programmes	Bundling existing activity	Visibility	B	
101	*Beyond the festival, it goes about binding the Stockholm scene together.*	Scene cohesion	Field-binding function	Visibility	B	
102	*Especially the idea of bringing independently run spaces together with institutionally funded ones.*	Cross-strata pairing	Asymmetric configurational design	Participation	B	
103	*There was no content prescription from the Case B host organisations. The conceptual orientation can be decided by those invited.*	Open conceptual frame	Curatorial autonomy within frame	Participation	B	
104	*Independent spaces typically don't have full-time staff. You need to align: what are working hours, how much in advance do you send out announcements.*	Aligning operational rhythms	Horizontal coordinative alignment	Translation	B	
105	*Bundling these things during a festival makes sense, but on the other hand these spaces have different speeds.*	Pace heterogeneity	Tempo mismatch across partners	Translation	B	
106	*It's a kind of trust relationship that develops in this collaboration: how much do I delegate, where are the strengths?*	Trust-based delegation	Configurational role-finding	Participation	B	
107	*Antics' Max has worked 30 years in exhibition installation. So we could give those practical tasks directly to him.*	Distributing by expertise	Capacity-matched task allocation	Participation	B	

108	*The Case B host organisations are the experts for Stockholm — they brought in suggestions. Then the question quickly became: what does the work need?*	Local-knowledge mediation	Host-led contextual translation	Translation	B	
109	*We were three times in Stockholm in advance and met many people, openly, to figure out how this city works right now.*	Pre-festival groundwork	Field reconnaissance	Translation	B	
110	*The public hand is withdrawing more and more from cultural funding [in Stockholm, like Berlin].*	Comparative resource scarcity	Trans-contextual precarity	Continuity	B	
111	*There are various references between works once they're in the same space — they have something to do with each other.*	Inter-work configurational meaning	Adjacency-based intelligibility	Visibility	B	
112	*These networks that emerge are very complex. I'd refuse to analyse them too much — they're a bit like a black box.*	Opaque emergent networks	Resistance to over-formalisation	Participation	B	
113	*People who see on [participating institution]'s social media 'we're in Stockholm' read the volume of participating institutions even without ties to the city.*	Configurational signalling outward	Aggregate as legibility cue	Visibility	B	
114	*There is naturally a capital that comes with that association.*	Credibility-by-association	Borrowed institutional capital	Participation	B	*4.1.2
115	*It promises to be less precarious than other contexts in which one works. The institution promises a kind of security.*	Umbrella as perceived stability	Risk-reduction through participation	Participation	B	
116	*The bigger the network, the less quickly the network fails.*	Network resilience claim	Aggregation-as-protection	Continuity	B	
117	*When funding shrinks, you start watching your own house. But collaboration takes time and is exhausting.*	Cost of collaboration	Maintenance burden under scarcity	Continuity	B	
118	*I made a kind of vow: however tough things get, we won't stop collaborating with other actors. It's an active decision.*	Active commitment to collaboration	Will-based continuity	Continuity	B	

119	*How to prevent gatekeeping between bigger and smaller institutions — how can there be exchange, because the smaller ones tend to come up short when funding shrinks.*	Equity within configuration	Asymmetric exposure recognition	Participation	B	
120	*We borrowed equipment from [peer institution], who weren't formally participating but were part of the network we perceived.*	Informal participation	Network beyond formal listing	Participation	B	
121	*In Berlin, cuts in the last 3 years for project spaces are almost 50%. Massive in terms of planning security, but new networks emerge.*	Crisis-driven network formation	Adaptive resilience	Continuity	B	
122	*It builds on something […] was very involved in 15 years ago — Stockholm Stockholm Stockholm.*	Antecedent initiative	Lineage continuity	Continuity	B	
123	*Case B invites external curators to lay a programme alongside engaging local art halls — to get this network going.*	Network catalysis	Inter-institutional binding	Visibility	B	
124	*Each such initiative is important. The more such initiatives, the better.*	Additive ecosystem logic	Cumulative visibility	Visibility	B	
125	*We bring people here all year. It's our mandate to facilitate meetings and create platforms.*	Meeting facilitation as mandate	Mandate-driven contribution	Participation	B	
126	*Our mandate is internationalisation [...] so when initiatives like Case B come along, we contribute with what is already on our agenda.*	Contributory rather than dependent participation	Mandate-aligned engagement	Participation	B	*4.2.2
127	*We are part of the program and then we finance them.*	Combined role-and-contribution	Formal involvement	Participation	B	*4.1.2
128	*We bear the cost of those visiting curators — that's our financial contribution.*	Targeted financial commitment	Cost allocation	Participation	B	
129	*First time, […] Open Studios coincided with Case B and we were a venue. Many guests didn't realise they were on something other than a slightly weird real bar.*	Integrated venue presence	Multifunctional positioning	Visibility	B	

