

NAPA IN NORDEN: CULTURAL BRIDGES IN CONSTRUCTION

A mixed-method case study of Greenland's status
within Nordic cooperation

Master's thesis in West Nordic Studies

University of the Faroe Islands

Supervisor: Hallbera West

Date of submission: 1 June 2021

Word count: 27 997

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Abstract

Nordic cooperation has historically been high on the agendas of the Nordic states, and cultural cooperation is one of its most prominent forms of to date. The different Nordic institutions were founded to bring the more remote Nordic countries closer to the cooperation's Scandinavian center – to build cultural bridges. NAPA, the Nordic Institute in Greenland, awards yearly over 100 cultural grants with the goal to build bridges between Greenland and the rest of Norden. However, Greenland's status as a former Danish colony puts the country in a position from which Nordic cooperation and its manifestations in Greenland can be questioned. This thesis studies how the cultural support program administered by NAPA reflects this special status Greenland has within Nordic cooperation. The most prominent themes are Nordic cooperation, cultural policy, and the Greenlandic decolonization process.

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1 Introduction

This thesis will study Nordic cooperation in the context of the cultural support program administered by the Nordic Institute in Greenland (NAPA). NAPA's status links the research to different overall themes both by association and by nature; as an international and regional organization administered by the Nordic Council of Ministers it is widely defined by the efforts of Nordic cooperation, where its role is to focus on cooperation between Greenland and the rest of the Nordic region through culture. However, Greenland being part of Nordic cooperation is a direct result of Danish colonialism, and as the general attitude and national identity in Greenland appear to point towards independence, Nordic influence in the country can be critically examined from this perspective. In addition, according to NAPA, the support program is often falsely perceived by applicants as a Greenlandic cultural fund instead of a Nordic cooperation body, and NAPA seeks to eliminate misunderstandings of this kind as they can be deemed counterproductive to the institute's purpose.

The existence of NAPA says something about the unique status of Greenland within Nordic cooperation. The distance – both geographical and cultural – between the outer edge of the Nordic region and its physical center in Scandinavia is certainly a reason to pay additional attention to Greenland's relationship with the rest of the region. Given the country's history with Denmark, this thesis assumes a duality in its position in the cooperative structure: Nordic cooperation can either be viewed as an inclusive network of independent, willing participants or a remnant or continuation of Danish colonialism, which poses the question of whether it is a relevant cooperative structure for the self-governing island nation.

Although the inspiration for this study originates from within NAPA, there are exogenous reasons adding to its importance. Nordic social and political science has long focused on national and EU politics instead of Nordic cooperation, and even research on Nordic

cooperation often fails to mention the autonomous regions or the West Nordic region, focusing on the Scandinavian states instead¹. The arts and culture sector is seen as an important arena for strengthening connections between countries both within the Nordic region and beyond, and for it to optimally serve its purpose, the different initiatives, efforts and organizations should be viewed, studied and evaluated².

The study is based on the following research question:

How does NAPA's cultural support program reflect Greenland's status within Nordic cooperation?

In addition to examining Greenland's relation to the other Nordic countries, this question aims to help define to which extent NAPA fulfils its purpose as a Nordic cultural cooperation body. If need be, the results can be used to identify potential areas of focus in the grant program management. To build a theoretical base to this research, the concepts of cooperation and cultural policy will be discussed both generally and in a Nordic context – also from a critical stance that emphasizes the aforementioned problematics with Greenland's colonial past and its participation in Nordic cooperation and other regional or international collaborative efforts.

The chosen approach follows a mixed-method strategy with pragmatism as its guiding epistemological stance. The strategy consists statistical analysis of the quantitative data – NAPA's application statistics divided per country – supplemented with the findings of the qualitative data – a thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews of persons in close professional contact with NAPA. NAPA is the most prominent concrete manifestation of Nordic cooperation in Greenland, founded with the objective to bring Nordic culture closer to Greenland

¹ Stie, Anne Elizabeth and Jarle Trondal, "Introducing the Study of Nordic Cooperation". In *Politics and Governance, Volume 8, Issue 4*, (Lisbon: Cogitatio, 2020), 1–2; Sundelius, Bengt and Claes Wiklund, "Nordisk fornyelse i etapper." In *Norden i sicksack. Tre spårbyten inom nordiskt samarbete*, edited by Bengt Sundelius and Claes Wiklund (Stockholm: Santérus Förlag, 2000), 19–23.

² De Paoli, Donatella and Lene Foss, *Effects of Network Funding – An Evaluation*. (Copenhagen: Nordic Council of Ministers, 2019)

– and Greenlandic culture closer to the rest of Norden³. The cultural support program is the main function of NAPA and receives over 100 applications annually from all over Norden, so it is a logical starting point. As will be argued later, interpersonal relations and networks are an important factor in Nordic cooperation, and observing NAPA's application statistics provides a sense of the breadth of the network the Institute has helped create. NAPA is a product of Nordic cooperation and is therefore directly influenced by it, and therefore, this thesis assumes that Greenland's position in the greater cooperative structure can be reflected onto NAPA and the results of the cultural support program. Comparing the countries' application data to one another sheds light to the status of cultural exchange between them and Greenland and supplementing this data with interviews can provide answers to the questions raised by the numbers. In other words, the statistics communicate the breadth of NAPA's influence and tendencies in decision-making during the application process, and the interviews may offer an explanation to these phenomena.

1.2 Disposition

The theoretical background of this thesis will be discussed in the next chapter. As mentioned above, the two most important concepts that lay the groundwork to this study are *culture* (and cultural cooperation) and *Nordic cooperation*. Funding programs for culture and cultural cooperation provide a point of comparison and are, in this context, also applicable as examples of both aforementioned themes and the fusion thereof. The third chapter presents the methodological approach as well as the individual methods used in this research before the strategies concerning analysis and data collection will be discussed. The data will then be analyzed

³ Duelund, Peter, "Cultural Policy in the Small Nations of Norden". In *The Nordic Cultural Model. Nordic cultural policy in transition*. (Copenhagen: The Nordic Cultural Institute, 2003), 422; Duelund, Peter and Gitte Pedersen, "The Nordic Cultural Cooperation." In *The Nordic Cultural Model. Nordic cultural policy in transition*,. (Copenhagen: The Nordic Cultural Institute, 2003) 263–264.

in Chapter 4. These chapters lay the groundwork for the discussion, to which Chapter 5 is devoted, and the results will be summarized in the concluding chapter, which also provides suggestions for further research. A list of references as well as appendices can be found at the very end of this thesis.

2 Theoretical framework

As will be further explained in the methodology section, this thesis aims to examine NAPA's cultural support program and its outcomes from a perspective that centers around the quantitative dimensions of cooperative cultural funding, supported by qualitative data.

Theoretically, studying a Nordic cultural cooperation body operating in a country with a colonial history could be done with a variety of ways combining different disciplines. The approach of this thesis was chosen with regard to both NAPA's status as a cultural cooperation body and Greenland's status within the regional cooperation: while Nordic cooperation and the core concept of cooperation is an evident part of the framework, cultural cooperation and cultural policy link the institution, and thus, the study, to a greater context beyond regional borders. The fact that NAPA is a Nordic institution in Greenland also plays a role in analyzing the research question, as the autonomous region's position within the Danish realm is not without issues and has been a topic of discussion regarding potential future independence. Although colonialism and its effects in Greenland are not the main topic of this thesis, the topic can hardly be completely avoided when discussing the position of Greenland in Norden. As the colonial times are formally over and independence from Denmark is regarded as a goal in the Greenlandic political agenda, understanding the concept of decolonization will help comprehend the duality Greenland faces within the Nordic cooperative structure: while there are arguments for furthering Nordic cooperation in Greenland, Nordic initiatives could potentially be counterproductive to the independence-driven agenda due to the country's status and given its history. These main themes as well as research surrounding them will be introduced in the following subchapters.

2.1 Core concepts: cooperation, cultural policy, decolonization

The interaction between governments, organizations, companies, and other actors to reach a common goal can be described by different terms, some of which hold very similar meanings. The

terms *coordination*, *cooperation* and *collaboration* are often used interchangeably and sometimes used to define each other. It has been suggested that *collaboration* would be a combination of the two other terms or a hypernym of them. According to Castañer and Oliveira, *coordination* carries a notion of only aligned actions, while *collaboration* and *cooperation* also contain common incentives. In the context of this thesis, *cooperation* is the term the Nordic interacting parties use themselves, which is reflected onto research pieces published on the topic. Compared to *cooperation*, *collaboration* contains a more altruistic notion: instead of solely furthering one's own objectives, the collaborating parties share common interests in addition to the common goal. Collaboration may also extend to helping the partner(s) reach their private goals, whereas cooperation includes the achievement of one's own goals as part of the common goal.⁴ As research on Nordic cooperation tends to not only adopt the term *cooperation* but also emphasize the importance of national agendas in organizing cooperative endeavors⁵, *cooperation* is the term believed to best represent what this thesis aims to describe and analyze. In the absence of extensive research on whether the "true nature" of Nordic intergovernmental interaction is better described as cooperative than collaborative, the theoretical framework of this thesis will be built around the concept of *cooperation*.

A key defining factor of cooperative efforts is the existence of participants who are each allotted their share of the joint labor required to solve a common problem or reach a

⁴ Castañer, Xavier and Nuno Oliveira. "Collaboration, Coordination, and Cooperation Among Organizations: Establishing the Distinctive Meanings of These Terms Through a Systematic Literature Review". In *Journal of Management Vol. 46 No. 6, (July 2020)*, 965–1001; "English Language Help Desk – Collaborate or cooperate?" The Arctic University of Norway, accessed 25.04.2021, <https://site.uit.no/english/words/collaborate-or-cooperate/#:~:text=However%2C%20there%20is%20a%20subtle,achieve%20a%20single%20shared%20goal.&text=cooperate%3D1.%20to%20work%20with,the%20world's%20largest%20social%20network>.

⁵ Ingebritsen, Christine, *Scandinavia in World Politics* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2006), Stie and Trondal, "Introducing the Study of Nordic Cooperation", 8; Strang, Johan, "Introduction. The Nordic model of transnational cooperation?" In *Nordic Cooperation. A European region in transition*, edited by Johan Strang, (New York: Routledge, 2016), 5–11., Sundelius and Wiklund, "Nordisk fornyelse i etapper.", 29.

common goal. The participants are thus each responsible for a portion of the effort to secure a jointly desired outcome.⁶ In Nordic cooperation, this manifests as tasks such as co-financing the official cooperation structures and taking turns hosting the Presidency every year. In world politics, cooperation is a means of influence based on bi- or multilateral intergovernmental activity, often exercised by small states to amplify their voice in the international arena.⁷

Cooperation is based on agreements between parties, and generally, multilateral agreements are far less common than bilateral agreements. The agreements are always situated in a larger context – they do not spawn into existence without the influence of factors that can be exogenous or endogenous, that is, originate from outside or within the cooperative network.

Kinne (2013) lists three formal requirements for the formation of a network: (1) the participating actors, (2) the ties connecting the actors and (3) interdependencies between the different ties formed by different actors within the network. These ties are naturally determined by various exogenous factors, such as politics and geography, but the structure of the network also plays a role. An example of this in the context of Nordic cooperation would be endeavors between countries, such as the different West Nordic initiatives, or the relationships between countries and the autonomous areas they legally partially govern. While cooperation may help the participants reach otherwise unattainable gains, it is not completely without difficulty.

Cooperation is built on trustworthiness, reliability, and motivation, and each of these factors can prove faulty at some stage of the process. In international relations theory, it is assumed that systemic anarchy (due to the lack of a worldwide supreme authority) obstructs the exchange of credible information between states about one another's preferences and thus the true motives behind cooperation. The (aspiring) cooperators may also harbor concerns about the partner's

⁶ Kinne, Brandon J.. "Network Dynamics and the Evolution of International Cooperation". In *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 107, No. 4. (2013), 766–785; Roschelle, Jeremy and Stephanie D. Teasley. "The construction of shared knowledge in collaborative problem solving." In *Computer-Supported Collaborative Learning*, edited by C. E. O'Malley, (Berlin: Springer-Verlag, 1995), 78.

⁷ Ingebritsen, *Scandinavia in World Politics*

resources and capability to commit to the agreement. When it comes to motivation, the prospective gains of cooperation must balance out or surpass the efforts: if the gains are small, the motivation to cooperate is low, and if the gains are none, the structure is exploitative rather than cooperative. Disagreements concerning the outcome, or the distribution of gains are another potential obstacle to cooperation.⁸ It has been theorized that cooperation is one of the manifestations of a state's collective identity, where a group's interests are seen as the state's own (although without neglecting the state's own personal interests).⁹

As will be discovered in Chapter 2.3, cooperation in the field of culture lies at the core of Nordic cooperation. Historically, cultural cooperation has been an "easy", low risk alternative compared to, e.g., economic or military cooperation in the Nordic region¹⁰, but cultural cooperation also serves other purposes, such as fostering respect for otherness, protecting cultural diversity and combatting the external pressure felt especially by small countries. Cultural components are present in international conflicts, potentially because culture is closely linked to identity: a concept the importance of which is emphasized in the agreements defining Nordic cooperation.¹¹

Cultural cooperation can be a result of as well as a producer of *cultural policy*; the devices regulating, protecting encouraging, supporting, and potentially financing creative arts and other aspects of culture, such as heritage, diversity, language and sometimes education. In short, cultural policy regulates and reflects the way different forms or products of culture are funded in a given society at a given time. Different stakeholders, both in the general society and in the

⁸ Kinne, "Network Dynamics and the Evolution of International Cooperation"

⁹ Andersson, Hans E. "What Activates an Identity? The Case of Norden." In *SAGE Journal of International relations (London)*, 2010-03, Vol.24 (1), (London: SAGE Publishing, 2010), 46-50.

¹⁰ Strang, "The Nordic model of transnational cooperation?" , Sundelius and Wiklund, "Nordisk fornyelse i etapper"

¹¹ Andersson, "What Activates an Identity?"; Langeland, Asbjørn. "The Nordic Countries: Cultural and Library Cooperation." *IFLA Journal* 31, no. 2 (June 2005): 146. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0340035205054878>, Sempere, Alfons. "Cultural cooperation". *Periferica* (2018). 168-173. <https://doi.org/10.25267/Periferica.2018.i19.17>.

cultural field, reflect art and culture in a different way and have different interests. Broadly defined, cultural policy is about the clash of these interests. Peter Duelund presents the concept from three different perspectives: as a societal phenomenon, as a sector and as a historical phenomenon. The defining question of cultural policy as a societal phenomenon is which cultural products are the best – or best fill the criteria to be considered worth funding – and therefore most deserving of public attention and increased participation. These criteria are the outcome of the debate concerning values which are considered important both for the individual and for the society. Examples of elements that shape these values include freedom of speech or the lack of it, attitudes towards the church and religion, research and teaching on all levels, nationality and cosmopolitanism – concerning this research, an important element for a common Nordic cultural policy or the internal policy of NAPA's funding program would be a common Nordic identity, but this connection will be explored later. That said, cultural policy is not a given but instead a statement of the values the dominant stakeholders want to see accepted, popularized, and funded in the society. The recipients or participants consuming cultural products are subsequently influenced to think the way the stakeholders of cultural policy want them to; cultural policy conveys tools and values that strengthen the recipients' sense of identity and belonging.¹²

Cultural policy can also be defined as a sector within a given society, and the research work presented in "Cultural policy: An overview" focuses on this definition. As can be gathered from earlier, the conflict of different stakeholders' interests is at the core of cultural policy, and, historically, cultural policy reflects the political struggle to create the framework and conditions for aesthetic self-expression. The sector of cultural policy reflects the tools that governments and other participating stakeholders use to promote certain values or directions and presents the direct and indirect tools – such as legislation statements – that are used to fund,

¹² Duelund, Peter.. "Cultural policy: An overview". In *The Nordic Cultural Model. Nordic cultural policy in transition* (Copenhagen: The Nordic Cultural Institute. 2003) 13–30; Duelund and Pedersen, "The Nordic Cultural Cooperation"

stimulate, and regulate the production, distribution, and consumption of cultural products. Public-sector cultural policy is subject to democratic debate, and state cultural policy must be legitimized by the political process, which is the reason the national budget – and, for example, the NCM’s annual budget – has earmarked funds for culture. The cultural programs and priorities supported by these funds are reflected by cultural policy reports published by governments, ministries and other authorities, which comprise one of the important stakeholder groups presented by Duelund. In addition to authorities, other stakeholders of cultural policy include cultural institutions, the public or its willingness to consume cultural products, professional artists and amateurs as well as the social and educational sector. These stakeholders each relate to each other and the concept of cultural policy differently. Cultural institutions tailor their operations according to quantitative and qualitative criteria set by the authorities, and grants are allocated on the basis of regular quality assurance. Some examples of these criteria include stimulation of national identity, preservation and protection of cultural heritage, activities for children and young people, immigrants, ethnic and geographic minorities etc. This type of regulation and adaptation had been on the increase in Norden in 2003, and a similar tendency is reflected by the recent and current strategies and visions for Nordic (cultural) co-operation¹³, where the alleged criteria for projects and initiatives is presented in form of themes. The public is the recipient and participant of the products funded by the authorities and realized by the cultural institutions – its interest as a stakeholder is to acquire said products inexpensively. Professional artists and other producers of culture want to create the best possible conditions for realizing their potential; their interest is both professional and personal, as they wish to both influence the establishment and development of cultural policy in a way that supports their visions and working conditions, and to

¹³ Nordic Council of Ministers, *Norden som världens mest hållbara och integrerade region. Handlingsplan 2021–2024*. (Copenhagen: Nordic Council of Ministers, 2019); Bergum Kinsten, Silje and Heidi Orava. *Nordisk råd – vårt råd*. Copenhagen: Nordisk råd, 2012. DOI:<http://dx.doi.org/10.6027/ANP2012-734>

receive a decent monetary compensation for their work. This often creates clash with the interests of cultural institutions, which, in turn, aim to appeal to the broadest possible public as well as with those of the authorities whose goal is to legitimize cultural policy quantitatively through target-oriented management and performance-related contracts, and with those of the public due to the aforementioned demand for affordable art. Amateurs as well as the social and educational sector, the fifth stakeholder group, do not seek to meet the success criteria set by the authorities, but they, too, seek ways to provide economic and physical frameworks for their own activities through cultural policy. A similar map of stakeholders can also apply for the private culture industries, although instead of influencing the public and promoting values deemed essential by the authorities, their interests lie on the economic side as they do not (wholly) rely on state funding but instead create their own funding by competing with other producers in the national and global markets. National cultural policies and developments are increasingly being influenced by international bodies, such as the EU and UNESCO. The regionalization trend in Nordic cultural policy is, for example, the outcome of the EU structural funds, and international copyright negotiations are something that influence and are influenced by national cultural policies.

So far, it can be concluded that conceptually, the combination of cooperation and cultural policy perceived in a Nordic context form the base of the network containing NAPA and other comparable bodies. To illustrate NAPA's, or Greenland's, status within this network, the approach chosen for this thesis is to look at what, allegedly, originally brought Greenland into the cooperative sphere: Danish colonialism, and the following *decolonization* of Greenland, which can be speculated to shape Greenland's future in relation to Norden. Formally, Danish colonization of Greenland has ended, making the country a post-colonial society, but it does not necessarily equal to a completed decolonization process. According to Ashcroft, Griffins and Tiffin, decolonization is

“the process of revealing and dismantling colonialist power in all its forms”¹⁴. Betts defines decolonization as “a series of political events, sometimes peaceful, often confrontational, and frequently militant, by which territories and countries dominated by Europeans gained their independence”¹⁵. This illustrates how decolonization is both regarded as a finished process or historical event, and a concept describing a process that is still ongoing in places like Greenland. “A process leading to independence” can function as a simplified definition of decolonization, but these processes are different for each postcolonial society, and, in fact, possess dimensions beyond the political: economic, cultural, psychological, and ontological. To the outside world, political independence may be the main signifier of a decolonized nation, but the institutional and cultural forces maintaining colonialist power are much harder to uproot and thus create a continued colonial presence the dismantling of which is complex and time-consuming. Culture and identity are also very closely linked to decolonization: they are important building blocks of a state and its corporate identity. These aspects distinguish nations from one another, which is an important tool for asserting independence.¹⁶

2.2 Nordic cooperation

The Nordic Region or *Norden* are the terms that are used to describe the region consisting of the independent countries of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden as well as the autonomous regions of Greenland, the Faroe Islands and the Åland Islands. The Sámi cultural region, stretching over the northern parts of Finland, Norway and Sweden and some parts of northwestern Russia, is also often treated similarly to a country of its own despite obtaining no legal status as such, and that will be the case to the largest possible extent also in this thesis. This definition is to recognize the existence of alternative terminology: the words *Norden/the Nordic*

¹⁴ Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin. *Post-Colonial Studies. The Key Concepts* (London: Routledge, 2000), 63.

¹⁵ Betts, Raymond F.. *Decolonization*. (London; New York: Routledge, 1998), 98.

¹⁶ Andersson, “What Activates an Identity?”

region and *Scandinavia* are sometimes used interchangeably, whereas according to the Nordic practice, *Scandinavia* means solely the three states of Denmark, Norway and Sweden, which have historically collaborated and coexisted in form of the Kalmar union.¹⁷ In both the collected and the pre-existing, comparable material, the autonomous areas are regarded as units of their own and not as part of the country they legally belong to, and thus, the term *country* will in this context be used to describe both the independent countries and autonomous areas. This is both to provide clarity and conciseness and to recognize the autonomy and distinctiveness of each party.

Nordic cooperation as it is is widely based on Nordic freedom of movement. This arrangement dates back to the establishment of a joint Nordic labor market in the 1950s. The Nordic freedom of movement and passport union harmonizes with freedom of movement within the EU/EEA¹⁸ – Nordic nationals have the right to freely travel and reside between the Nordic countries, and nationals from most Nordic countries also enjoy the freedom of movement within the EU/EEA, with the exception of Greenland¹⁹ and the Faroe Islands²⁰. Today, active efforts are being made to remove any leftover obstacles to cross-border freedom within the Nordic region²¹, and institutions such as NAPA promote and profit from cross-border mobility in their own ways. Freedom of movement is, however, only a part of Nordic cooperation, and it can be debated whether it, in fact, is more a consequence or a prerequisite of collaboration than another “active” or institutionalized part of it.

¹⁷ Stie and Trondal, “Introducing the Study of Nordic Cooperation”; Strang, “The Nordic model of transnational cooperation?”

¹⁸The European Parliament: Free Movement of Persons, visited 24.02.2021,

<https://www.europarl.europa.eu/factsheets/en/sheet/147/free-movement-of-persons>

¹⁹ Naalakkersuisut, About Government of Greenland: About Greenland: Coming to Greenland, visited 24.02.2021 <https://naalakkersuisut.gl/en/About-government-of-greenland/About-Greenland/Coming-to-Greenland>

²⁰The Government of the Faroe Islands: Work and Residence Permit, visited 24.02.2021, <https://www.government.fo/en/foreign-relations/missions-of-the-faroe-islands-abroad/the-representation-of-the-faroes-in-london/work-and-residence-permit/>,

²¹Nordic Co-operation: Freedom of Movement, visited 24.02.2021, <https://www.norden.org/en/information/freedom-movement>,

The dimensions of Nordic cooperation vary both in formality and in focal areas. The former is popularly illustrated by a divide into official and unofficial cooperation, while the latter contains a wider variety of options such as cooperation in the field of employment, security, voluntary organizations, culture etc. Some cooperation projects and initiatives only occur on the official or unofficial side while others have a version in both.²² Unofficial Nordic cooperation also contains several bilateral agreements, organizations and initiatives, while official Nordic cooperation is often regarded as multilateral²³. As providing a thorough presentation of the concept of Nordic cooperation is an important part of answering the research question, these dimensions, their roles and their relevance regarding this thesis will be discussed in this section.

2.2.1 Official cooperation

The Norden Association, an unofficial cooperation body in close association with the official cooperation, had a key role in the establishment of the inter-parliamentary Nordic Council (later NC) in 1952, as well as the inter-governmental Nordic Council of Ministers (later NCM) in 1971. These are the two main bodies which continue to promote and facilitate diverse and multi-disciplinary Nordic collaborative efforts to this day.²⁴ The NC is run by a Presidium and meets twice annually to make decisions and proposals that they request the Nordic governments to implement. The President, Vice-President and the members of the Presidium are elected every autumn for the following year, and the Presidency rotates between the countries. The NC has 87 elected members: Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden have 20 each, and Iceland has seven.

²² Götz, Norbert, Heidi Haggrén and Mary, Hilson, "Nordic cooperation in the voluntary sector." In *Nordic Cooperation. A European region in transition*, edited by Johan Strang, (New York: Routledge, 2016), 49–68.; Olesen, Thorsten Borring and Johan Strang, "European challenge to Nordic institutional cooperation. Past, present and future." In *Nordic Cooperation. A European region in transition*, edited by Johan Strang (New York: Routledge, 2016), 27–47; Strang, "The Nordic model of transnational cooperation?" , Sundelius and Wiklund, "Nordisk fornyelse i etapper"

²³ Andrén, Nils, "Nordiska kulturkommissionen lägger grunden." In *Norden i sicksack. Tre spårbyten inom nordiskt samarbete*, edited by Bengt Sundelius and Claes Wiklund, (Stockholm: Santérus Förlag, 2000), 47–66.

²⁴ Sundelius and Wiklund, "Nordisk fornyelse i etapper"

Two of the Danish representatives are from the Faroe Islands and two from Greenland, and two of Finland's representatives are from Åland. The members are not directly elected to the Council but are instead members of the national parliaments and nominated by the party groups. The Nordic Council was founded by Denmark, Iceland, Norway and Sweden. Finland joined three years later in 1955, but the autonomous areas waited longer: the Faroe Islands and Åland became members in 1970 and Greenland in 1984.²⁵

Establishing the NCM was a joint effort by the five sovereign states, but since the amendment of the so called Åland document in 2007, the autonomous areas have had greater influence and stronger positions in it – their opportunities and limitations will be further inspected when discussing Greenland's position within Nordic cooperation. While the Nordic Prime Ministers have the overall responsibility for Nordic cooperation, the NCM's work is in practice coordinated by the Ministers of Nordic Cooperation as well as the Nordic Committee for Cooperation, yet in line with the Prime Ministers' vision. The Nordic Council of Ministers consists of 11 ministerial councils: Labour; Sustainable Growth; Fisheries and Aquaculture, Agriculture, Food and Forestry; Gender Equality; Culture; The Ministers for Nordic Co-operation; Legislative Affairs; Environment and Climate; Health and Social Affairs; Education and Research; Finance; and the Ad-hoc Council of Ministers on Digitalization. Just like the NC, the NCM is lead by a Presidency, but the country holding the Presidency of the NC cannot hold the presidency of the NCM at the same time. During the Presidency, a country is to plan a guiding program for Nordic cooperation for the following year. The Prime Ministers meet annually and the ministerial councils a few times each year, and the issues addressed by the ministerial councils are prepared and followed up by committees of senior officials in the different countries. Both the Nordic Prime

²⁵ Bergum Kinsten and Orava, *Nordisk råd – vårt råd*; Nordic Co-operation: The Nordic Council, , accessed 03.04.2021 <https://www.norden.org/en/information/nordic-council>; Nordics.info by Aarhus University: Nordic Council and the Nordic Council of Ministers, accessed 03.04.2021, <https://nordics.info/show/artikel/nordic-council-and-nordic-council-of-ministers/>

Ministers and the Nordic ministers of foreign affairs and defense meet on a regular basis also in contexts unrelated to official Nordic cooperation (although they might assume a cooperative position even in those meetings). The NCM also oversees 12 official Nordic institutions, including NAPA, and 3 Baltic offices for Nordic cooperation. Overall, official Nordic cooperation is based on the Helsinki Treaty, first signed in 1962 and latest amended in 1996.

2.2.3 Nordic cooperation in practice: motivation, history, and current status

Both the official and unofficial cooperation is motivated by a variety of reasons that differ from country and county and sector to sector. From a political perspective, Nordic cooperation allows for a common Nordic position in international negotiations; the voice of the entire region is stronger than that of the individual countries. This has proven especially desirable in times of urgent international crises, shifts in the global economic landscape and finding solutions to long-term threats, such as climate change. Reasons such as this or the aforementioned “Nordic brand”, which also gains influence from having several states and autonomous regions behind it, can be labelled as external purposes. Nordic cooperation also serves so-called domestic purposes, which include different types of exchanges of experiences and ideas regarding best practices in a variety of fields. Historically, the different states have relied on each other’s advice when looking to appropriate non-Nordic ideas in a Nordic context and upon testing foreign models of different practices. Traditionally, Denmark and Sweden have been seen as the “front runners” of Nordic decision-making, and Finland, Iceland and Norway (not to mention the autonomous regions of Greenland, the Faroe Islands and the Åland Islands) have been considered peripheries, lagging behind in development. Genuine transnationality has, however, been achieved on some occasions. For example, the field of social policy has seen Nordic expert gatherings negotiate the status and direction of the welfare state, a model adapted by the entire region. The individual countries also do not tend to possess large enough communities to study or discuss things on a

more universal level: the need to source participants in order to form a critical mass large enough for the venture in question is yet another domestic motivation for Nordic cooperation. In addition to these political and practical purposes, there are also ideological reasons to pursue Nordic cooperation, such as furthering the idea of Norden or “Nordicity” or protecting and promoting the Scandinavian linguistic community. Besides the long history and somewhat established position of the region, the distinctiveness of Norden and the defining features of Nordic cooperation are not a given, but political constructs, the use of which depends on the changing circumstances. Strang points out that these constructs are important to study in order to understand the nature of the future for which Norden is headed.²⁶

Norden i sicksack. Tre spårbyten inom nordiskt samarbete, edited by Bengt

Sundelius and Claes Wiklund, contains observations and analyses of the so-called changes of track that happened during the first 50 years of Nordic cooperation as well as commentary on the history of Nordic cooperation research. According to Sundelius and Wiklund, research concerning Nordic cooperation in the social and political sciences has been relatively limited and focused more on the geopolitical framework conditions than the inner dynamics behind the progress and the shortcomings of Nordic cooperation. These studies have focused on matters of high politics such as the potential establishment of a Nordic customs union or participation in EU cooperation in the areas of security and economics. Other than that, a more institutional tradition focusing on the importance of everyday political work for concrete political results also exists within inter-Nordic institution studies. Sundelius and Wiklund claim that the classical approach to study inter-Nordic matters has been to discuss the centrifugal forces on which the opportunities for Nordic solutions depend. This type of macro-analysis formulates the essential framework needed for the establishment of institutional solutions, policy programs, cooperation agreements and resource allocations, but

²⁶ Strang, “The Nordic model of transnational cooperation?”

it does not discuss the concrete formation of these arrangements within said framework. Therefore, most of the content of these arrangements shaped by the different restrictions and opportunities is left out of the picture. Sundelius and Wiklund suggest a more penetrative approach is necessary to explain some of the defining features of Nordic cooperation, such as the repetitive phenomenon where unsuccessful initiatives based on economic or political interest have been compensated with identity-building institutional reforms which have later generated concrete results. The subject of this study, NAPA's cultural support program, can be counted as one of these, and this research also aims to provide a "more penetrative approach" in the sense that the subject of the study is a concrete manifestation of the cooperation. In *Norden i sicksack. Tre spårbyten inom nordiskt samarbete*, the history of Nordic cooperation is divided into three formative periods, each centering around a significant change of direction, and the following summary can be gathered from these documented changes of direction: in the 50 years that make up the basis of Sundelius and Wiklund's analysis, both the subjects of interest and the forms of Nordic cooperation have changed, and the relations to the world outside Norden have an effect on the inner dynamics of the cooperation.²⁷ Given the time frame of these defining changes, there would be room for at least one more to have happened after the publication of *Norden i sicksack. Tre spårbyten inom nordiskt samarbete* at the time of this writing. Upon inspecting a more recent piece of Nordic cooperation research it is revealed that this might be the case. The discoveries of Sundelius, Wiklund and other researchers featured in the edited volume appear interesting in comparison with the observations in *Nordic Cooperation. A European region in transition*, edited by Norden researcher Johan Strang and published nearly two decades later. In his

²⁷ Sundelius and Wiklund, "Nordisk fornyelse i etapper"; Sundelius, Bengt and Claes Wiklund. "Nordisk samverkan vid femtio. Visst finns det en framtid!" In *Norden i sicksack. Tre spårbyten inom nordiskt samarbete*, edited by Bengt Sundelius and Claes Wiklund, (Stockholm: Santérus Förlag, 2000), 327–334.

introductory article, “Nordic model of transnational cooperation?”, Strang presents his observations of a ‘Nordic renaissance’, referring to the way the Nordic region has recently caught international attention in terms of both different scientific ratings (of values such as transparency, education, prosperity, gender equality or peace) and cultural aspects such as food, television, and design trends. Also within the region itself, “Norden” has regained attention, and the shadow of European cooperation projects also mentioned by Sundelius and Wiklund seems to have faded, giving space to the development and utilization of a rediscovered ‘Nordic brand’. Interestingly, the ‘Nordic renaissance’ presented by Strang has brought along new cooperation initiatives related to foreign and defence politics – the area historically deemed unsuccessful – as a result of European geopolitical unrest. Simultaneously, Strang points at a ‘continuous decline’ in Nordic cooperation in its traditional form, namely in the fields of welfare, law, and culture. This is the very form of cooperation relevant for this thesis, and therefore it is important to inspect Strang’s findings, which can be summarized with the following theses:

1. The Nordic welfare model is a popular element of nation-branding strategies throughout Norden, but there is a serious lack of focus on common Nordic social and welfare initiatives and policies.
2. The Nordic Council and the Nordic Council of Ministers, which form the institutional base of official Nordic cooperation, have lost prestige and relevance to EU cooperation bodies, and need a radical reform.

As NAPA is administered by the official cooperation institutions, their alleged decline in relevance can hardly be ignored. In addition to these two findings, Strang mentions recent crises, such as the 2014 Ukrainian revolution and the 2015 European migrant crisis as a threat to the aspects of

cooperation historically deemed as key: the passport union and Nordic citizens' free mobility.²⁸ These crises, followed by stricter border restrictions and passport inspections, were followed by the 2020 coronavirus pandemic still ongoing at the time of this writing, which has made cross-border mobility and migration significantly more difficult if not virtually impossible. In addition to a decline in physical connections, isolation also occurs within the (Scandinavian) language community, as the citizens' understanding of each other's languages is on a continuous decline.²⁹ While Sundelius and Wiklund talk about 'changes of track', Strang claims the Nordic community is at "a crossroads where the role of the region is debated against the background of the persistent economic crisis in Europe and an increasingly challenging geopolitical situation"³⁰. Sundelius and Wiklund focus on the key changes of track in their analysis of the history of modern Nordic cooperation, and Strang looks at the same events from a perspective that distinguishes between a narrative of failure and a narrative of success.

2.3 Nordic cultural cooperation

As has been mentioned earlier, culture and cultural cooperation are often perceived as the core form of Nordic cooperation by the institutions themselves and researchers alike. 'Culture' is often divided into the fields of 'cultural matters' including different forms of creative arts and matters of education and research, and the term 'culture' is ambivalent in the sense that it is used to describe both the umbrella term and the subordinate concept.³¹ This thesis focuses on cultural

²⁸ Strang, "The Nordic model of transnational cooperation?" , Sundelius and Wiklund, "Nordisk fornyelse i etapper"

²⁹ Duelund and Pedersen, "The Nordic Cultural Cooperation", Giacometti, Alberto and Mari Wøien Meijer. *Closed borders and divided communities. Status report and lessons from Covid-19 in cross-border areas.* Nordregio report 2021:6. (Stockholm: Nordregio, 2021); Skjold Frøshaug, Andrea and Truls Stende. *Har Norden et språkfelleskap?* (Copenhagen: Nordisk Ministerråd, 2021); Theilgaard Brink, Eva. *Man skal bare kaste sig ud i det. En interviewundersøgelse af unge i Nordens nabosprogsforståelse i praksis.* (Copenhagen: Nordisk Ministerråd, 2016)

³⁰ Strang, "The Nordic model of transnational cooperation?" :2, Sundelius and Wiklund, "Nordisk fornyelse i etapper", Sundelius and Wiklund, "Nordisk samverkan vid femtio"

³¹ Andrén, "Nordiska kulturkommissionen lägger grunden", Bergum Kinsten and Orava, *Nordisk råd – vårt råd*, Nordic Council of Ministers 2000b, Söder, Karin."Förord av f.d. utrikesministern." In *Norden i sicksack. Tre spårbyten inom nordiskt samarbete*, edited by Bengt Sundelius and Claes Wiklund (Stockholm: Santérus

cooperation as the facilitator and motivation of NAPA's operations, and it is therefore important to inspect what kind of institutions share a similar placement or category in the cooperation network. Currently, the NCM makes a clear distinction between cultural matters and matters of education and research by having appointed separate ministerial councils for the two, whereas in the NC, they are merged into a Committee of Knowledge and Culture. In her foreword to the edited volume *Norden i sicksack. Tre spårbyten inom nordisk samarbete*, the former Swedish Minister for Foreign Affairs, Karin Söder, calls Nordic culture the glue keeping the Nordic region together through centuries. Without delving deeper into the concept, she describes Nordic culture as "not homogenous, but a culture rich in diversity", which, however, is based on some essential similarities, such as respect for the individual, secularization, solidarity for marginalized groups and the will to create an equal society.³² The Nordic Council motivates their engagement in matters of culture by stating that this set of values as well as the Nordic language and cultural community are more often seen as a unifying than a separating factor.³³ This is demonstrated by the existence of NAPA and other comparable institutions and solutions for cultural cooperation, such as Nordic bilateral funds and foundations. Like other Nordic cooperation, this field also has both an unofficial and an official dimension. While the history and prospects of the latter are tied to those of other official cooperative organs, the former highly depends on private actors and the initiatives of non-official cooperators. As NAPA is part of the official Nordic cultural cooperation, it is evidently a more relevant dimension to discuss, but as the unofficial cooperation contains many solutions similar to the cultural support program, exploring it provides a point of comparison and a way of placing NAPA in the field of Nordic cultural funding opportunities.

Förlag, 2000) , 7–14.

³² Söder, "Förord av f.d. utrikesministern", 9

³³ Bergum Kinsten and Orava, *Nordisk råd – vårt råd*

2.3.1 Official cooperation and cultural policy

The status of culture within Nordic cooperation is further demonstrated by the fact that the first permanent cooperative organ to be established in the post-war period was the Nordic Culture Commission (later NCC), active from 1946 to 1972.³⁴ The expertise of the Norden Associations had an important role in the establishment of the NCC, and representatives of the Association were present in the NCC's conferences – this adds to the placement of the Norden Associations in a grey area between official and unofficial cooperation. During its active period, the NCC hosted conferences on Nordic languages, literature, and sociology to provide students with better opportunities for scholarships in other Nordic countries and a to present the different Nordic people's movements, hereby reaching for a link between the official and unofficial. One of the NCC's achievements was the establishment of a Nordic Language Council, and the Commission also had an important role in the Nordic school reform operations in the 1950s. The less successful initiatives include enabling inter-Nordic teacher exchange, promotion of the recognition of higher education qualifications from the region in other Nordic countries – an initiative that was later adapted – and cooperation in the field of literature. The latter was motivated by the internationally weakened status of Nordic literature: literature from the isolated North would not reach international readers, and Nordic readers preferred translated anglophone literature to works from other Nordic countries. The economic interests of publishers and retailers hindered the spread of Nordic literature, and regardless of cooperation in the field of literature having been a long-discussed topic and one of the first priorities in the Commission's agenda, the attempts to establish it fell short. Today, cooperation in the field of literature exists in some form: the Nordic Council awards its yearly Literature Prize, and actors in the literary field can seek Nordic funding for projects and networking. Although some of the ambitious initiatives of the NCC eventually failed, it can be agreed that it did succeed in (morally) supporting the establishment and promotion of Nordic cooperation and the Nordic brand outside the Nordic

³⁴ Andrén, "Nordiska kulturkommissionen lägger grunden"; Söder, "Förord av f.d. utrikesministern."

region in form of, for example, Nordic education institutions and cooperation between them. The NCC coexisted for 20 years beside the NC, which also prioritized culture in its operations, but after the revision of the Helsinki Treaty, and the establishment of the NCM in 1971, the NCC was discontinued and the cultural cooperation structure was reconstructed with the Agreement concerning cultural cooperation, signed by the governments of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden.³⁵

Apart from the Agreement, Nordic cultural cooperation is being regulated by strategies set every few years. During the studied time period, the following strategies have been in place: *Nordic Cultural Co-operation 2010–2012 – Aims and Vision* (2010), *Nordic Council of Ministers Strategy for Nordic Cultural Co-operation 2013–2020* (2013) and its revised, broader edition published after the interim review in 2016, *Strategy for Nordic Cultural Co-operation 2013–2020* (2017). For the immediate future after the research period, the course is set by *Art and culture - driving force for sustainable development in the Nordic region. Co-operation programme on culture policy 2021-2024* (2021). In addition, the countries' Presidency plans include a separate segment for cultural cooperation and the annual budget has earmarked approximately 23 million EUR for culture – this includes the operations of all the Nordic Houses and institutions such as NAPA³⁶. Official Nordic cultural cooperation is a direct continuation of cultural policies both in Greenland and the rest of the Nordic region, and although the focus of this thesis is not directly on cultural policy, the concept itself and its manifestations in Norden help comprehend the structure on which the researched activities are built, and this way, approaching cultural policy brings depth to the definition of cultural cooperation.