130	*Third time, the dates clashed with Gripka [Triennial]. So Case B had to move dates — you can't compete with Istanbul and Gothenburg.*	Calendar coordination across festivals	External temporal pressure	Continuity	B	
131	*Then it becomes a small cluster. If you come to Stockholm, you know all these places have something exciting.*	Clustering effect	Spatial concentration of attention	Visibility	B	*4.1.1
132	*Different curators with different practices and visions activate different parts of Stockholm.*	Geographic activation	Variable urban presence	Visibility	B	
133	*The signal to the Ministry of Culture and, in extension, the government and parliament — that we as cultural workers collaborate to create visibility for what happens here in Sweden.*	Upward signalling	Vertical configurational signal	Translation	B	*4.1.2
134	*All of us include Case B in our annual reports.*	Reporting traceability	Formal traceable inclusion	Participation	B	*4.1.2
135	*There have also been some articles as a result. International visibility through reviews in the big art magazines.*	Press-driven amplification	External validation circuit	Visibility	B	*4.1.2
136	*Out in the country it's particularly tough — perhaps one person running a kunsthall* (art hall) *doing communication, curating, leadership, pedagogy. Unsustainable.*	Role concentration in periphery	Capacity strain in dependent actors	Continuity	B	
137	*Especially important to collaborate when isolated. Money helps but having someone to talk with, exchange ideas — that lifts the conversation.*	Collegial relief through participation	Anti-isolation function	Participation	B	
138	*Stockholm is a small pond where everyone knows everyone. It's nice that more is done. The more cooperation, especially in these times, the better.*	Cumulative collaboration logic	Field-ecosystem orientation	Visibility	B	
139	*Cooperation in itself shows a vibrant cultural life with high ceilings and many scenes.*	Collaboration as cultural signal	Vibrancy demonstration	Visibility	B	
140	*In other countries it can go the other way: less generosity, less sharing of contacts.*	Comparative collaborative culture	Relational scarcity elsewhere	Participation	B	

141	*We all win by lifting each other — institutions to small art-driven initiatives like Supermarket and Market Art Fair.*	Mutual elevation	Field-wide reciprocity	Participation	B	
142	*Year after year — it's also a way for colleagues to meet and get a trip to Stockholm. The recurrence creates anticipation.*	Recurrence as professional rendezvous	Temporal anchoring	Continuity	B	
143	*It promises to attract financial support because the budget understanding from government — how little culture money there actually is — would shift if they grasped the leverage.*	Budget-framing argument	Vertical budget translation	Translation	B	
144	*Korea has invested heavily in culture for decades and it has succeeded as soft power.*	Comparative model reference	Frame for vertical legitimation	Translation	B	
145	*From the very beginning we felt it was a very open framework. The invitation felt completely open.*	Open framework perception	Curatorial openness	Participation	B	
146	*There was a clear interest in engaging with the city and accepting an outsider's perspective.*	Outsider perspective embrace	Productive foreignness	Translation	B	
147	*Case B didn't offer a pre-established space. The possibility of searching for a space in the city imposed a much more horizontal and collaborative way of working.*	Space-seeking as horizontal coordination	Site-finding as collaborative practice	Translation	B	
148	*It required listening closely to each project, attending to its specific needs, and coordinating them with those of the other artists.*	Cross-project coordination	Multi-project alignment	Translation	B	
149	*It also meant thinking together with the Case B team about which places could host them, allowing ourselves to be 'guided' by the knowledge of people who understood the city far better than we did.*	Local-knowledge mediation	Host-led contextual translation	Translation	B	
150	*Negotiation was constant — when to give way but also recognising each person's 'hard no's' (curators, artists, and space owners alike).*	Constant negotiation	Distributed decision-rights	Translation	B	