Post-war cultural policy in Norden was shaped by questions related to the position of the region in Europe and the effectiveness of a welfare-based cultural policy. It was doubted

³⁵ Andrén, "Nordiska kulturkommissionen lägger grunden", Duelund, "Cultural policy: An overview", Duelund and Pedersen, "The Nordic Cultural Cooperation"

³⁶ De Paoli and Foss, *Effects of Network Funding*

whether cultural funding coming from the government would fulfil the artistic expectations of the so-called founding period, and there was an increasing contrast between the political and the artistic rationales. The position of Norden in the “new Europe” was discussed as the EU began to take form, and in the cultural sphere, the multiple national subsidy systems of the time faced issues in the advent of the internal EU market. Encouraged by the EU structural funds, the infrastructural developments in Nordic cultural policy were characterized by regionalization and decentralization in the final decades of the 20th century. Other characteristics of Nordic cultural policy include the ‘arm’s length principle’, according to which decision-makers are not to interfere in the concrete decisions made about cultural funding by addressing opinions of taste or making professional quality assessment. The principle could also be illustrated by stating that decision-makers should fund, but not manage: their task is to provide funding, whereas the producers of culture decide how it will be spent.³⁷ Duelund and Pedersen (2003) point out that the official Nordic cultural institutions have been subject to increased political control in form of target and results contracts, efficiency improvement and financial management, but the institutions’ individual boards still remain in power regarding decision-making. The Nordic houses and institutes have their own, general cultural objectives which are regarded superior to the cultural policy ones, but the institutes also collaborate with the political decision-making organs by implementing the cultural cooperation initiatives which have a political motivation.

The Nordic houses and institutes, which are the primary concrete organs of Nordic cultural cooperation, are all located outside Scandinavia. This is not only to bring Nordic culture closer to the peripheral societies, but also to promote equal opportunities for participating in the cooperation. In addition, the Saami people’s rights have had a great significance in Nordic political and cultural cooperation, and recently, immigration and multiculturalism have gained significance

³⁷ Duelund, “Cultural policy: An overview”, Duelund, Peter, “Cultural policy in Denmark” In *The Nordic Cultural Model. Nordic cultural policy in transition* (Copenhagen: The Nordic Cultural Institute, 2003), 31–78

in the cultural cooperation agenda. The intent of Nordic integration is, therefore, clearly visible also in this area of cooperation, but Duelund and Pedersen (2003) question the underlying motive behind it. Cultural cooperation has historically been legitimized by the concept of an anthropologically unified Nordic culture or a cultural community, that should be developed, and a common Nordic identity, that should be strengthened, protected, and polished to be exhibited to the outside world – one could see this as a prototype of Strang’s Nordic brand that has gained attention over a decade later. Their arguments include earlier statements of cultural policy being “characterized by a desire to protect the national culture and (...) protect the national identity”³⁸ in a study conducted on Nordsat, a common Nordic television initiative, and dilemmas considering the factual unity of the Nordic community. The already addressed weakened state of the linguistic community is only a part of it: additionally, the whole idea of the linguistic community is based on the Scandinavian languages, excluding the native and official languages of the Faroe Islands, Finland, Greenland, and Iceland. Culturally, the question lies in the various lifestyles and values possessed by Nordic citizens: not only does the region comprise five states, three autonomous areas and a cultural region, but these societies contain people and communities with widely different lifestyles from one another. Duelund and Pedersen illustrate this by asking “what everyday values and ways of life do a Greenlandic hunter, a farmer in the East of Norway, a Saami reindeer breeder, a Danish fisherman and a Stockholm businessman have in common?”³⁹ With the clash of national and Nordic interests often being the cause of setbacks in official (cultural) cooperation initiatives, the call for unity is understandable, but relying on a vision of a Nordic monoculture is not the only option to achieve a high enough level of belonging. Instead of striving for a unified culture, Duelund and Pedersen suggest shifting focus to promoting artistic freedom

³⁸ Duelund and Pedersen, “The Nordic Cultural Cooperation”, 268

³⁹ Duelund and Pedersen, “The Nordic Cultural Cooperation”, 268

and the cultural diversity of the region by a joint cultural policy model and keeping the community as a constitutional and political principle.

The cultural policies implemented by the NC and the NCM are concretized in the work of the aforementioned Nordic houses – one in Reykjavík, Iceland, and one in Tórshavn, the Faroe Islands, plus the headquarters in Copenhagen – and institutions – NAPA in Nuuk, Greenland, NIPÅ in Mariehamn, the Åland Islands and the Nordic Cultural Point in Helsinki, Finland – that create the physical framework for cooperation. With its secretariat located in the headquarters of the NCM in Copenhagen, Nordic Cultural Fund offers grants for inter-Nordic cultural projects but does not conduct activities of its own and is therefore rather perceived as an institutional instrument rather than a physical institution with its own agenda. Out of the physical institutions, only NAPA and the Nordic Cultural Point offer grants for cultural cooperation projects. As NAPA's cultural support program is the subject of this study, it will be presented later, but the other two will be shortly introduced here.

The Nordic Cultural Fund (later NCF), founded in 1966, defines its objective in the following way:

“The Nordic Culture Fund contributes to positive artistic and cultural development in the Nordic Region by promoting co-operation between Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, Sweden, the Faroe Islands, Greenland and Åland. We do this by gathering knowledge and information, building networks and providing financial support.”⁴⁰

In practice, this is done with a current budget of DKK 36 million (approximately 4,8 million EUR) divided into over 300 allocated grants per year. The grants are divided into four categories:

⁴⁰ The Nordic Cultural Fund: About the Fund, accessed 07.04.2021, <https://www.nordiskkulturfond.org/en/about-us/#AbouttheFund>

1. Opstart, designed for project development grants such as meeting and travel subsidies up to 25 000 DKK.
2. Project Funding, for funding projects that are ready to be initiated.
3. Globus, for Nordic efforts extending beyond the region.
4. Puls. a temporary funding initiative for promoters and curators in the music industry.

In order to be eligible, the applicant does not need to be a citizen or resident of the Nordic region.

In some categories, bilateral projects with a regionwide relevance are accepted, while others require a multilateral setup. The Fund states that the projects must be of high quality but does not specifically mention that the applicants must be professional artists.⁴¹

The Nordic Culture Point (later NCP), located in Helsinki, Finland, houses a library and event hall as well as spaces for exhibiting visual art in addition to managing grant programs. Currently, NCP awards grants for approximately 1,2 million EUR. The institution's objectives are stated in a document of statutes found on its official webpage, describing NCP as a facilitator of a central Nordic cultural meeting point with the objective to strengthen the presence of the Nordic languages and culture in Finland and elsewhere in Norden. In addition, the institution should function as a secretariat for the programs administered by the NCM and other activities within cultural cooperation coordinated by the NCM and profile Nordic cultural cooperation both within the region and internationally. The Nordic Cultural Point categorizes its grants into project and mobility grants and administers four grant programs further divided into six different types:

1. Norden 0–30, a project funding program for children and young people up to the age of 30,
2. Volt, a language and cultural grant program for children and young people up to the age of 25,

⁴¹ The Nordic Cultural Fund, accessed 07.04.2021, <https://www.nordiskkulturfond.org/>

3. The Culture and Art Programme, for projects “with artistic and/or cultural quality which promotes a multifaceted and sustainable Nordic region”,⁴²
4. Short-term and long-term network funding for professional artists and cultural workers,
5. Mobility funding for professional artists and cultural workers,
6. Funding for artist residencies receiving professional artists and cultural workers.

The NCP does not require residency in or citizenship of a Nordic country for every type of grant, but for some, the applicant must reside in the Nordic region. Eligible projects must link together at least three different countries, two of which Nordic. While the youth grants are not limited to professionals only, the other grants either are, or a level of professionalism is implied by a quality claim. Two recent reports of the NCP’s work have been published: an evaluation of the network funding program conducted by Donatella De Paoli and Lene Foss in 2019, and a report of applications received by the institution between 2015 and 2016. In addition, yearly reports of the institution’s work are available on the official webpage.⁴³

The official cultural cooperation organs reflect the definition of Nordic cultural cooperation stated in the Helsinki treaty: to be classified as Nordic, the cooperation must happen between two or more different Nordic countries or autonomous areas. In practice, both the NCF and the NCP communicate their preference of multilateral projects to bilateral ones by either an official requirement or a statement that even bilateral agreements must be linked to regionwide cooperation. Although the Helsinki Treaty does not exclude bilateral cooperation from the

⁴² Nordic Culture Point: About the Grant Programmes, accessed 07.04.2021

<https://www.nordiskkulturkontakt.org/en/grants/about-the-grant-programmes/>,

⁴³ De Paoli and Foss *Effects of Network Funding*, Nordic Culture Point, accessed 07.04.2021

<https://www.nordiskkulturkontakt.org/>,

definition of Nordic cooperation, researchers have argued in favor of multilateralism as a key element⁴⁴.

2.4 Greenland as part of Norden

As can be gathered from above, Nordic cooperation is being maintained, promoted and developed by a political will stemming from a historical bond and a sense of similar values, lifestyles, and even culture. The aims for the future are centered around environmental and social sustainability, a strong status as a competitive player on the international field as well as increased integration. It is, however, also possible to argue that both the historical and the cultural aspects of belonging in Norden are not equal to each country involved. Not only has Greenland (among the other autonomous areas) had a subordinate status in the official cooperation, its belonging in the region is also a result of Danish colonialism⁴⁵. Should Greenland become independent one day, the geographical link to the rest of the region would technically be weakened. While it is an asset for sparsely populated countries to stand together and support one another in both international affairs and the production of scientific and cultural products, there are some aspects that should be assessed for the co-operation to be more inclusive; this is especially important when Nordic cooperation is being evaluated from a Greenlandic perspective. With NAPA being the most prominent cooperative organ present in Greenland, this discussion is also relevant regarding this thesis. As neither Nordic cooperation nor Greenland's position in it are granted or unchanged absolutes, the question of how NAPA promotes Nordic cooperation in Greenland includes an underlying question of what importance Nordic cooperation has for

⁴⁴ Andrén, "Nordiska kulturkommissionen lägger grunden", Hermansson 2009, Micheletti 1998, The Helsinki Treaty, Article 5, c.

⁴⁵ Søbye, Gry.. "To be or not to be indigenous: Defining people and sovereignty in Greenland after Self-Government." In *Modernization and Heritage: How to combine the two in Inuit societies*, edited by Karen Langgård and Kennet Pedersen, (Nuuk: Ilisimatusarfik/Forlaget Atuagkat, 2013) 187–206.; Thisted, Kirsten.. "Discourses of indigeneity. Branding Greenland in the age of Self-Government and climate change." In *Modernization and Heritage: How to combine the two in Inuit societies*, edited by Karen Langgård and Kennet Pedersen, (Nuuk: Ilisimatusarfik/Forlaget Atuagkat, 2013), 207–234.

Greenland. Is there a risk that Nordic cooperation will only serve as a remnant of the colonial past in an increasingly independent Greenland?

2.4.1 Relations to Denmark: colonialism, a post-colonial society and decolonization

Greenland was a Danish colony from Hans Egede's mission in 1721 to its incorporation in Denmark in 1953. This period was highly identified by a structure where the Danes took decision-making, trade, and teaching upon themselves while the Greenlandic Inuit "were decided over, went hunting, and lived in tents or turf huts"⁴⁶. Access to Greenland was limited for a long time by Denmark with the intention of protecting the indigenous culture and the supply of tradable items provided by the traditional hunters. In the wake of German romantic nationalism and its ideals of native-language enlightenment, a Greenlandic elite, aspiring equality with the Danes, was formed. Formally, this equality was supposed to be achieved at the end of the colonial period, but the ethnic hierarchy and power structure remained in the everyday life, making Greenlanders second-class citizens in their own country⁴⁷. In 1979, Greenland was granted Home Rule, and the current system of Self-Government was established in 2009, granting the country more independence from Denmark.⁴⁸ Independence has been the goal of the Greenlandic political agenda already before the establishment of the Self-Government, but Greenland has remained dependent on the annual block grant from Denmark to uphold the current welfare standard⁴⁹, and a vast majority of voters are unwilling to pursue independence at the cost of welfare.⁵⁰ Some research suggests that

⁴⁶ Gad, Ulrik Pram. "Greenland projecting sovereignty – Denmark protecting sovereignty away." In *European Integration and Postcolonial Sovereignty Games: The EU Overseas Countries and Territories*, edited by Rebecca Adler-Nissen and Ulrik Pram Gad, (New York: Routledge, 2013), 218.

⁴⁷ Loftsdóttir and Jensen

⁴⁸ Gad, "Greenland projecting sovereignty"; Gad, Ulrik Pram. "Post-colonial identity in Greenland? When the empire dichotomizes back —bring politics back in." In *Journal of Language and Politics* 8:1, (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2009) 136–158; Grydehøj, Adam, "Unravelling economic dependence and independence in relation to island sovereignty: The case of Kalaallit Nunaat (Greenland)". In *Island Studies Journal*, 15(1), (Charlottetown: Institute of Island Studies. 2020), 89-112

⁴⁹ Gad, "Greenland projecting sovereignty", Grydehøj, "Unravelling economic dependence and independence in relation to island sovereignty"; Søbøye, "To be or not to be indigenous."

⁵⁰ Carlsen, Aksel V., "Grønland: et holdningsskift i den post-koloniale velfærdspolitik." In *Arbejde, helse og velfærd i Vestnorden*, edited by Guðbjörg Linda Rafnsdóttir (Reykjavík: Háskólaútgáfan, 2007), 57–75. Gad,

Denmark, although willing to not be regarded as a colonizer, is not truly willing to grant Greenland full sovereignty, either⁵¹. In practice, the Greenlandic standard of welfare does not only depend on funds: the cooperation between Denmark and Greenland is suggested to be structured so that the Greenlandic economy also depends on the purchase of goods and services from Danish providers as well as export of Danish (or other foreign) educated workforce, creating a “dependency-based economy” (Danish: *afhængighedsøkonomi*) and thus an inescapable cycle, when there is no evident way to replace the funds, goods or services causing dependency.⁵² Greenland’s coloniality may have legally ended, but it remains a necessary reference for most of the society, making Greenland a post-colonial society⁵³. The process of ending this dependency caused by colonization is a major part of the Greenlandic decolonization process. As can be gathered from the examples above, this process requires not only full legal sovereignty, but also, ideally, abolishment of the dependency-based economic structure.

2.4.2 Language, culture, and identity

As discussed above, questions of language and culture have been deemed important in the formation and justification of Nordic cooperation, but the idea of a joint Nordic culture has also been questioned. However, the importance of a common Nordic identity is harder to dispute; while the concept of identity can be discussed in a multitude of ways, a vast majority of scholars agree that, in the simplest sense, it can be defined as “one’s conception of who one is, and who one is not”⁵⁴. For cooperation that emphasizes the role of community, it would seem important that its participants have a clear conception of themselves being Nordic.

“Greenland projecting sovereignty”, Thorsteinsson, Benedikte. “Velfærd i Grønland.” In *Arbejde, helse og velfærd i Vestnorden*, edited by Guðbjörg Linda Rafnsdóttir, (Reykjavík: Háskólaútgáfan. 2007), 76–83.

⁵¹ Adler-Nissen, Rebecca and Ulrik Pram Gad.. “Introduction. Postcolonial sovereignty games.” In *European Integration and Postcolonial Sovereignty Games : The EU Overseas Countries and Territories*, edited by Rebecca Adler-Nissen and Ulrik Pram Gad, (New York: Routledge, 2013) 1–24; Gad, “Greenland projecting sovereignty”

⁵² Gad, “Greenland projecting sovereignty”, Thorsteinsson, “Velfærd i Grønland.”

⁵³ Gad, “Post-colonial identity in Greenland?”

⁵⁴ Andersson, “What Activates an Identity?”, 46

To begin with, it is to be addressed that any potential “Nordic dimension” in Greenlandic identity is, originally, a result of Danish colonialism. Gad claims that becoming independent is one of the defining factors of modern Greenlandic identity – in addition to political independence, this contains preservation of the Greenlandic language as well as the traditional Inuit culture and lifestyle. Simultaneously, this identity is constituted in relation to what Gad calls *a Danish Other* – the former colonial power which has brought along the modern practices and structures that, today, are equally considered a vital part of the Greenlandic society, such as democracy and the welfare state. Gad argues that this has led to democracy and welfare being irreducible parts of a present-day Greenlandic identity. This could potentially spur tension in contact with the independence aspect, as a welfare state requires educated personnel, and education is still provided in Danish to a high degree. The question of language is potentially even more tense: Greenlanders most often receive higher education in Denmark, and as this education is required to fill leading, high influence and high-income positions, fluency in Danish equals privilege in contemporary Greenlandic society, and the colonial positions remain rather unchanged. On the other hand, most top administrative positions in the society are manned with Greenlandic speakers, which, due to the amount of interaction with Danish-speaking bodies, must also have a sufficient proficiency in Danish. Overall, Gad argues that in a contemporary Greenlandic society, bilinguals speaking both Greenlandic and Danish are, in fact, the most privileged: they might get criticized for being “too Danish” for a society striving for decolonization, but their knowledge of the indigenous language privileges them in relation to those who only know Danish. One option would be to replace Danish (a colonial lingua franca) with English, a global lingua franca: while it might not instantly change the power dynamics (as the highest-educated bilinguals or Danish speakers are most likely to also speak English), it might make it easier to incorporate elements of modernization into Greenlandic identity and to shift further

away from the colonial past.⁵⁵ The status of English has been debated as something threatening to the existence of the Nordic language community and, to some degree, the languages themselves, but the discussion has recently taken an interesting shift into accepting English as a necessary part of pan-Nordic interaction and cooperation.⁵⁶

Another aspect of Greenlandic identity has to do with the Greenlandic Inuit's status as indigenous people. This binds them together to other Inuit peoples residing in the United States, Canada, and Russia, as well as the Saami people of Fennoscandia and the Kola peninsula. From a cultural perspective, the Inuit share a similar culture and language, and all the aforementioned peoples have a similar history of colonization, assimilation and emancipation.⁵⁷ This could easily be seen as a parallel to what the other Nordic countries have in common, and thus a base for more organized cooperation.

2.4.3 Nordic and international cooperation

When it comes to Greenland's affiliations with the rest of the world, Norden does have a special position. For example, Nordic citizens are the only ones allowed to freely reside in Greenland, as the country is not part of the EU. Greenland's status within the official Nordic cooperation was strengthened by the 2007 agreement known as the Åland Document, which was the result of an inspection of the autonomous areas' participation in official Nordic cooperation, but the membership still has limitations as the Ministers of Cooperation chose not to address suggestions that demanded changes be made to the Helsinki Treaty.⁵⁸ Greenland's status within the cooperation reflects the generally unequal position within the region, as it lies behind the nation

⁵⁵ Gad, "Post-colonial identity in Greenland?"; Gad, "Greenland projecting sovereignty"

⁵⁶ Skjold Frøshaug and Stende, *Har Norden et språkfelleskap?*, Theilgaard Brink, *Det er bare at kaste sig ud i det*

⁵⁷ Sjøbye, "To be or not to be indigenous"; Thisted, "Discourses of indigeneity", Nordic Culture Point. (Producer) *Har Norden et språkfelleskap?* [Video, 2021]. <https://youtu.be/DZj1xV2ntVQ>

⁵⁸ Nordic Ministers of Cooperation, *The Åland Document. Betänkande från arbetsgruppen med uppgift att föreslå initiativ som kan förstärka de självstyrande områdenas deltagande i nordiskt samarbete. Behandlat av samarbetsministrarna vid mötet på Åland den 5 september 2007.*

states in terms of education and welfare and, as addressed before, still depends on Denmark on many aspects. This could create a power imbalance in case a complete membership was issued.⁵⁹

For cultural cooperation, the 2007 agreement presents a suggestion that questions the differentiation between observer status and full membership due to demand for equal participation and representation. Currently, the Finnish presidency of the NCM has further strengthening the participation of the autonomous areas as one of its main objectives.⁶⁰

It is unfortunate both in terms of this study and the general field of West Nordic studies that Nordic cooperation research has not only focused on the five independent states, but often left the autonomous areas without mention. According to Strang, Nordic cooperation has been a politically marginalized subject, although the concept of Norden or a specific “Nordicity” has played a key role in the national narrative of the Nordic states. Being a Nordic country is regarded as a defining factor in the construction and history of the five nation states, yet Nordic cooperation has more of an ambiguous role. Research about Greenlandic nation-building emphasizes the role of Greenlandic nationalism versus Danish colonialism.⁶¹ When discussing international relations and cooperation partners for Greenland, Denmark is regarded as the given choice, but Gad argues that “some of the restrictions in post-coloniality only exist in the minds of the colonized”⁶²: Greenland has other options when it comes to international relations and cooperation. One option could be to follow Iceland’s example: the country opted for independency from Denmark in 1944 and has since spread its relations of dependency to include the USA for matters of security, the Scandinavian countries (Denmark included) for education and

⁵⁹ Larsen, Joan Nyman.. ”Samfund under pres. Samfundsøkonomiske udfordringer for arktiske regioner i Norden”. In *Arbejde, helse og velfærd i Vestnorden*, edited by Guðbjörg Linda Rafnsdóttir (Reykjavík: Háskólaútgáfan, 2007), 13–26.

⁶⁰ Nordic Ministers of Cooperation 2007, Nordic Co-operation: Finland to lead Nordic Council of Ministers in 2021, accessed 27.05.2021: <https://www.norden.org/en/news/finland-lead-nordic-council-ministers-2021>

⁶¹ Gad, “Greenland projecting sovereignty” , Strang, “The Nordic model of transnational cooperation?”

⁶² Gad, “Post-colonial identity in Greenland?”, 151

the UK for investments and, increasingly, also education.⁶³ Currently, Greenland is not part of the EU but is a full member of the Council of Europe and NATO. Regarding organizations similar to official Nordic cooperation, Greenland is part of the intergovernmental Arctic Council under the Kingdom of Denmark. Greenland is also part of the non-governmental Inuit Circumpolar Council (ICC) as an independent area, along with the US state of Alaska, Canada and the Chukotka region in Russia.⁶⁴

Within Norden, Greenland can be categorized as a West Nordic country along with the Faroe Islands, Iceland and sometimes Coastal Norway. The West Nordic countries have their own interparliamentary cooperation body called the West Nordic council.⁶⁵ Projects related to the West Nordic countries can receive funding through the loan-based West Nordic Fund⁶⁶ or the grant-based North Atlantic Cooperation (NORA), which is part of the official Nordic cooperation⁶⁷. Culturally cooperative projects situated in Nuuk, Reykjavík or Tórshavn can also be funded via the Common Fund of Nuuk, Reykjavík and Tórshavn. Denmark and Greenland have also had a bilateral cultural fund, but as no official information of its current status has been found, it can be assumed that the fund has ceased to exist. The Danish-Faroese Fund does, however, also support cultural initiatives between the Faroe Islands and Greenland. Greenland has official friendship associations with Finland, Iceland, and Sweden.⁶⁸

The Nordic Institute in Greenland (NAPA), established in 1987, is the youngest of the current Nordic cultural institutions and shares its physical spaces with the Nordic information service *Info Norden*, making them close collaborators. NAPA's work is administered by a board

⁶³ Gad, "Greenland projecting sovereignty"

⁶⁴ The Arctic Council, accessed 12.04.2021, <https://arctic-council.org/en>; The Inuit Circumpolar Council, accessed 12.04.2021, <https://www.inuitcircumpolar.com/>

⁶⁵ The West Nordic Council, accessed 12.04.2021, <https://www.vestnordisk.is/>

⁶⁶ Vestnordenfonden, accessed 12.04.2021, <https://vestnorden.is/>

⁶⁷ NORA: About NORA, accessed 12.04.2021, <https://nora.fo/what-is-nora?l=en>

⁶⁸ Hermansson, Nanna Stefania. *Nordiska bilaterala kulturfonder och föreningar. Tillkomst och verksamhet*. (Copenhagen: The Nordic Culture Fund, 2009)

consisting of 5 permanent members and 3 alternates from the Nordic countries and self-governing areas. The board is re-established every 2 years, and the Greenlandic representative is selected by the Greenlandic Minister of Culture. NAPA is unique in the sense that none of the other Nordic countries have an official cooperation body dedicated to promoting its cooperation with the rest of the region or belonging thereof, and with regard to the statements above, it is clear that, from the perspective of the official cooperation, Greenland's position within the region requires that additional attention. However, the question of decolonization does pose additional questions of why Nordic cooperation should be valued over other types of cooperation, and whether adjustments could be made to secure regionwide inclusion and a Greenlandic interest within the cooperative structure. More information about NAPA can be found in Appendix 4.

2.5 Summary

Conclusively, it can be gathered that the Nordic cooperation structure has a long history and an established status in the Nordic countries' contemporary political agendas for a reason. Not only does cooperation aid international negotiations by providing the individual countries and autonomous areas a unified, stronger voice, but it also serves internal purposes, such as having a broader pool of experts for the production of immaterial and material goods. However, this structure has been through major reforms in the past, and scholars have stated that another reform would be due soon. The most recent trends in the cooperation structure include the rise of previously unsuccessful initiatives, such as defense and security cooperation, and a decline in the fields of social and cultural cooperation – fields that, historically, have formed the core of Nordic cooperation and proved successful. This decline is linked to the official cooperation bodies, the NC and the NCM, losing prestige due to increased EU cooperation. Nordic cooperation is known for its informal nature, and civil organizations and movements have had a key role in its establishment. It can be stated that the cooperative structure is rather based on informal networks than, for example, a strong defense front, but in the light of the recent crises, the focus may be shifting towards the latter.

All official Nordic cultural institutions are under the NCM, which is responsible for budget allocations as well as the policies that create the framework for the institutions' operations. Decentralization and the principle of funding but not managing, also known as the arm's length principle, have historically been defining features of Nordic state cultural policies, and they are also present in Nordic cultural cooperation: the different institutions are spread across the countries, with the Nordic houses and institutes located in the geographical peripheries, and although the arm's length between the institutions and the decision-makers seems to be getting shorter, the institutions still control most of their budgets and get to, for example, make all decisions concerning the applications submitted to the grant programs. However, these decisions are being controlled to a certain degree by the NCM's visions and guidelines, which often split the cultural cooperation work into themes that the institutions are instructed to consider in their work. Official Nordic cultural cooperation started as a single Culture Commission, which laid base to intergovernmental cooperation and was abolished following the establishment of the NCM, which controls the official cultural cooperation at the time of this writing. On a more concrete level, Nordic cultural cooperation is represented by the Nordic Houses and Institutes as well as the Nordic Culture Fund, which does not provide a physical meeting point but is an important source of grants for inter-Nordic cultural initiatives. The other important grant provider is the Nordic Culture Point (NCP), which functions in a manner similar to NAPA, the case of this study. Both institutions offer grants for inter-Nordic cultural projects on similar conditions, although NAPA works on a much smaller scale and has a special emphasis on Greenland. There are no unofficial bilateral funds between Greenland and other Nordic countries apart from the Danish-Faroese fund, which also grants support for initiatives between Greenland and the Faroe Islands, and the different West Nordic arrangements.

Considering Greenland's status within this cooperative structure, it is important to take into account the role of Danish colonialism and the following decolonization process:

Greenland's relationship with the Nordic region is largely due to its history with Denmark, and with the Greenlandic political agenda striving towards independence, Nordic cooperation could be perceived as an extension of the Danish influence – especially when Greenland currently participates in the large-scale decision-making as part of Denmark. For a future independent Greenland, other options exist, and it is not easy to determine the effect of the observed decline in cultural cooperation and the increased interest in security and defense cooperation. Without its own army, for example, Greenland would rely on external forces in terms of defense, but dependency on Denmark is a major factor hindering Greenland's independence today. In addition to Greenland's political situation, matters of culture and identity can be perceived as distancing factors: linguistically, Greenland is only part of the Scandinavian dialect continuum through its history with Denmark, and with a national identity centered around independence, the common Nordic identity often regarded as a key factor for cooperation may not have had a chance to develop as strong as elsewhere in the region. Cultural cooperation is one of the easier forms of cooperation and would potentially provide Greenland a more equal chance of representation and participation. A similar logic can be applied to all Nordic autonomous areas and cultural regions, which are currently underrepresented in many aspects: in addition to small populations and remote locations, Nordic cooperation research often emphasizes the independent states and EU cooperation. On the other hand, Nordic cooperation is also primarily financed with tax revenue from the independent states.

According to previous definitions, this thesis aims to study how NAPA's cultural support program reflects Greenland's status within Nordic cooperation. In this chapter, the main components of this research question have been presented and can be summarized with the following arguments:

1. While all the autonomous regions have an underrepresented and distinct status within Nordic cooperation, Greenland's case is special due to its geographical location, linguistic and cultural landscape, and colonial history.
2. Greenland's participation in Nordic cooperation is largely due to its colonial history – Denmark has been and to some degree still is Greenland's gate to Norden. This adds to the distance between Greenland and the rest of the region, making it easier to confuse inter-Nordic cooperative efforts with bilateral Greenlandic-Danish efforts.
3. When discussing the relevance of Nordic cooperation in Greenland, there is an element of duality. On one hand, Nordic cooperation can be interpreted as a remnant of or a connection to colonialism, but on the other hand, several of the values represented and emphasized by Nordic cooperation fit the ones deemed key also in the contemporary Greenlandic society.
4. According to the arm's length principle of Nordic cultural policy, the institutions still control their internal decision-making and management of the funds allocated by the NCM. This would imply that NAPA can create ties to the other Nordic countries and enhance Greenland's participation on an institutional level on its own accord, without having to be ordered by the NCM. Thus, while this thesis is not to be regarded as an evaluation or a guidebook on these matters, the results of this study may realistically motivate future changes or initiatives.

3 Methodology

Cross-disciplinarity and mixed-method research are common approaches to cultural studies, and while this thesis does not directly research culture, the link is evident. Not only is the concept being discussed in this context, but culture is also NAPA's main means of influencing and contributing to both Nordic cooperation and the surrounding society. The chosen approach reflects this connection by combining qualitative and quantitative research, but not directly in terms of philosophy. Critical theory has traditionally been linked to cultural studies, but as this thesis does not seek to delve deeper into the discussion on social justice and the imbalance of power than what is necessary for understanding Nordic cooperation in a Greenlandic context, applying critical theory into the research might not be the most suitable alternative. While this research may provide some ground for discussing the potential changes required to optimize NAPA's participation in and means of promoting Nordic cooperation, it does not directly provide guidelines on what needs to be changed and how. What this thesis aims to present is the current situation and the potential underlying reasons thereof – any conclusions and suggestions regarding change are to be made by whoever may utilize this piece of research for such purposes.

In order to reach the aforementioned aim, the research needs to focus on what NAPA does to participate in the work of the greater cooperation unit, and this is easiest by studying the grant program data. As the perspective is Nordic cooperation (and not, for example, NAPA's contribution to the performing arts scene in Greenland), the logical choice is to look into how the different countries are represented in the Institute's activity. To examine the underlying reasons for whatever the statistics show, one can turn to theories developed by earlier researchers, but to bring depth and first-hand information, the researcher has chosen to consult those who have had a say in the decision-making behind the statistics. To include all these parts in one piece of research, a mixed-method approach is necessary, and in this case, it means elaborating the statistical analysis with semi-structured interviews. When choosing the right

epistemological viewpoint to support this methodology, one also needs to take into account features such as the concept of reality that support the desired outcome. The next subchapter will elaborate on the purpose of the epistemological stance and the reasoning behind the researcher's choice of viewpoint.

The case in question is a complex phenomenon that is being concretized in a program whose output (finished projects and their impacts) cannot directly be determined by the input (applications, administration) and the desired data is being collected from several different sources by using two different methods. In that regard, the research fits Launsø and Rieper's (2005) definition of a case study. The research is also connected to a developmental process, as the results might help the Institute to pursue better ways to promote and communicate the Nordic aspect of their existence in the future. This adds to the suitability of this particular methodology, as mixed methods research is a popular tool when approaching practically rooted problems⁶⁹.

3.1. Epistemology

The epistemological stance represents the researcher's worldview in terms of the conducted study. This worldview consists of the definition of reality and the accepted ways of obtaining information thereof. In terms of methodology, research has traditionally been divided into quantitative and qualitative approaches, and subsequently, the epistemological stances traditionally underpinning these approaches have existed in a binary with (post)positivism on one side and constructivism/interpretivism on the other. The researcher takes their stance based on what kind of information and data the research relies on; in quantitative approaches, the data collected is based on observable facts, while qualitative methods are used to extract opinions, attitudes and other subjective interpretations of the researched topic. Postpositivism and

⁶⁹ Launsø, Laila, Leif Olsen and Olaf Rieper.. *Forskning om og med mennesker. Forskningstyper og forskningsmetoder i samfundsforskning*. 5th ed. (Copenhagen: Nyt Nordisk Forlag, 2005)

positivism only accept knowledge gathered from observable phenomena as credible and the researched phenomena is reduced to generalizations and simple elements, which provide a solid foundation for examining causality, and therefore this stance often gets chosen if the methodology is quantitative. At the other end of the binary are constructivism and interpretivism, which emphasize the subjectivity of reality and only accept subjective meanings and social phenomena as sources of credible knowledge, and as this tends to be the nature of information extracted by qualitative methods, they are usually backed up by these epistemological paradigms. Although common, these combinations of research strategies and philosophical stances are not fixed and choosing a certain methodological approach does not automatically mean choosing a certain epistemological and ontological implications for the research.⁷⁰

In the light of the information presented above, it seems that a mixed-method study such as the one conducted in this thesis would be epistemologically divided. The research relies on both observable facts (statistical analysis) and subjective interpretations and opinions (interviews) and cannot therefore be exclusively defined as representative of either side of the epistemological binary (postpositivist/positivist vs. constructivist/interpretivist). This has led to exploring pragmatism, a fairly new research paradigm which seems to be made for underpinning mixed-method social research. Pragmatism claims to bridge the gap between the scientific and naturalistic methods, just as mixed-method research utilizes both quantitative and qualitative data to support, complement and complete each other. The basis of pragmatism is the proposition that researchers should use the philosophical and/or methodological approach that works best for their particular research question, and with its foundation in the pragmatist philosophy it embraces the plurality of methods per definition. Pragmatism as a philosophical

⁷⁰ Bryman, Alan.. *Social Research Methods*, 4th edition. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012); Kaushik, Vibha and Christine A. Walsh. "Pragmatism as a Research Paradigm and Its Implications for Social Work Research" *Social Sciences*, MDPI, Open Access Journal, vol. 8(9) (September 2019), 1-17; Launsø and Rieper, *Forskning om og med mennesker*.

doctrine is traced back to the 1870s, when a discussion group of academics and non-academics representing a wide variety of fields including philosophy, psychology and sociology jointly rejected the traditional assumptions about reality, knowledge and inquiry, as well as the notion that reality can be accessed solely by using a single scientific method within the social sciences. The pragmatist world is a world of unique human experiences and warranted beliefs instead of universal truths, and these beliefs take shape according to actions taken by people. The actions cannot be separated from their context, which their consequences also depend on and are therefore open to change despite the repeated action itself being the exact same. Pragmatists believe that experiences can be shared to varying degrees, but two people can never have an identical experience, which translates to two worldviews never being identical; the observed similarity or unity of worldviews and opinions is due to the extent of shared belief between people about a particular experience or situation. This allows worldviews to be both individual and socially shared. Pragmatist scholars in particular have suggested that there is an objective reality, the existence of which is independent of human experience – encountering it, however, can only happen through human experience, as this reality is grounded in the environment. Pragmatism is heavily underpinned in the claim that knowledge and reality are based on socially constructed beliefs and habits, and pragmatists generally see all knowledge as socially constructed. Some versions of those social constructions, however, match the individuals' experiences more than others, and this is what common habits, beliefs and other systems are based on. People are free to believe what they want, but some beliefs are more likely than others to meet their goals and needs.⁷¹

3.1.1 Pragmatism, mixed-method research and the research question

As explained in Kaushik and Walsh (2019), pragmatist philosophy claims that the meaning of human actions and beliefs is found in their consequences, which fits well with the research

⁷¹ Kaushik and Walsh, "Pragmatism as a Research Paradigm and Its Implications for Social Work Research"

question, aims and the topic of this thesis. The cultural grant program can be seen as a consequence of the action of Nordic cooperation, as well as the projects and their impacts are a consequence of the grant program's action of distributing economic support to cultural actors. Pragmatism is a popular paradigm amongst consequence-oriented research in general, and due to the normative leanings of this thesis, it can provide a coherent stance: in a desirable scenario, this research can serve as a grounding for discussions about how the Nordic Institute in Greenland can highlight and promote Nordic cooperation in an inclusive and sensible manner.

3.1.2 Critical comments and perspective

As popular as it has become among mixed-method researchers, pragmatism does not come without weaknesses. Allmark and Machaczek put pragmatism against realism and conclude that realism is an equally good approach to mixed-method studies, and, while it can be complemented by some pragmatist insights to communicate the research into practice, even has some advantages over a pragmatist approach. Lipscomb criticizes pragmatism by claiming that researchers often neglect the diversity of pragmatism, which can even be understood as something inherent to the paradigm, given that reality itself being ever-changing instead of static is one of the tenets of pragmatism and the pragmatist agenda emphasizes the role of the human experience, in both research and in defining reality and what one can know thereof. Hence, trying to apply pragmatism to research as an overarching, unifying and unambiguous paradigm can seem counterintuitive.⁷²

Martin Lipscomb suggests the following conditions be met, should pragmatism be chosen as the followed paradigm:

⁷² Allmark, Peter and Katarzyna Machaczek. Realism and Pragmatism in a mixed methods study. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*. 74 (2018). <https://doi.org/10.1111/jan.13523>; Kaushik and Walsh, "Pragmatism as a Research Paradigm and Its Implications for Social Work Research"; Morgan, David L. "Pragmatism as a Paradigm for Social Research." *Qualitative Inquiry* 20, no. 8 (October 2014): 1045–53. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1077800413513733>.

If it is granted that pragmatism describes a broad range of philosophic positions, and this seems difficult to refute, then mixed method texts ought to clarify the meaning they attach to the term. We should either be told which specific pragmatism is being referred to, or, we should be told which versions are being discounted.⁷³

While the main metaphysical, ontological and epistemological principles of pragmatism are not rejected in this thesis, it is especially the following assumptions linked to pragmatism, both as a philosophical stance and as a research paradigm, that this research aims to highlight and represent:

1. There is an objective reality that exists apart from human experience. However, this reality is grounded in the environment and can only be encountered through human experience.
2. Reality is not static, but in a constant state of becoming, and this state is altered through actions, such as international cooperation and cultural exchange.
3. The actions are taken based on the potential consequences, and the results of these actions are used to predict the consequences of similar actions in the future.
4. Knowledge from the world cannot be extracted by one means alone – the scientific, quantitative approach must be supplemented by qualitative methods leaning on the human experience.

3.2 Quantifying application data into descriptive statistics

Quantitative data is straightforward and based on objective facts, and statistics can both tell interesting stories and lay a good base for the research, as quantitative methods provide

⁷³ Lipscomb, Martin. "Critical realism and realist pragmatism in mixed method research: the problematics of event identity and abductive inference" In: *American Educational Research Association Conference 2011* (New Orleans, Louisiana, USA, 8th -12th April, 2011), 4

overviews of the researched data and show potential patterns and trends.⁷⁴ In this study, the statistics based on quantitative data allow the researcher to see whether certain countries tend to be more visible in this particular branch of Nordic cooperation and make it possible to easily compare the participation pattern with other cooperation bodies. The statistics also lay the groundwork for analyzing whether NAPA being seen as a Greenlandic or Danish institution instead of a pan-Nordic one is a true concern and therefore help answer the research question by showing whether the division of NAPA applications reflect the arguments presented in the previous chapter.

The quantitative data analyzed in this thesis consists of overviews NAPA's latest application data which has been quantified with different variables: *the total number of applications per year, the total number of successful applications per year as well as the numbers of applications per country*, both successful and all applications. A database was developed using these variables on the data overviews provided by NAPA. The development of the database was a continuous effort: the groundwork was done during a practice learning period in West Nordic Studies in Autumn 2019, when the application data was first quantified using the total numbers of applications as well as the numbers of successful applications per year as variables. There is no reason to assume that these numbers should have changed, so they will be used as a point of comparison in this thesis without alterations. The country variable was added specifically for this thesis, leading to the expansion of the database to its current extent. The extracted numbers were used to illustrate how the applications had been divided per country per year, to calculate success rates for the individual countries and to calculate per capita application rates for each country. The data is presented both in numbers and in percentages.

The statistics created from the database show the following things:

⁷⁴ Bryman, *Social Research Methods*

1. How all applications received by NAPA are divided per country,
2. How the applications accepted by NAPA (*successful applications*) are divided per country,
3. The number of applications accepted each year from each country (*success rates*).