151	*We found a 1920s cinema run by another team of around six people, which expanded the collaboration even further.*	Network expansion through site	Configurational growth in execution	Participation	B	
152	*Working collectively does not make responsibility or accountability diminish. On the contrary, we believe it increases them.*	Expanded collective responsibility	Distributed accountability	Participation	B	*4.3.1
153	*You are accountable to, and affected by, a greater number of people and elements.*	Multi-party accountability	Expanded ethical surface	Participation	B	
154	*The Case B host organisations are also led by duos, which made it easy to align with them.*	Structural symmetry between collaborators	Compatible governance form	Participation	B	
155	*Did the association affect how the project was perceived? Definitely.*	Association affects perception	Frame as perceptual filter	Visibility	B	
156	*The Case B host organisations act as hosts: they help amplify the approaches an outsider's perspective can bring while qualifying or correcting gaps from a lack of contextual knowledge.*	Host-mediated framing	Curatorial qualification	Visibility	B	
157	*Case B does an impressive job of mediation, understood as the production of an environment, a language, and a particular situation in which certain ideas can take place in the city.*	Mediation as environment-making	Discursive infrastructure	Translation	B	
158	*It allows things to be more 'leaky' — to reach places that cannot even be anticipated in advance.*	Leakiness as visibility extension	Decentralised reach	Visibility	B	
159	*It's undeniable that when there are urgent situations, collaborative processes can be slower and delay decision-making, especially in the final stages.*	Slowness in collaboration	Decision-pace cost	Translation	B	*4.2.2
160	*These decisions are always more considered, come from multiple points of view, and are usually more accurate.*	Deliberative quality gain	Multi-perspective decision-making	Translation	B	

161	*In our case, occupying a space that wasn't dedicated to visual arts required an extra effort of translation to familiarise the cinema team with the dynamics, processes, languages, timelines and needs of visual arts.*	Cross-professional translation	Inter-disciplinary alignment	Translation	B	*4.2.2
162	*This is what it entails to take art out of conventional spaces and involve more people.*	Programmatic inclusivity cost	Expansion-by-translation	Translation	B	
163	*Case B gives you a kind of freedom that isn't so common in the art world. Do whatever you want, with whomever, in whatever space — because there are so many people on this boat helping out.*	Freedom underwritten by network	Networked enablement	Participation	B	
164	*Small and medium-sized actors don't have the financial muscles to be visible in the cityscape in the same way.*	Resource asymmetry in visibility	Structural visibility constraint	Visibility	B	*4.1.1
165	*You pour all of this energy into a project. And then once it's almost done, you find yourself not having that final push, which means actually maybe communicating what it is.*	Communication capacity gap	Final-mile shortfall	Visibility	B	*4.1.1
166	*There is simply a vulnerability for smaller art institutions [...] for us, there is everything to gain from collaborating.*	Vulnerability-driven engagement	Asymmetric stakes in collaboration	Participation	B	*4.3.2
167	*So that you don't feel alone when it's tough and difficult to run your organisation, that you have something to fall back on. It contributes a lot to feeling part of a kollegium where there is solidarity.*	Collegial solidarity function	Anti-isolation participation	Participation	B	*4.2.2
168	*There's a klister network of smaller kunsthalls* (art halls) *that strengthens each other, sharing experiences in how to talk to a kulturpolitiker* (cultural politician) *who has no respect for armlängds avstånd* (arm's length principle).	Peer network for political navigation	Horizontal-to-vertical translation pipeline	Translation	B	
169	*Klister is working on a kulturpolitisk* (cultural-policy) *campaign — sharing the more critical state of culture, especially for smaller kunsthalls.*	Joint *kulturpolitisk* work	Vertical defensive translation	Translation	B	

170	*I would sit in meetings with four people from a large museum's communications department, and I would be the producer, the curator, the communicator, the press agent — all those roles in that meeting.*	Role concentration in smaller actors	Concentrated coordination burden	Translation	B	*4.3.2