The first point is directly connected to how well known the Institute is in the rest of the region and whether there is interest in Greenlandic-Nordic cooperation in each country. The second and third points illustrate NAPA's actual influence in each of the other countries and the decisions made while processing the applications. The third point specifically shows whether there is correlation between the number of received and the number of successful applications: submitting an application is the applicant's choice and NAPA cannot control the representation of different countries in that respect, but accepting the application is up to NAPA and the decision-making process affects the diversity of the supported applications.

This method provides a simple outlook on the status of the different countries in NAPA's network and gives an insight into the relations between Greenland and the rest of the region in the field of culture. Looking back on the definitions in Chapter 2.5, the tendencies, trends and patterns the quantitative analysis reveals are comparable to Greenland's general status within Nordic cooperation.

3.3 Obtaining qualitative data via semi-structured interviews

In the qualitative part of the research, three NAPA personnel or close associates were interviewed with questions regarding the objectives and framework of NAPA and its grant program as well as their experiences with the Institute. The interviewees all had served a fundamental role in the management of the cultural support program during the period in focus, and they were each asked the same questions. The interviews were guided and had an external structure, as some

specific information was desired, but there was space for some spontaneity and extended discussions, should the interviewees have some deeper insight into the topic. The interviews were aimed to provide information on the expectations versus reality of the grant program applicants and to scout for issues and potential improvements.

The interviewing method gets used when the researcher wants to dig deeper than what can be observed from recorded information and when direct observation of the subject is not possible – in this case, the variety of the applicants' geographical locations already makes direct observation very challenging, and the desired information would be even more difficult if not impossible to extract without asking questions. However, interview as a method has some weaknesses compared to other, especially quantitative, research methods. While subjective information, such as meanings and experiences, is sometimes the ideal type of data, it comes with the downside of sometimes being incomplete and less reliable than data extracted from documents; when extracting information from people, one can only expect to get the information the subject remembers and is willing to share, and if the questions aren't worded carefully, there is a chance of misunderstandings and misinterpretations that can derail or prolong the scheduled interview. Also, both Launsø and Rieper (2005) and Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) point out that an interview isn't a conversation between two equal parts, but a situation where the researcher stands as the expert who has the responsibility to obtain useful information and the "power" to ask questions – what these researchers haven't mentioned, however, is that the subject also has their own special position of power. In the end, it is up to the subject to decide how much information they are willing to share – a choice the interviewer can only affect by creating an environment of openness, trust and professionalism. All the aforementioned authors emphasize the amount of skill, consideration and careful planning that goes into a successful qualitative research interview, but this does not necessarily mean that the interview must always be meticulously structured. There are both advantages and disadvantages in raising the level of

structure; a very structured interview can provide more precise information that is easier to compare and standardize, but it can leave the information shallower as it doesn't provide the flexibility it often takes to ask further questions or allow the subject to reflect deeper on the topic. There is also the risk that the researcher's reality overpowers the interviewee's reality. A structured interview allows for the extraction of information from a broader range of meanings, while an unstructured one gives the opportunity to reach deeper within a narrower range. While an unstructured interview has been argued against as it can favor individualism and end up being chaotic and low in comparability, it does provide room for personality and extra reflection, which can result in unexpected but useful information being revealed. In short, what one wins in depth, one loses in breadth when it comes to research interviews, and this thesis aims for something in between. Some structure is indeed desirable, as it makes it easier to gather comparable and precise information from several subjects but making very precise questions of the chosen topic is challenging, so the subjects should have the possibility to add in potential reflections during the discussion.⁷⁵ These reflections led to choosing a semi-structured interview method based on an interview guide presented in the following subchapter.

3.3.1 Interview guide

The 3 semi-structured interviews, all conducted in Spring 2020, were structured by the same interview guide. The interview subjects have all had a role in NAPA's decision-making and, subsequently, in Nordic cooperation: two of them previously, and one at the time of the interview. The interviews were conducted in different Scandinavian languages, which led to two versions of the interview guide being made, one in Danish and one in Swedish (see Appendix 2). The researcher has then translated the questions and answers into English to the best of her ability, but due to the nature of translation, slight differences in nuance between the three

⁷⁵ Brinkmann and Kvale, *InterViews*; Launsø and Rieper, *Forskning om og med mennesker*.

varieties may apply⁷⁶. The translated answers can be viewed in Appendix 3, and the interview guide can be viewed in Appendix 2.

The interview guide was created on the basis of the previously presented theory and the statistical analysis. The statistics say different things about NAPA and its relations to the outside world: the general numbers of applications suggest which countries NAPA has managed to reach, and the numbers of successful applications reflect the decisions made from NAPA's part. The interview questions were constructed according to the main findings of the quantitative data, which revolve around the over- and underrepresentation of some countries, and the aim was to find out how conscious NAPA employees or close associates have been to the tendencies exposed by the data and if they knew of any reasons behind the findings that caught interest: the motivation and context of the aforementioned decisions. When constructing the interview guide, the main findings presented in Chapter 4.5 were applied in the following way:

- Point 1 is addressed with Questions 2 and 3, while Question 1 seeks a broader perspective regarding application tendencies. The fact that Denmark is specifically addressed here but Greenland isn't is motivated by Greenland being on the "other side" of the cultural bridge(s) NAPA is aiming to build.
- Point 2 is specifically addressed with Question 4.
- Point 3 is addressed with Question 5. As the Director holds the decision-making power alone in the case of applications for up to DKK 49 999 and together with the Chair of the Board in the case of applications for DKK 50 000 – 99 999, NAPA employees and close associates can be deemed aware of any written or unwritten rules or quotas that apply.

⁷⁶ Eysteinnsson, Ástráður. *Tvímæli: Þýðingar og bókmenntir*. (Reykjavík: Háskólaútgáfan, 1996); Munday, Jeremy. *Introducing Translation Studies. Theories and applications*. 4th edition. (London: Routledge, 2016)

Prior to the interview, the interviewees were asked to sign a consent form presented in Appendix 1. As they were granted anonymity, the signed forms cannot be attached to this thesis but are available for viewing in consultation with the researcher. Audio and video recordings of the interviews are likewise bound by an anonymity agreement and will thereby not be disclosed to third parties. The original content of the interviews may, however, be viewed in form of anonymized transcriptions in consultation with the researcher.

Leaving room for reflections allows the subjects to provide perspectives and answers to questions the researcher might have overlooked in the process of choosing which questions to include in the interview guide. While the guide has been specifically made to answer questions raised by the previously discussed theoretical framework and the statistics created from NAPA's application data, the possibility to also bring up other points allowed the researcher to receive personalized answers and opinions that are not bound by the statistical findings. Originally, the questions were created to extract factual answers and explanations, but a review of the recordings revealed an opportunity to also observe the interviewees' *attitudes* towards Nordic cooperation and Greenland's position within it, a component worth considering when studying a topic that has proven to have a strong base in human activity, identities, ideals, and interpersonal relations. To summarize the complementary use of this method: the structured part of the interview fills in the blanks in the statistical analysis, and the non-structured and spontaneous conversation provides alternative ways to look at NAPA's role in Nordic cooperation, the status and importance of Nordic cooperation in Greenland, and other factors crucial to the completion of this research project.

3.4 Data collection

As can be gathered from before, the data in this thesis has been collected by using both quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative data consists of statistics extracted of

NAPAs yearly application data from an 8-year period from 2012 to 2019 and. As NAPA has not registered the application countries in their own documents before the year 2012, and as this thesis aims to describe the current state and form a base for future activity, data from before 2012 is not considered relevant enough to excuse the time-consuming effort of manual country data extraction. No personal data was handled during the data extraction process. The statistics were extracted from Excel documents where each received application in the calendar year has been documented. Some years, a separate document containing only the successful applications had been made, which made the extraction of information easier – this, however, has not been the case in the most recent years, so all the information needed had to be extracted manually.

The qualitative data comprises semi-structured interviews with persons who have had a significant role in NAPAs operations in the studied period and could thus provide answers to questions raised by the statistics. An interview guide was created and although it laid the base for the interaction with the informant, additional questions and comments were allowed throughout the conversation. Some of the interviews were conducted online via Zoom and some in person. Each informant was asked to give their consent to the interview being recorded and utilized as qualitative data for this thesis (see Appendix 1). After conducting and recording the interviews, the recordings were reviewed and the answers transcribed in the original language of the interview (Swedish or Danish). As has been mentioned before, the informants were granted full anonymity, which limits the display of the completed consent forms as well as the recordings as a part of this thesis, but the translated content of the interviews can be found in Appendix 3.

These two methods observe the research question(s) from two perspectives: the quantitative data shows how the operations look from the side of the observer by presenting the numbers of applications in different categories, and the qualitative data gives insight into the administration's perspective and the reasons behind the divide of applications. It would have been desirable to add a survey method to see the operations from the applicants' perspective and

thus paint a more complete picture of NAPA's operations and the status of Nordic cooperation in Greenland, but this opportunity was, unfortunately, hindered by the limitations of the scope of this thesis.

3.4.1 Issues in data collection

The quantitative data shows how many applications NAPA has received each year from each country and how many of these applications have been successful. However, it is to be noted that when registering application countries in their documents, NAPA only takes into account the country the application has been sent from. Information concerning the nationality of the applicant(s) as well as the other countries involved in the project the funding is being applied for are only accessible via a time-consuming process of reading through individual applications, some of which have been sent per physical mail and therefore might not be available in a digital/easily obtainable form today. The digital application form found on NAPA's webpage at the time of data collection did not require the applicant to separately specify the countries participating in the collaboration project, either, regardless of bi- or multilateral Nordic cooperation being one of the prerequisites for a successful application, which implies that the applicant is supposed to specify this part in their written description of the project. While the statistics created based on the available data do provide a basis and a direction, it is possible that they would look slightly different if it were easier to find out which countries are participating or being included or affected in the planned projects. As the manual extraction of this information is deemed too labor-intensive given the limited time and resources available for the realization of this research, this will simply be noted as a potential flaw in the statistics and an aspect NAPA is recommended to pay attention to, should they wish to monitor the division of applications between countries in an effective and accurate way.

As was mentioned before, the qualitative data was gathered in more than one language and translated into English, which can lead to some slight differences in nuance.

Another obstacle was rooted in the sound quality of recorded online interviews: in few instances, a glitch in the internet connection made exact transcription impossible. However, due to the short duration of said glitches and the irrelevance of single words or syllables to the chosen analytical tools, this is not believed to have led to loss of relevant information. It should also be mentioned that while it would have been desirable to include more interviewees and different perspectives, this was unfortunately not possible in the given time frame. While only interviewing NAPA personnel and close associates does serve the purpose of obtaining “insider perspective” on the statistics, it is also to be acknowledged that each interviewee has moved to Greenland from abroad and is therefore very likely to look at the society from a different perspective than a person born and raised in the country.

3.5 Analytical strategy

3.5.1 Complementary analysis of quantitative and qualitative data

The data collection process begun with the extraction of the quantitative data, and the questions asked during the interviews were largely based on the results of the data extraction. Therefore, the analysis will follow a bottom-up strategy, starting from presenting and analyzing the quantitative country data and building it up with the help of the qualitative data to make statements and principles which are then linked to the presented theoretical framework. The different data will be merged together by complementary analysis. The quantitative data will answer the question of how NAPA’s work reflects Greenland’s status in Nordic cooperation based on figures via descriptive statistics: is there an element of true regional cooperation? The qualitative data will then explain further the conditions presented by the quantitative data, looking for a motivation for the element of cooperation or lack thereof. This way, the study both recognizes that the studied operations are multidimensional and credits the different methods for suiting different purposes better to compose a bigger and more nuanced picture.

The following strategies are applicable for complementary analysis:

- enhancing analysis from one source with illustrative or contextual material from another source,
- using elements from multiple data sources to compose a coherent picture of the topic of the study,
- verification and elaboration of data interpretation by comparing and contrasting the complementary data sources,
- in intervention studies: obtaining a complementary understanding of both the process and the outcome by using different sources.⁷⁷

For this study, the top two strategies are the most applicable: the first because the quantitative data pool is larger and creates a base for asking the informants further questions, and the second because this is done in attempt to create as nuanced and complete account of the phenomenon as possible. Even the third strategy could apply, as the different sources certainly elaborate each other, but given the different sizes of the data pools and the fact that the quantitative data existed before the qualitative and they were thus not fundamentally used to answer the exact same questions, their comparison per se is not deemed a relevant approach.

3.5.2 Descriptive statistical analysis

The collected quantitative data will be analyzed with descriptive statistics. Here, two different variable types can be identified: ratio variables (numbers of applications, success rates), the difference between which can be measured with identical units of distance across the material, and nominal variables (countries), which cannot be ranked as being more or less anything that is being measured. Due to the Nordic countries studied have vastly varying populations, sole numbers of applications are not enough to produce a realistic impression of participation from each country in NAPA's operations. By example of the Nordic Culture Point's 2017 study, a per

⁷⁷ Bazeley, Patricia. *Integrating Analyses in Mixed Methods Research* (55 City Road, London: SAGE Publications Ltd, 2018), <http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781526417190>.

capita element will be added to study the potential correlation between population and the number of applications sent from the country. The database entries will be presented as tables and visualized with figures and charts. In order to present the data in a clear and concise way, the following abbreviations are used to mark the different countries:

DK = Denmark

FO = The Faroe Islands

FI = Finland

GL = Greenland

IS = Iceland

NO = Norway

SE = Sweden

AX = The Åland Islands

Despite being a Nordic collaboration body, NAPA receives and accepts grant applications also from outside of the Nordic region. This is mostly due to Greenland's close cultural and geographical proximity to other Inuit regions and provinces in North America, the Nordic collaboration institution's interest to include the Baltic states in their operations, Nordic and Greenlandic applicants residing outside of the Nordic region and communication and networking, both on a personal and institutional level, making NAPA known for actors elsewhere in the world. As data concerning these countries is not directly relevant to the research on Nordic cooperation, it will not be analyzed further but will be presented as an element in the statistics – it is interesting to see, for example, whether there are more applications coming from non-Nordic countries than from some of the Nordic countries, but seeing which countries these “other” applications come from is more interesting as a research topic of its own. While it would be desirable to include the Sámi region and other Inuit communities in the categorization process, this information is unfortunately not readily available and would require a time-consuming effort to go through a considerable number of project descriptions. In addition to yearly success rates, a

total success rate (the number of all successful applications compared to all applications received in the researched time period) and an average success rate (the average value of all success rates in the researched time period) were calculated.

3.5.3 Deductive thematic analysis

For the qualitative data, the approach chosen for this study is thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a somewhat disputed method: while it has not received the same appreciation as other qualitative research methods, it has also been argued to deserve acknowledgement as a method of foundational quality. Thematic analysis is a process containing several core skills needed for other types of analysis, and it is used to identify and analyze themes within a data set. Thematic analysis is useful for handling and summarizing large amounts of data in an organized manner and as an approach it is flexible and accessible, but the flexibility can also lead to inconsistency. Thematic analysis can be criticized for lacking nuance, and not allowing to make claims on language use disadvantages thematic analysis compared to other methods, but for this thesis, identifying themes is considered to be more relevant than analyzing the language used by the interviewees.⁷⁸

Thematic analysis can be conducted inductively (with themes surfacing from data) or deductively (with themes surfacing from theory prior to data analysis).⁷⁹ In this study, relevant themes such as *cooperation* and *cultural policy* were identified in Chapter 2 and used as a base for the interview guide in addition to findings from the qualitative data. *Decolonization* is an important theme to address when studying Greenland's status within Nordic cooperation and a valid point of reflection in the discussion of the analysis, but it is not embeddable to the interview

⁷⁸ Bryman, *Social Research Methods*, 578–581; Nowell, Lorelli S. et al. "Thematic Analysis: Striving to Meet the Trustworthiness Criteria." *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, Volume 16 (October 2017): 2–3. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406917733847>

⁷⁹ Nowell et al., "Thematic Analysis", 8.

questions that concern applications sent to and accepted by the cultural support program in the same way the other two themes are – this is why it would rather be listed as a subtheme of Greenland’s status within Nordic cooperation. The analysis follows the Framework approach in which central themes and subthemes, created in relevance to the research question and the theoretical framework, are identified and presented in a matrix. This is done after conducting and transcribing the interviews as well as coding the transcripts.⁸⁰ In this study, the translated interview data was coded by highlighting repeated aspects and matching them with the previously found, theory and statistics-based themes:

1. *Central theme: Nordic cooperation*
 - a. *Subtheme: Nordic identity*
 - b. *Subtheme: Center-periphery divide within Nordic cooperation*
2. *Central theme: Cultural policy*
 - a. *Subtheme: General implementation of cultural policy in form of guidelines, strategies etc.*
 - b. *Subtheme: Unequal representation of countries in NAPA application statistics*
3. *Central theme: Greenland’s status within Nordic cooperation*
 - a. *Subtheme: Greenland’s relationship with Denmark and decolonization*
 - b. *Subtheme: Greenland’s relationships with the other Nordic countries*

These themes were reviewed after the coding process. The interview data in Appendix 3 also includes the used codes, which were the following:

1. *Nordic identity*
2. *Interpersonal relationships*
3. *Center-periphery divide*
4. *Greenland and Denmark*
5. *Greenland and the rest of Norden*
6. *Denmark’s overrepresentation*
7. *Greenland’s overrepresentation*
8. *Assumption of NAPA as a Greenlandic body*
9. *Assumption of NAPA as a Danish body*
10. *Colonial structures or mindsets*

⁸⁰ Bryman, *Social Research Methods*, 579-581

11. *Exoticism*
12. *Cultural policy*
13. *Dilemma between project quality and country representation*
14. *General misconceptions*

Some of these codes were derived from the existing themes, while others were created according to repetitive topics in the interview subjects' answers. The codes and themes were matched, and the reviewed, finalized system of themes was the following:

Codes	Subthemes	Central themes
Nordic identity	Nordic identity	Nordic cooperation
Interpersonal relationships	Interpersonal relationships and informal structures within official Nordic cooperation	
Center-periphery divide	Center-periphery divide within Nordic cooperation	
Cultural policy	General implementation of cultural policy in form of guidelines, strategies etc	Cultural policy
Denmark's overrepresentation	Unequal representation of countries in NAPA application statistics and attempts to equalize it	
Greenland's overrepresentation		
Dilemma between project quality and country representation		
Assumption of NAPA as a Greenlandic body	Misconceptions related to NAPA and the implementation of Nordic cultural policy in Greenland	Greenland in Norden
Assumption of NAPA as a Danish body		
General misconceptions		
Greenland and Denmark	Greenland's relationship with Denmark	
Greenland and the rest of Norden	Greenland's relationships with the other Nordic countries	
Colonial structures or mindsets	Prevailing colonial structures or mindsets	
Exoticism		

The frequencies of the different themes in the qualitative data were derived from calculating the number of instances of each code and will be presented in Chapter 4.2.

4 Descriptive statistical analysis of application data: patterns, trends, and tendencies

In this chapter, the quantitative data collected by the previously presented method will be analyzed according to the strategy stated in Chapter 3.5. To provide basic information and context, some overall application data will be shortly presented first, followed by application data divided by country. The third subchapter will go through changes in application statistics over time, and potential correlation will be examined in the fourth subchapter. Lastly, a concluding subchapter will discuss the main findings.

4.1 Basic application data

Overall, NAPA receives roughly between 100 and 200 applications per year – during the studied period, the average number of applications per year is 165. The following table shows the yearly numbers between 2012 and 2019:

Year	Number of all applications
2012	186
2013	162
2014	186
2015	167
2016	152
2017	153
2018	141
2019	174
Total	1321

Table 1: All applications received by NAPA between 2012 and 2019

As can be observed, the highest number of applications (186) was received twice, in 2012 and 2019, while 2018 saw the lowest number of applications (141). Out of these applications, usually fewer than 100 are accepted.

Year	Number of successful applications
2012	98
2013	101
2014	72
2015	91
2016	91
2017	79
2018	73
2019	82
Total	687

Table 2: All successful applications between 2012 and 2019

The table above shows that the highest number of accepted applications was 101 (2013), whereas the lowest was 72 (2014). By comparing the numbers of successful applications and all applications, success rates can be created for each year:

Year	Overall success rate
2012	52,69%
2013	62,35%
2014	38,71%
2015	54,49%
2016	59,87%

2017	51,63%
2018	51,77%
2019	47,13%
Total	52,01%

Table 3: Overall yearly success rates between 2012 and 2019 in percentages

Table 3 presents the success rate of all applications in a given year. Out of all applications received between 2012 and 2019, 52,01% were accepted, and the average yearly success rate (calculated from the yearly success rates instead of numbers of applications) was 52,33%. Individual yearly success rates can deviate dramatically from the average: 2014 saw the lowest success rate of 38,71%, while the previous year, 62,35% of all applications were accepted. The success rate in 2016 was almost 60 percent, but the latest rate in 2019 had gone down to roughly 47 percent. The yearly variation of the overall success rate is, however, small compared to the success rates of the individual countries, as can be observed in the next subchapter.

4.2 Application data divided by country

Here, the application data will be presented by country. In addition to tables, the data will be visualized with figures. This section looks at application data similarly to the previous subchapter: first, all applications received from each country will be presented both in numbers and percentages, whereafter the successful applications will be observed in a similar manner. A per capita perspective has been added to make the data more comparable, as the countries vary vastly in population. Lastly, yearly and average success rates for all countries will be studied.

Year	DK	FO	FI	GL	IS	NO	SE	AX	Other	Total
201	46	2	4	126	2,5	2	0	0,5	3	
2	(24,72%)	(1,07%)	(2,15%)	(67,77%)	(1,34%)	(1,07%)	(0%)	(0,27%)	(1,61%)	186

201	30	0,5	1	117,5	4	3	3	0	2	
3	(18,51 %)	(0,31%)	(0,62%)	(72,53%)	(2,47%)	(1,85%)	(1,85%)	(0%)	(1,23%)	162
201	42	2	1	129	3	5	1	0	3	
4	(22,58%)	(1,06%)	(0,54%)	(69,35%)	(1,61%)	(2,69%)	(0,54%)	(0%)	(1,61%)	186
201	46	2	1,5	106	1	1,5	5	1	3	
5	(27,54%)	(1,20%)	(0,90%)	(63,47%)	(0,60%)	(0,90%)	(3,00%)	(0,60%)	(1,80%)	167
201	32	3	1	101	1	7	4	0	3	
6	(21,05%)	(1,97%)	(0,66%)	(66,45%)	(0,66%)	(4,61%)	(2,63%)	(0%)	(1,97%)	152
201	35	3	3	86	3	9	7	0	7	
7	(22,88%)	(1,96%)	(1,96%)	(56,21%)	(1,96%)	(5,88%)	(4,58%)	(0%)	(4,58%)	153
201	42	2	2	72	5	7	7	0	4	
8	(29,79%)	(1,42%)	(1,42%)	(51,06%)	(3,55%)	(4,96%)	(4,96%)	(0%)	(2,84%)	141
201	63	4	2	86	3	3	6	0	7	
9	(36,21%)	(2,30%)	(1,15%)	(49,43%)	(1,72%)	(1,72%)	(3,45%)	(0%)	(4,02%)	174
	336	18,5	15,5	823,5	22,5	37,5	33	1,5	32	
Total	(25,44%	(1,40%	(1,17%	(62,34%	(1,70%	(2,84%	(2,50%	(0,11%	(2,42%	1321
)))))))))	

Table 4: The total numbers and percentages (in parentheses) of received applications per country per year

Here, great variation between the different countries can be observed. Even though there is some fluctuation in the numbers of applications received from each country each year, the data shows some clear tendencies. Table 1 shows that most applications – around 60% – come from Greenland, both in total and yearly. The second most active country regarding applications is Denmark, although still far behind Greenland. The other countries' numbers are much lower, ranging from 0,11 percent of all applications (Åland) to 2,84% (Norway). This points at something that could be described as *factual bilaterality* or *performative multilaterality* – while NAPA does

receive applications from almost all other Nordic countries every year, it is clear that most non-Greenlandic applications are, according to this data, intended for Danish-Greenlandic cooperation.

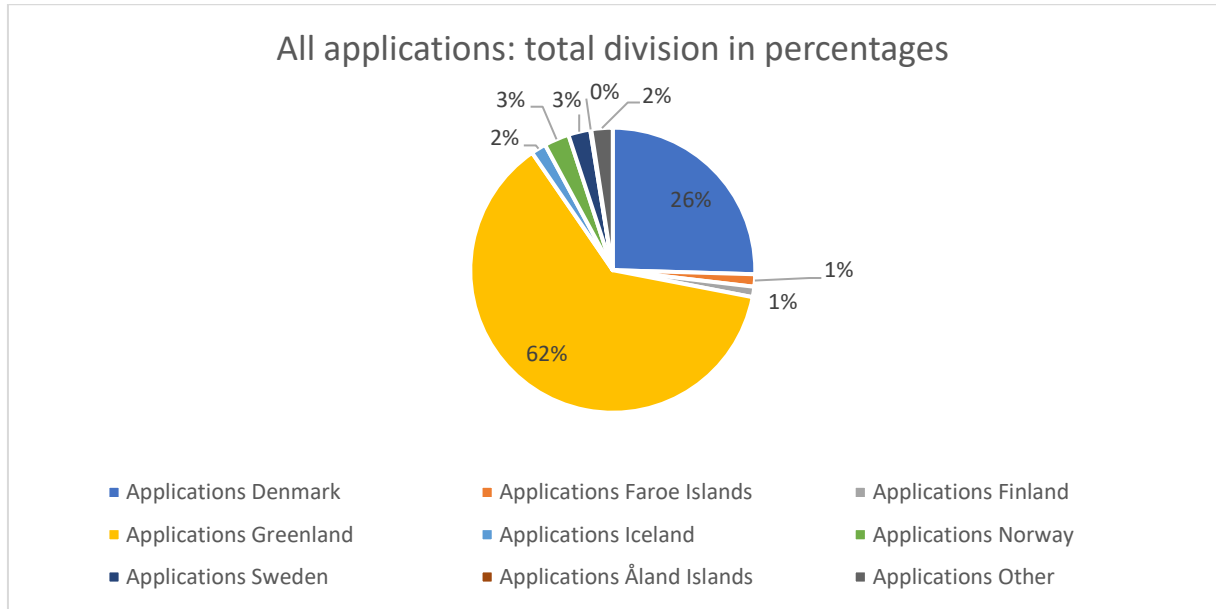


Figure 1: The division of all received applications from 2012 to 2019 in percentages

It nearly appears as if there are three country categories instead of 9: Greenland, Denmark, and the others. This has been further illustrated by Figure 2.

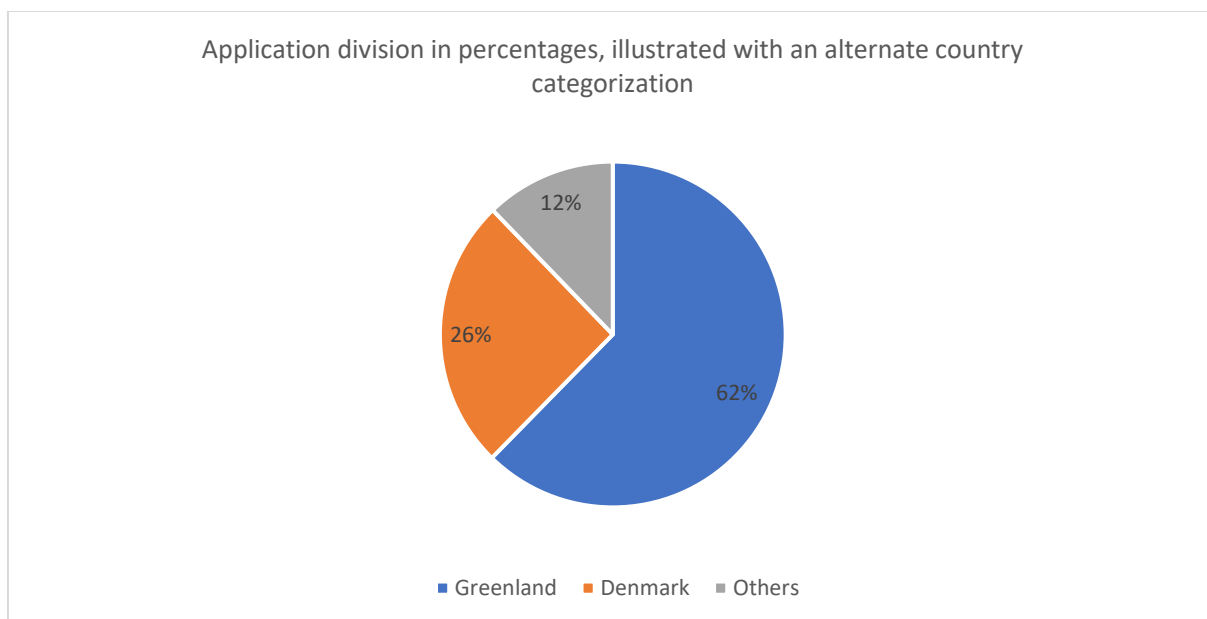


Figure 2: The division of all received applications from 2012 to 2019 into three alternate categories in percentages

Upon observing the per capita numbers of applications, it is clear that the nations with the smallest populations have the highest per capita rates whenever applicable, regardless of a small number of received applications. Greenland still clearly dominates the charts, but instead of Denmark, it is followed by the Faroe Islands whose per capita rate far exceeds those of the other countries. While Iceland on some occasions does obtain a higher number per capita than Denmark, the latter's remarkable activity is reflected into these statistics: Denmark's per capita application rate is much higher than those of Sweden, Norway and Finland combined. The other independent states often have a per capita rate of less than 0,1 (except for Norway on 3 occasions). In most years, Åland is not represented at all, but those two occasions it is, it places third by number of applications per capita due to its small population.

Year	DK	FO	FI	GL	IS	NO	SE	AX
2012	0,82	4,15	0,07	222,03	0,78	0,04	0	1,76
2013	0,54	1,04	0,02	208,44	1,24	0,06	0,03	0

2014	0,75	4,15	0,02	229,2	0,92	0,1	0,01	0
2015	0,81	4,11	0,03	189,34	0,3	0,03	0,05	3,46
2016	0,56	6,11	0,02	180,85	0,3	0,13	0,04	0
2017	0,61	6,02	0,05	153,96	0,89	0,17	0,07	0
2018	0,73	3,96	0,04	128,85	1,43	0,13	0,07	0
2019	1,09	7,79	0,04	153,59	0,84	0,06	0,06	0

Table 5: Received applications per capita (e-5)⁸¹ per year

Of course, the numbers of received applications only tell a part of the story – more specifically, they shed light on in which countries NAPA is known, but do not tell anything about the decision-making process concerning the applications. This is why it is important to look at the successful applications. While the general pattern follows that of all received applications, with most accepted applications coming from Greenland, followed by Denmark, there is an observable change in the percentages of the less represented countries. Sweden and Norway both had a percentage of less than 3 in received applications, while in successful applications, both countries' proportions have grown to over 4 percent. All the other underrepresented countries also experience a rise in the relative numbers of successful applications. The only ones with a lower percentage of successful applications than all applications are Greenland, Denmark and the non-Nordic countries, all listed here as "Other".

Year	DK	FO	FI	GL	IS	NO	SE	AX	Other	Total
2012	26 (26,53%)	0 (0%)	2 (2,05%)	63 (64,29%)	2 (2,05%)	2 (2,05%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (3,06%)	98
2013	16 (15,84%)	0,5 (0,50%)	1 (1%)	74,5 (73,76%)	3 (2,97%)	3 (2,97%)	3 (2,97%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	101

⁸¹ The number of applications per capita is calculated with population statistics provided by The Nordic Statistics Database and Statista.

2014	13 (18,06%)	2 (2,78%)	0 (0%)	49 (68,06%)	2 (2,78%)	4 (5,56%)	1 (1,39%)	0 (0%)	1 (1,39%)	72
2015	25 (27,47%)	2 (2,20%)	0,5 (0,55%)	52 (57,14%)	1 (1,10%)	1,5 (1,65%)	5 (5,50%)	1 (1,10%)	3 (3,30%)	91
2016	18 (19,78%)	3 (3,30%)	1 (1,10%)	56 (61,54%)	1 (1,10%)	5 (5,49%)	4 (4,40%)	0 (0%)	3 (3,30%)	91
2017	21 (26,58%)	2 (2,53%)	3 (3,80%)	36 (45,57%)	2 (2,53%)	6 (7,59%)	5 (6,33%)	0 (0%)	4 (5,06%)	79
2018	23 (31,50%)	2 (2,74%)	1 (1,37%)	34 (46,58%)	2 (2,74%)	4 (5,48%)	7 (9,59%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	73
2019	30 (36,59%)	2 (2,44%)	0 (0%)	36 (43,90%)	2 (2,44%)	3 (3,66%)	7 (8,54%)	0 (0%)	2 (2,44%)	82
Total	172 (25,04%)	13,5 (1,97%)	8,5 (1,24%)	400,5 (58,30%)	15 (2,18%)	28,5 (4,15%)	32 (4,66%)	1 (0,15%)	16 (2,32%)	687

Table 6: The total numbers and percentages (in parentheses) of successful applications per country per year

A pie chart made from all the successful applications from the researched period (see Figure 3) and compared to the chart comprising all received applications (see Figure 2) effectively visualizes this change in percentages: Denmark and Greenland's portions are slightly smaller, which means that the "space" is being occupied by applications from elsewhere. This would imply that at least some of the countries with fewer received applications have an elevated success rate.

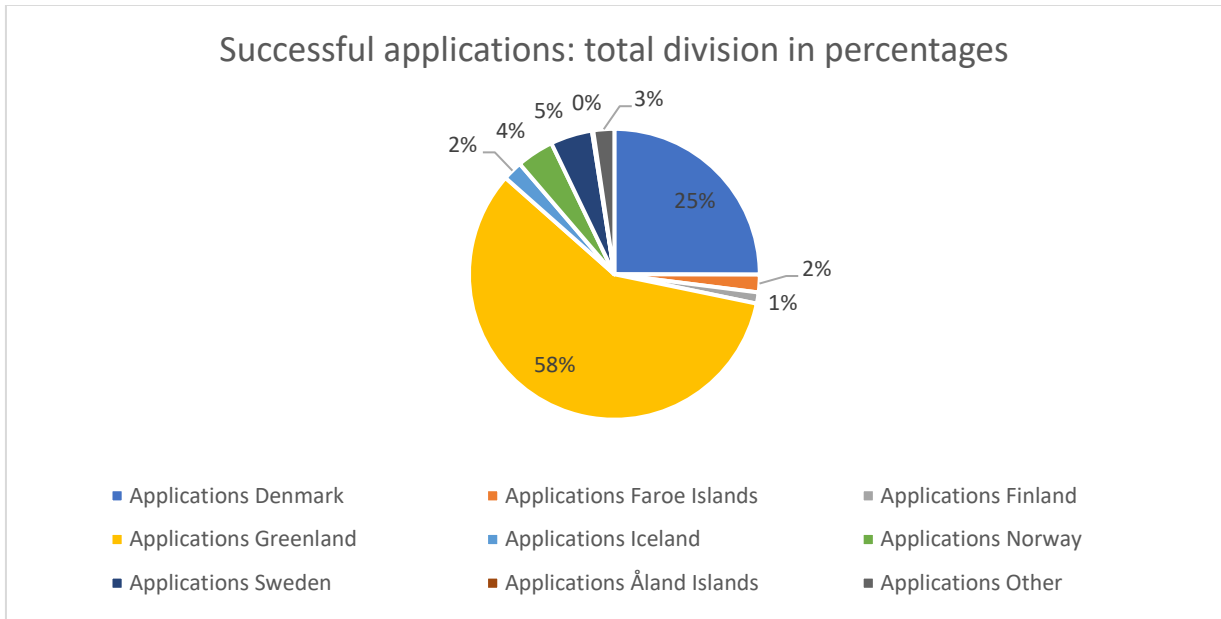


Figure 3: The division of all successful applications from 2012 to 2019

Figure 4 illustrates the slightly altered dynamics in a scenario where the application data is divided three ways: here, it is easy to see that other countries than Greenland and Denmark have a 5% bigger portion of successful applications than all applications. This observation motivates the calculation of success rates.

Successful application division in percentages, illustrated with an alternate country categorization

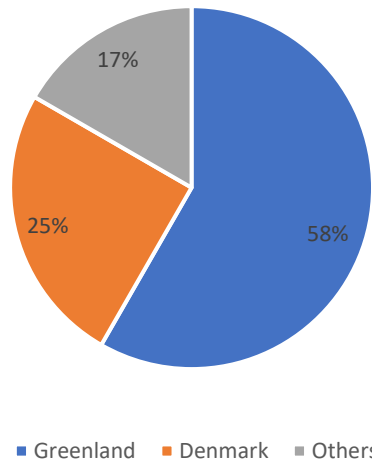


Figure 4: The division of all successful applications in percentages, from 2012 to 2019 into three alternate categories

The per capita rates of successful applications also suggest remarkable variation in success rates. Table 7 illustrates a significant drop of per capita applications in the most active countries when the category is changed from all applications to successful applications. In Greenland's and Denmark's cases the drop is often more than 50%, while Iceland's numbers aren't as much lower. The Faroe Islands' ratio of all applications versus successful applications per capita seems to have varied significantly: in 2012, the number dropped from 4,15 to 0, whereas in 2016 and 2018 the rates are the same.

Year	DK	FO	FI	GL	IS	NO	SE	AX
2012	0,47	0	0,04	111,02	0,63	0,04	0	0
2013	0,29	1,04	0,02	132,16	0,93	0,06	0,03	0
2014	0,23	4,15	0	87,06	0,61	0,08	0,01	0
2015	0,44	4,11	0,01	92,88	0,3	0,03	0,05	3,46
2016	0,32	6,11	0,02	100,27	0,3	0,1	0,04	0

2017	0,37	4,02	0,05	64,45	0,6	0,11	0,05	0
2018	0,4	3,96	0,02	60,85	0,6	0,08	0,07	0
2019	0,52	3,9	0	64,29	0,56	0,06	0,07	0

Table 7: Successful applications per capita (e-5) per year

As has been mentioned before, 52,01% of all NAPA applications received between 2012 and 2019 have been successful and the applications have an average yearly success rate of 52,33%. Table 8 illustrates yearly success rates for each country. Success rates, as well as the numbers of successful applications, give insight into NAPA's decision-making process, and success rates specifically illustrate the relationship between application activity and success.

Year	DK	FO	FI	GL	IS	NO	SE	AX	Other	Total
2012	56,52%	0%	50%	50%	80%	100%	No applications	0%	100%	52,69%
2013	53,33%	100%	100%	63,40%	75%	100%	100%	No applications	0%	62,35%
2014	38,01%	100%	0%	37,98%	66,67%	80%	100%	No applications	33,33%	38,71%
2015	54,35%	100%	33,33%	49,06%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	54,49%
2016	56,25%	100%	100%	55,45%	100%	71,43%	100%	No applications	100%	59,87%
2017	60%	66,67%	100%	41,86%	66,67%	66,67%	71,43%	No applications	57,14%	51,63%
2018	54,76%	100%	50%	47,22%	40%	57,14%	100%	No applications	0%	51,77%
2019	48,39%	50%	0%	42,35%	66,67%	100%	87,50%	No applications	28,57%	47,13%
Total	51,19%	72,97%	54,84%	48,69%	66,67%	76%	91,43%	66,67%	50%	52,01%

Table 8: Yearly success rates

As can be seen in Table 8, Greenland, Denmark and non-Nordic countries are the only ones with a below-average total success rate, while Sweden has a dramatically higher total success rate of 91,43%. Norway and the Faroe Islands also have total success rates above 70%. The difference is further illustrated in Figure 5.

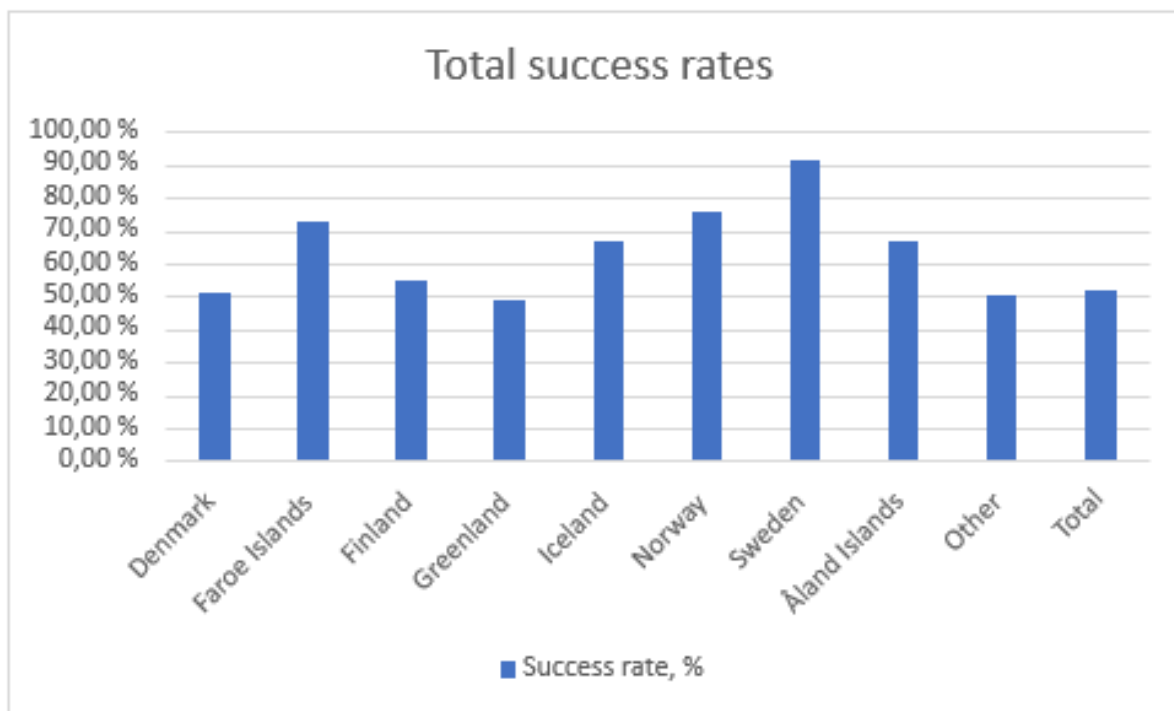


Figure 5: Total success rates

The average success rates look somewhat different: Sweden's success seems here even more prominent, and the Faroe Islands are clearly behind Norway. While Denmark, Finland and the non-Nordic countries have average success rates close to the total average, Greenland is the only country with an average success rate below it. For Åland Islands, this success rate calculation is not applicable due to a low number of applications only received in 2 of the 8 years studied.

Denmark	52,70%
Faroe Islands	77,13%
Finland	54,13%
Greenland	48,42%
Iceland	74,38%

Norway	84,41%
Sweden	94,13%
Åland Islands	Not applicable
Other	52,38%
Total	52,33%

Table 9: Average success rates

Figure 6 illustrates the average success rates further. It is clearly visible that on average, applications from Sweden, Norway, the Faroe Islands and Iceland have been the most successful, having visibly elevated success rates while the other countries are much closer to the total average rate.

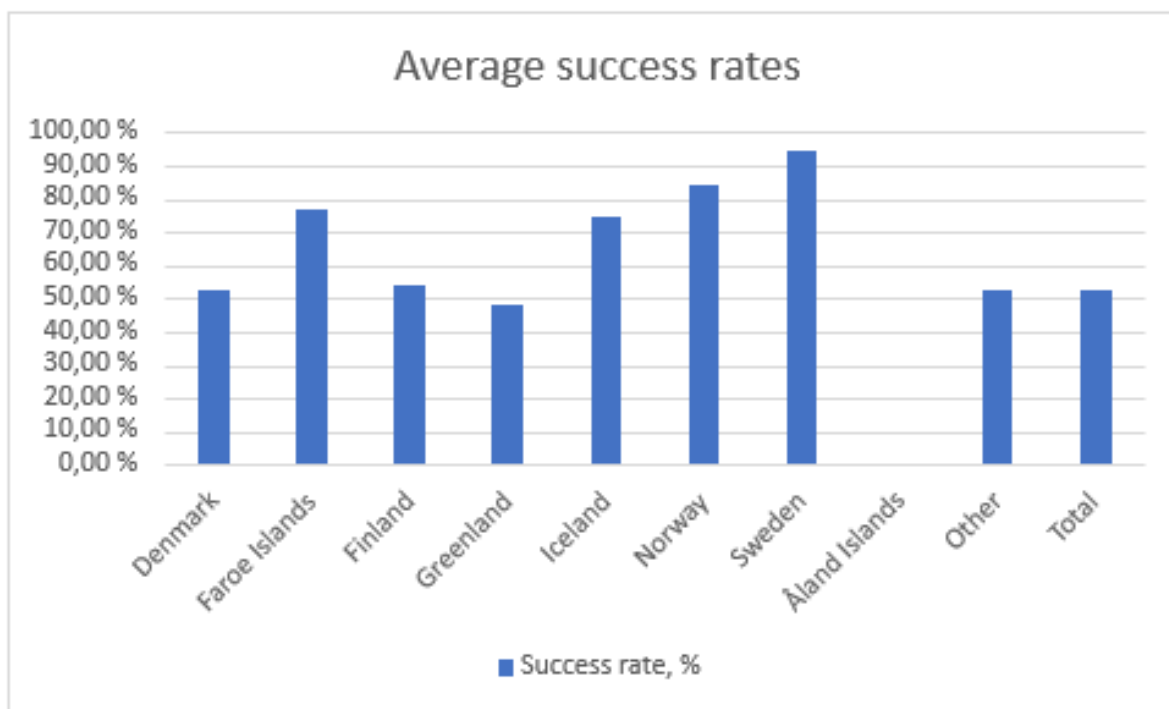


Figure 6: Average success rates

Calculating success rates is a way of studying whether there is correlation between application activity and success and whether it could be assumed that some countries are favored in one way or the other. This will be further examined in subchapters 4.4 and 4.5.

4.3 Changes over time

As can be observed in Table 1, there has been a downward trend in numbers of applications from 2014 to 2018, after which in 2019, NAPA received the second-highest number of applications in the researched period. However, this has not clearly reflected on the numbers of successful applications: 2014 had the lowest number of successful applications, and while the numbers did drop in 2016, the two previous years saw a high number of accepted applications. The total success rates vary from 38,71% to 62,35%, going up and down at regular intervals – on average, approximately half of the applications get accepted.

There are some visible trends in the division of applications by country. Denmark's numbers of both all applications and successful applications have been far behind those of Greenland with the exception of the very recent years, where the gap seems to have started to close (see Figures 7 and 8). The other countries are constantly clearly at the bottom of the charts, but they do demonstrate varying activity over the years. For example, there appears to be a slight surge of applications from Sweden in 2015, leading to a more or less steady flow of applications received the following years.

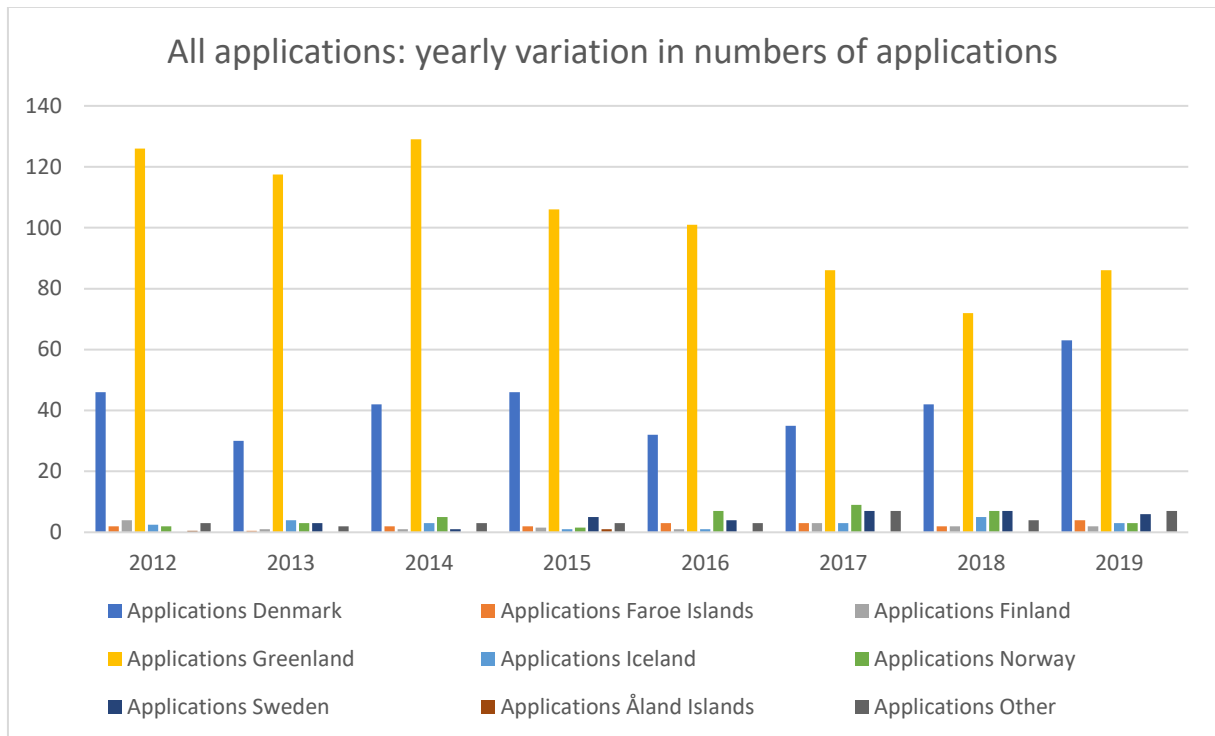


Figure 7: The yearly variation of all applications, measured by numbers of applications

After a year of very few applications, Norwegian applications also had a surge in 2016, followed by a record number of applications in 2017, after which the number of applications has been declining. It would also appear that the numbers of Greenlandic applications have been on a decline from 2014 to 2018, and 2019 is distinguished by a smaller gap between applications from Greenland and “foreign” applications.

Figure 8 demonstrates a similar overall dominance of Greenlandic applications to Figure 7 and a slight increase in diversity in the years 2017-2019. Also in this category, the two main groups of applications are Greenlandic and Danish – equalizing it would take a significant increase in applications from the other countries – and in 2019, successful Greenlandic applications outnumber the Danish varieties by only 6, which is a remarkable change compared to the several dozens in 2012-2016.

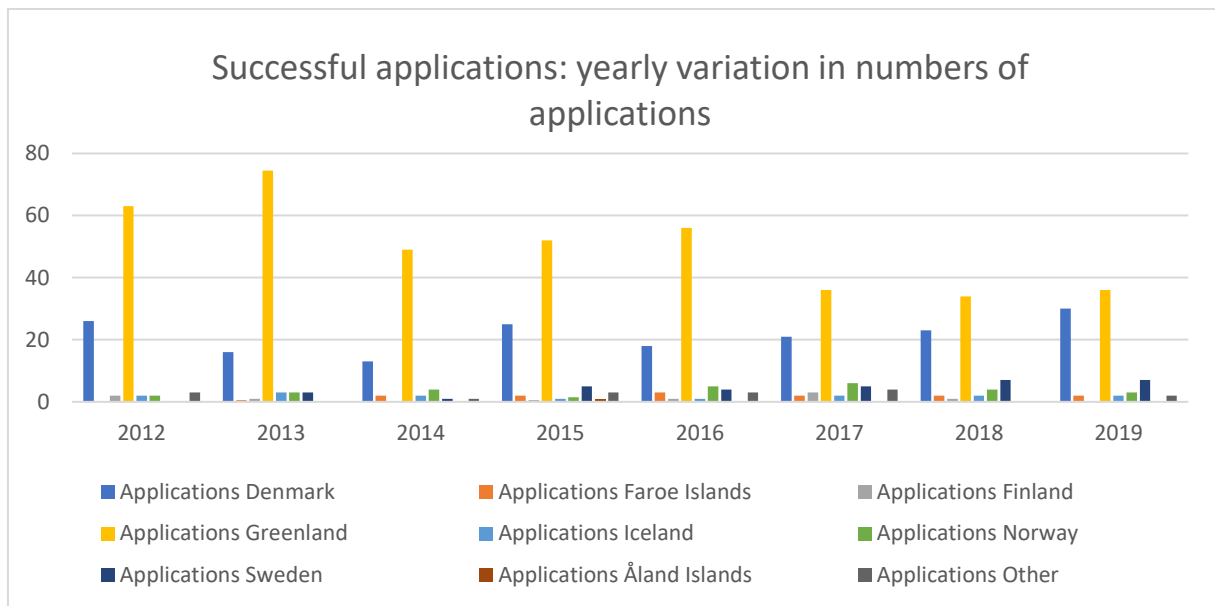


Figure 8: The yearly variation of all successful applications, measured by numbers of applications

Applications have been received every year from all countries apart from Sweden (no applications in 2012) and Åland (applications only in 2012 and 2015). Applications from Denmark, Greenland, Iceland and Norway have been accepted every year, whereas Swedish applications have been accepted every year they have been received.

4.4 Correlation analysis

Based on the previously presented findings, the relationship subject to correlation analysis is that between the numbers of received applications and the success rates, which tell how many percent of the applications sent from each country are rewarded a grant. Calculating success rates and analyzing their relationship with the overall numbers of applications is one way to concretize the findings of the quantitative data. The average and total success rates can be used to find out whether there is a correlation between the number of received applications and the success rate – in practice, this would mean that the more applications are received from a certain country, the higher the success rate.

When looking at Tables 4, 8 and 9 as well as Figures 5, 6 and 7, there is no evident correlation. Inspection of Greenland’s and Denmark’s high numbers of applications and relatively

low success rates is a clear indicator that a high success rate is a result of something else than a large number of received applications. Although most of the successful applications come from Greenland, Greenlandic applications in general aren't the most successful – in fact, Greenland holds the lowest success rate among the listed countries. Countries ranking in the middle on the list of most received applications seem to perform best regarding the success rate, but otherwise the data does not suggest a clear correlation between these two variables. The only exception would be the Faroe Islands, which have a high per capita rate of received applications and a high average success rate (see Table 5, Figure 6). The lack of previously suggested correlation as well as the remarkable differences between success rates have raised a question of whether it is encouraged to accept applications from “atypical” application countries. This was one of the main findings addressed during the interviews.

4.5 Main findings

One of the most prominent findings of this analysis is that Greenland dominates both the numbers and percentages as well as the per capita charts. This can partially be explained by the Institute's physical location in Nuuk and the fact that the local population's own use of the Nordic cultural institutions situated far away from the inter-Nordic decision-making core in Scandinavia has been emphasized as an important base for inter-Nordic cultural exchanges⁸². Greenlandic applications have, however, been on a decline (followed by a slight surge in 2019), and the gap between them and applications from other countries – especially Denmark – has recently gotten narrower.

In terms of raw numbers of applications, Denmark is clearly overrepresented in relation to the rest of the countries, but upon observing the per capita rates, the Faroe Islands clearly takes second place after Greenland. This is, however, a theoretically explicable connection

⁸² Duelund, “Cultural Policy in the Small Nations of Norden”, 422.

due to the Faroe Islands also being part of the Danish Unity of the Realm and therefore automatically having an easier access to Greenland. Iceland's per capita rate is similar to that of Denmark, which can be explained by physical proximity. The per capita calculations do make the situation somewhat more equal for the small nations, but they do not change the fact that the independent states with no obvious geographical or socio-political connection are far behind in application numbers, percentages and per capita statistics.

When it comes to success rates, the countries with most received applications are generally the ones with the lowest success rates. However, this does not work the opposite way, as not all countries with similar, low application percentages and per capita rates have prominently elevated success rates: Finland's success rate is similar to that of the non-Nordic countries. While Åland does have a relatively high success rate, it is generally the most underrepresented of all the countries. Non-Nordic countries do not comprise a significant portion of the applications, but their success rate is not very high, either: this could indicate that the applications come from places generally not eligible for NAPA support instead of places like the Baltic states, Alaska, or Canada, which have a special eligibility due to cultural ties to Norden.

To summarize, the following three points were considered specifically remarkable:

1. Denmark's overrepresentation in the statistics, which could make the program appear bilateral rather than multilateral or regional. The official guidelines state that the program is Nordic, allowing applications from elsewhere only in special circumstances, but the data makes it appear as if it is a Greenlandic-Danish program also allowing applications from other countries – the number of applications coming from nearly any other Nordic country than Denmark is on par with applications coming from other countries (however, it is to be noted that the “other” countries are here treated as an unit), so it is approximately as likely for NAPA to receive an application from a different Nordic country

than from outside Norden. This has led to the researcher questioning the Nordic relevance that is being called for in the application guidelines⁸³.

2. Åland's underrepresentation in the statistics. Being the least populated of all the Nordic countries, the expected application flow from Åland is not high, but 1,5 applications in 8 years creates a gap large enough between Åland and the other countries to pique the researcher's interest.
3. The less represented countries' high success rates compared to those of Greenland and Denmark, which could indicate the existence of a quota system or other systematic effort of favoring applications from these countries.

When these points are compared to the theoretical arguments presented in Chapter 2.5, a connection can be seen between the application data and Greenland's position within Nordic cooperation in the sense that most non-Greenlandic applications are coming from Denmark. Denmark was earlier stated to be Greenland's gate into Norden, and the application data reflects this statement – without Danish applications, there would hardly be other than Greenlandic ones. Also, the Faroe Islands' relative success can be seen as something strengthening this argument, given the country's similar status within the Danish Unity of the Realm. The data does not reflect the autonomous areas' underrepresented status generally to a very great extent, although Åland is by far the least represented country in all the statistics apart from success rates. This could be connected to the fact that NAPA is based in Greenland and the data looks at Nordic cooperation from the perspective of an autonomous, underrepresented area. The success rates are a direct link to NAPA's decision-making process and will be further examined in the next chapter along with the questions of representation.

⁸³ Nordens Institut i Grønland: *NAPAs Kulturstøtteprogram. En håndbog om rammerne for NAPAs kulturstøtteprogram.*

5 Thematic analysis of semi-structured interviews: providing complementary points

In this section, the results of the qualitative analysis will be presented one theme at a time. Each presentation begins with a table showcasing the frequency of each theme and subtheme being mentioned during the interviews, which is followed by comments and verbatim examples from the interview data.

5.1 Nordic cooperation

Nordic cooperation				
	Nordic identity	Center-periphery divide within Nordic cooperation	Interpersonal relationships and informal structures within official Nordic cooperation	Total number of mentions of general theme
Interviewee 1	1	2	4	7
Interviewee 2	2	1	3	6
Interviewee 3	3	1	1	5
Total	6	4	8	18

Table 10: The frequencies of the theme Nordic cooperation and its subthemes being mentioned in numbers.

This central theme was mentioned 18 times in total. The *subtheme Interpersonal relationships and informal structures within official Nordic cooperation* was the most popular, being mentioned 8 times, followed by *Nordic identity* (6 mentions) and *Center-periphery divide within Nordic cooperation* (4 mentions). Interviewee 1 mentioned this general theme most often, as well as the subtheme concerning interpersonal relationships and informal structures, and interviewee 3 talked most often about Nordic identity.

The themes concerning interpersonal relationships and Nordic identity sometimes overlap. Upon answering Question 3 (later Q3), Interviewee 1 (later I1) says to have perceived a difference between applicants who have a pre-obtained “Nordic mindset” and therefore can look at things from a Nordic perspective, and those who do not and would therefore require additional

communication of the essence and importance of Nordic cooperation. The same answer contains mentions of interpersonal relationships and their importance:

I think there are those, who already are Nordic in one way or another, who have a mindset that they carry further on with themselves after having been in contact with [the Nordic dimension] somewhere and been “raised Nordic” in some way. We did these school projects where we had classes from Åland and Finland visiting and interacting to implement the Nordic dimension in them – the way to look at things [from a Nordic perspective] and understand why it’s important. Then there are those who have not met this [Nordic dimension] elsewhere and who have a completely different starting point when it comes to communication. What is this, and why is it important?

I1 was the most eager to mention interpersonal relationships and themes related to Nordic cooperation in general.

The center-periphery divide was primarily mentioned in connection with the fact that the Nordic houses and institutes are placed in the peripheries rather than in the administrative center of Norden (See I1, Q1; I2, Q5b; I3, Q6). As their final comment, I3 recognizes this divide and questions the existence of the cultural support program in general:

[I’m also thinking], why does Greenland have a cultural support program and the others don’t? Why has one thought that Greenland should have about 3 million DKK, but the other houses shouldn’t?

Regarding Åland’s remarkable underrepresentation in the statistics (Q4), I1 and I3 find lacking communication with the Nordic Institute in Åland (NIPÅ) to be the main reason. I1 emphasizes the role of (informal) meetings, which, if true, supports the previously mentioned claims of Nordic cooperation being strongly based on interpersonal relations and informal

networking. Regardless of claiming that NAPA and NIPÅ have a strong relationship on a directorial level and that Åland would be closer to Greenland than Sweden and Norway at other parts of the interview, I1 does not communicate surprise at the low numbers of Ålandic applications. I2, however, describes the finding as “a complete surprise” and says to have had higher expectations concerning NAPA’s efforts to reach out beyond Denmark. Interpersonal relations also affect success rates: I2 mentions that applications coming from the personnel’s network have a chance of better preparation and counseling regarding the application process (Q4, Q5).

The inclusion of this theme is interesting because the interview questions do not directly address Nordic cooperation but are heavily centered around NAPA and the statistics presented in the previous chapter. It is not surprising that this theme came up less frequently than the others, but it is interesting to observe the interviewees bring up subjects present in the theory without further encouragement. According to I1 and I3, interpersonal relationships and lack of institutional cooperation are the reason behind Åland’s underrepresentation, and I2 is surprised that the number is so low regardless of the institution which is “NAPA’s primary information channel” (Q4). Besides the overlap with the interpersonal relationship theme, Nordic identity is often mentioned when correcting misconceptions (I2, I3: Q2). For example, in Q2, I2 focuses on the public reception of communicating the Nordic dimension, unsure of how Greenlanders in fact receive the fact that NAPA is Nordic instead of Greenlandic, while I3 emphasizes their perceived importance of the manifestations of this communication. For example, NAPA’s employees being from different Nordic countries would be beneficial to communicating that the institution is Nordic instead of Danish, while communicating with the public in Danish might not be.

5.2 Cultural policy

Cultural policy

	General implementation of cultural policy in form of guidelines, strategies etc.	Unequal representation of countries in NAPA application statistics and attempts to equalize it	Misconceptions related to NAPA and the implementation of Nordic cultural policy in Greenland	Total number of mentions of general theme
Interviewee 1	3	3	5	11
Interviewee 2	9	2	12	23
Interviewee 3	5	9	13	27
Total	17	14	30	61

Table 11: The frequencies of the theme Cultural policy and its subthemes being mentioned in numbers.

Cultural policy was by far the most frequently addressed theme with 61 mentions, most of them of the subtheme *Misconceptions related to NAPA and the implementation of Nordic cultural policy in Greenland*. The second most frequent subtheme was *General implementation of cultural policy in form of guidelines, strategies etc.*, and the subtheme closest to the statistics, *Unequal representation of countries in NAPA application statistics and attempts to equalize it* was the least frequently mentioned. Here, interviewees 2 and 3 expressed the misconception-related subtheme most often. Interviewee 1 did not address this theme nearly as often as the other two did.

When faced with the question regarding tendencies in general (Q1), all the interviewees bring up some of these subthemes. I1 and I3 address the overrepresentation of Denmark and Greenland in the statistics directly, while Interviewee 2 focuses more on individual applicants or application types, such as festivals asking their participants to apply for travel grants. I3 is more direct in their comments, saying that “there is a tendency that everything is either Danish or Greenlandic”. I2 mentions that most recurring applications are Greenlandic, and I3 rejects the existence of tendencies but is aware of the differences in relationships between the different countries and Greenland, a comment more related to the third set of themes. Generally, the informants each provide a different perspective on tendencies: I1 gives a descriptive answer based on their perception of the status of the Nordic network, which is not opinionated in terms

of whether measures should be taken to alter said status. I2 mentions the nation-related tendencies only in connection with the different tendencies in application types, and I3's answer to Q1 is clearly opinionated, stating the following:

There is a tendency that everything is either Danish or Greenlandic. To be very concrete, I have rejected some applications that have aspired to present Greenlandic hunting culture in the Nordic region, or in some of the Greenlandic houses in Denmark. It's just... That's also a tendency, isn't it? There are many applications from Denmark, and I think we are missing some innovative thinking. And Nordic relevance, which we just defined as something that stretches beyond the very well-established relationship between Greenland and Denmark. If we support too many projects, activities or other things like that, it will be difficult to communicate the real breadth of our cultural support program. If many of them revolve around conveying Greenlandic culture in the Nordic House in Århus, that's a very rough generalization, it's hard to communicate that our real purpose is actually different – that the application might just as well be from someone in Åland willing to do a project with Greenlandic artists. So, I think it's very important to strive for diversity in the distribution of grants. I have personally gotten very tired of this tendency in a very short time, but we have had a meeting about this.

The informants all partially agree that communicating the Nordic dimension of NAPA and the cultural support program to Greenlandic participants/applicants has at some point been difficult. I1 believes these difficulties were at least starting to get resolved during their time (Q2):

No, I think we actually managed quite well to take a new direction, make people understand that you need someone to do things with – that [NAPA] isn't just about

Greenlandic-Greenlandic cooperation projects. I actually think people did start to understand that, and I think there was a good understanding of that. [...]

I2 and I3, however, state the opposite, claiming that Greenlandic artists either group NAPA together with the Greenlandic cultural funding opportunities (I2) or the money coming from Denmark to support Greenlandic initiatives (I3). I2 summarizes the struggle in the following way:

[...] We have had to work hard to correct that perception [and communicate that] NAPA wishes to create a Nordic benefit. This money is not for supporting Greenlandic culture policy, it's for supporting a Nordic cultural policy. [...]

All the interviewees agree that there have been projects lacking Nordic relevance.

I2 and I3 elaborate that these applications have often been either exclusively Greenlandic or focused on the Danish Realm or the bilateral relationship between Denmark and Greenland.

When asked about Greenlandic relevance (Q3a), all interviewees agree that there has not been a lack of it. I2 provides the most elaborate answer, stating that Greenlandic relevance is hard to measure, but if one does that by setting involvement of Greenlandic actors as the lowest requirement possible, it has never been absent. However, they do bring up the existence of a phenomenon where applicants from outside Greenland have not established sufficient contact with the Greenlandic collaboration partner:

[...] There have been applications with a very vague idea but the preparations have been poor, with no cooperation contract or any kind of contact with the Greenlandic part. That has existed. But those applications often get told to do some homework already in the application phase: get back to us once your cooperation contract is in place, then we can get involved with this. [...]. I think there is this very, very naïve expectation from actors from the rest of Norden that if they come visit, the others must be very happy and willing to cooperate, which can lead to false

assumptions that there's no need to take the cooperation contracts and planning so seriously.

The informants' views differ somewhat on Question 3b. I1 is "sure there have" been some applications from outside the Nordic region lacking Nordic relevance and mentions the Baltic area as an example, claiming that there "wasn't a lot of understanding for" the Baltic countries' interest in the Arctic. I2 provides practical examples, such as an application for a bilateral film project between Palestine and Greenland, but says that applications like that tend to "disappear in the application process". I3 cannot remember any cases of lacking Nordic relevance, and states, contrary to the definitions used in this thesis, that the Baltic countries would here be regarded as Nordic. In their experience, applications from non-Nordic countries tend to get rejected based on the fairly recently introduced Nordic residency requirement.

As the quantitative data suggests, the countries with low numbers of applications tend to have a higher success rate, and all interviewees do, either directly or indirectly, suggest that a tendency to favor unusual or atypical countries – and in I3's case, also cities – is in place if the relation is deemed weak. I1 and I3 point out that quality criteria still apply, but applications coming from the typical places need to "prove their worth" more than those coming from more unusual places. All interviewees state that no official country-based quota system has been in place, but I2 mentions that it has been common to allocate funds to unusual countries based on feeling and that discussions have been had about earmarking some funds for children and young people's own initiatives. I3 expresses a lack of need for a quota system, stating that "if there suddenly were very many applications from other Nordic countries, they would be favored regardless of quotas". When it comes to other measures to equalize the numbers of applications, I1 denies the existence of formal measures but highlights the director's (and the Institute's) responsibility to spread information across Norden. They also mention that any networking is done on top of the application processing, the "other side" of the job, which implies that a heavy workload in

application administration takes time from marketing the Institute and networking with the other institutions. I2 takes their answer in a similar direction, stating directly that NAPA might have refrained from creating any real marketing campaigns due to fear of an unmanageable increase in the administrative workload. Simultaneously, I2 calls for prioritization of efforts focused on the rest of Norden, as the applicants from there often express humbleness over participating in “building cultural bridges with Greenland”, are excited about the opportunities provided by NAPA, and have a higher grade of additional funding. I3 does not recall such measures having been in place during their time.

The final question (Q6) gave the interviewees the opportunity to freely express their opinion on the Nordic dimension of NAPA’s work. I1’s comment is positive: they express their satisfaction with NAPA’s existence in Greenland and are clearly of the opinion that NAPA contributes positively to Greenlandic cultural life and policy. I2 and I3, however, take a more critical stance. While not denying nor confirming NAPA’s importance for the Greenlandic cultural life, they say that NAPA has lacked tools to help Greenlandic cultural life contribute to something concrete in the other Nordic countries. I3’s expresses criticism towards the Nordic cultural grant system in general, and they suggest improvements be made in the way the different grant pools are presented or communicated to the public:

The Nordic funding system is confusing – I can allow myself to say this both as an artist, because I have applied for funds in that system before coming here, and during. But now that I have worked with it and needed to have a professional perspective, I think it’s messy. It’s very, very hard to understand for someone coming from outside, it’s a little bit like the EU, but smaller. As an artist, I have given up on applying for EU funds, because it’s so complex and the documentation requirements are horrible – I heard someone had hired someone to do all the

bureaucratical work needed. The Nordic system is a little bit like that: there are so many pools, requirements, and deadlines. [...]

I3 tells that they have suggested the establishment of a joint grant portal or website gathering together all funding opportunities and guiding the applicant to the right pools based on a sophisticated search and surveying function as a potential solution to the perceived issue. I3 shedding light on the conditions of the applicants can provide additional clarity to the lack of applications coming from outside the Danish Realm: a maze of grant providers perceived as “confusing” can logically be perceived as discouraging for artists to navigate, and without a personal connection to NAPA or Greenland, this particular funding opportunity can be hard to find.

The popularity of this theme is hardly a surprise, as many of the interview questions centered around the themes of misconception and unequal statistical representation. The popularity of misconceptions implies that the interviewees recognize that the public does not have a clear idea of NAPA’s true purpose, which could be connected to a vague Nordic identity – it is hard to understand a concept that is not strongly anchored in the society. While the theme of *Nordic cooperation* focused on the framework and structures behind NAPA, *Cultural policy* is a concrete manifestation of NAPA’s work. The third theme, *Greenland in Norden*, provides an outlook on the situation which affects NAPA and which this data reflects.

5.3 Greenland in Norden

Greenland in Norden				
	Greenland’s relationship with Denmark	Greenland’s relationships with the other Nordic countries	Prevailing colonial structures or mindsets	Total number of mentions of general theme
Interviewee 1	2	7	1	10
Interviewee 2	2	11	3	16
Interviewee 3	5	8	1	14
Total	9	26	5	40

Table 12: The frequencies of the theme Greenland in Norden and its subthemes being mentioned in numbers.

Greenland in Norden was the second most frequently mentioned theme, with *Greenland's relationship with the other Nordic countries* as the by far most popular subtheme with 26 mentions. *Greenland's relationship with Denmark* was mentioned 9 times, and *Prevailing colonial structures or mindsets* 5 times. The interviewees' individual frequencies differed somewhat, with interviewee 2 mentioning the general theme and the most frequent subtheme most often and interviewee 1 least often.

I1 brought this theme up early on in their answers, providing an interesting perspective to Q1:

[...] There are no tendencies per se, but one can say that some countries are more observant of Greenland – for example Denmark, as we are both part of the Unity of the Realm (Danish: rigsfællesskabet). I think that both Norway and Sweden are further away than Iceland and the Faroe Islands are, and Åland is also closer to us [than Norway and Sweden]. It also fits the fact that there is no Nordic House in Norway or Sweden to back up cross-border cultural interaction. That's why it might not be so strange that it's Denmark and Greenland [that dominate the charts], because we are brother and sister, and the others are our cousins – Iceland and the Faroes – and the others – Norway and Sweden – are more like cousins, but a little more distant.

This response is specifically interesting due to the description of Denmark and Greenland as “brother and sister” and the other countries as their “cousins” (with no mention of Finland). While the connection via the Danish Realm is a fact, it is interesting how the Faroe Islands were left out of the definition – this could be due to a less established dependency between the two. Also, with Nordic cooperation originally being a Scandinavian invention, not everyone would

agree to rank Sweden and Norway as Denmark's "cousins". Finland not being mentioned reflects the country's statistical underrepresentation and undeniable distance to Greenland, while the "demotion" of Faroe Islands to Greenland's "cousin" is not in harmony with the country's high per capita application rates and success rate.

I2 brings the colonialism-related subtheme up most often, and it is the most prominent in their answer to Q3:

If the point is that one should create Greenlandic-Nordic benefit or effect, then I understand it as a project that contributes with something but also provides the creator with something to learn and to take home with them. There are quite a lot of applications for what we a bit sloppily call "savior projects" whose aim is to solve a Greenlandic problem without the applicant learning anything or going through self-development in the process. Those aspects are often underrated, especially by those who motivate their projects with socially preventive or pedagogical arguments or objectives. They tend to be very strongly one-sided.

I3 does not see this as a communicative issue as big as the lack of Nordic relevance (Q3), but refers to the history of Danish economic support as something that could make it more difficult for Greenlandic artists to understand that NAPA wishes to promote inter-Nordic cooperation and networking instead of providing Danish funding for Greenlandic projects. While this is also related to misconceptions, mentioning the history of support from Denmark connects the answer to the dilemma of independence and dependency on Denmark regarding funding. I2's answer to Q2, stating that NAPA has lacked tools to implement concrete contributions in the other Nordic countries, draws a parallel to their previous comment on Nordic projects being one-sidedly about improving something in Greenland without an intention to improve oneself or something in one's home country. I2 also states that it is "hard to say if the participation is really on equal terms" and that there is "often some kind of an exotic element involved (instead)".

5.4 Interviewees' perspectives and attitudes

The interviewees generally exhibit different perspectives on NAPA's work regardless of their similar position within the administration: I1 emphasizes NAPA's role as a cultural facilitator in Greenland and has a generally positive tone with little to no criticism, justifying the unequal application numbers with lacking efforts in networking and the status quo in the Nordic region – some countries and regions simply aren't as close to one another as others. I2 takes a more self-reflective stance, communicating that the situation is not ideal and that something should be done differently and criticizing the outsiders' view of Greenland and, to some extent, NAPA. I3 generally puts NAPA in a wider perspective, looking at the program in a broader Nordic context and, like I1, emphasizing networking and communication, but also expressing criticism in a manner similar to I2.

5.5 Main findings

The thematic analysis observes the research question from different thematic perspectives that can be easily linked to theoretical arguments. It is easy to see the connection between the results and Greenland's status as a remote and underrepresented region: many answers reflected the status of NAPA as a body providing institutional and interpersonal contacts to the rest of Norden. However, the colonial past and the present duality of independence aspirations and "voluntary" belonging to a cooperative structure was not as present as other aspects surrounding Greenland's status in Norden. Some answers did mention the exoticism, potentially rooted in colonialism, and the savior-like perspective of some applicants, and a very positive attitude towards NAPA "guarding the cultural policy" is potentially possible to interpret as something that reinforces Greenland's dependency from other nations in administrative matters.

Out of all the themes found in the interview data, *Cultural policy* and its subthemes were by far the most prominent. This is likely to be due to the questions centering topics connected to these themes. Over- and underrepresentation were said to be both results of interpersonal connections or the lack of them, and due to the status quo of Norden, where

Greenland has a much closer relationship to Denmark (and the Faroe Islands) than to the other countries. The personal networks of NAPA personnel are often the reason behind surges of applications from a certain nation, whereas the large numbers of applications coming from Denmark are due to the two nations' established historical relationship. Although a Nordic institution exists in Åland and the relationship of that and NAPA was mentioned a few times during the interviews, there are very few applications coming from there to NAPA, and the interviewees agreed that it would have to do with lack of communication. In *Cultural Policy in the Small Nations of Norden*, Duelund mentions that Åland has a high concentration of amateur artists and cultural practitioners but a modest number of professional cultural institutions, which could partially explain the few grants applied for from the area. However, as NAPA does not require the applying artist to be a professional, it is not theoretically impossible for Ålandic artists to be included.⁸⁴

The interviews confirm that while a certain tendency to favor applications coming from atypical countries does exist and can be justified by a desire to make the cultural support program less performative and more factual in regionwide cooperation, no official quota system is in place. Given the arm's length principle, it is unlikely that such a system be implemented by initiative of the NCM, but based on I3's comments on the present and future precautions taken to equalize the application flows, NAPA could be moving towards a more Nordic and less bilateralized program.

⁸⁴ Duelund: *Cultural Policy in the Small States of Norden*

6 Discussion

From the analysis of the data and the previous methodological considerations, it can be gathered that, in a rough sense, the quantitative data reveals tendencies, while the qualitative data reveals themes and attitudes. Both of them play a role when the research is put into a broader context: Greenland's status within Nordic cooperation consists of both statistical facts and matters of human perception, such as (a common Nordic) identity. Explained from a pragmatist perspective, the statistical facts and, possibly, formal institutions constitute the objective reality, which is then encountered through human experience: each actor has a different relationship with, perception of and attitude towards these institutions, and these actors also modify the reality – as some sources have discussed, Nordic cooperation is not a given, but an agreement-based, alterable construct undergoing constant modification on a minor level and, as Strang has suggested, due a major reform. Today's version of it is not the same as it was 20 years ago and will most likely not remain the same for the next 20 years.⁸⁵ This section aims to provide a review of Greenland's position in it, following a similar thematic structure as the previous theoretical framework and showing how the previously analyzed data reflects it.

6.1 NAPA as a Nordic cultural cooperation body

Compared to the other official Nordic programs of cultural funding, NAPA is small, both from an administrative and an economic perspective. NAPA's cultural support program is also the only one with a special focus on a certain country and its connection to the rest of the region. Still, in addition to the interviews, the statistics extracted from NAPA application data can to some degree be compared to those from the Nordic Culture Point, located in Finland, in 2015-2016. The NCP is the most similar institution to NAPA: a Nordic cooperation body that hosts a grant system strictly dedicated to culture. Both programs receive applications from everywhere in Norden and have certain tendencies in their application flow, which can reflect the physical location and/or

⁸⁵ Strang, Sundelius and Wiklund

the political, institutional or interpersonal relationships of the hosting institution. The NCP's statistics show some correlation between the size of the country and the number of received applications – Denmark, Sweden, Finland and Norway dominate the charts in this particular order – while in NAPA's case, proximity (either physical or political/cultural) seems to be the main factor linked to overrepresentation. While NAPA receives most of its applications from Greenland, the country is underrepresented in the NCP's statistics, except for the per capita statistics of received and successful applications. Åland, which is highly underrepresented in NAPA's statistics with 1,5 received applications during the 8-year period, is the most active amongst the Nordic autonomous areas to send applications to the NCP, but none of the 15 applications sent in 2015-2016 were accepted, whereas Greenland had the success rate of 66,6% and the Faroe Islands 35,7%. In addition to country statistics, the NCP has analyzed its application data also on a regional and city level. Greenland's underrepresentation in the NCP's statistics and Finland's underrepresentation in NAPA statistics could point at a weak relation between the two countries. Although largest in population size, the three Scandinavian states are Finland's nearest neighbors after Åland and also historically, culturally and linguistically closest (given the Swedish-speaking minority residing in Finland), which indicates that, in fact, the two institutions might witness overrepresentation of certain countries in their statistics for similar reasons.

All interviewees agree that, in NAPA's case, there have been no formal efforts to equalize the numbers from applications coming from the different Nordic countries other than a single, minor-level marketing campaign attached to the establishment of the latest NAPA handbook. While a group of three individuals is no way representative of all NAPA personnel and associates and their individual statements and opinions are not generalizable per se and used here to complement and explain some of the findings of the data, the responses to the questions regarding potential quota systems and other such efforts were so similar and confidently stated that it has been deemed safe to assume that concrete actions to change the numbers have not

been in place between 2012 and 2019. One can ask the question of whether there should be: do the numbers matter, when there are applications coming from (nearly) everywhere in Norden? It is also to be noted that this data only considers the countries the application has come *from*, not the countries listed as collaboration partners, as this data would have been too time-consuming to obtain. If equal participation is desired, more than half of the applications coming from Greenland could be justified if there was diversity in the participating countries. The Danish applications might also contain some involving one or more partners besides Denmark and Greenland, although the interviewees' statements express that the clear overrepresentation is a noticeable tendency. I2 and I3 seem to strongly be of the opinion that the situation needs to change, while I1 seems to be more of the opinion that the differences in number occur out of a reason so "natural" or understandable that trying to affect them would not call for acute action.

Although NAPA reflects the decisions made by the NCM of Culture, it can also make its own policy regarding eligibility requirements and, during the period studied in this thesis, which of the NCM's chosen values or themes to apply. The 2021-2024 strategy is thematically much scarcer, implying that all institutions are to work according to the same goals and values revolving around the themes of social and environmental sustainability as well as international competitiveness.⁸⁶ Throughout the researched period, joint Nordic cultural policy strategies have been based on values communicated by keywords or themes that are further explained in the official publications: these include, among others, environmental or social sustainability, young people and children's matters, competitiveness on the international arena, equality, interculturality and digital nativity, but the institutions themselves are given freedom to apply these values in a way of their choosing according to the arm's length principle, which in NAPA's case also extends to the cultural support program: although the decisions concerning funded

⁸⁶ The Nordic Council of Ministers, *Art and culture – driving force for sustainable development in the Nordic region. Co-operation programme on culture policy 2021-2024*

projects is being made by the administration, it is the applicants' responsibility and freedom to provide all details regarding the project.

6.1.1 Autonomous areas as part of Nordic cultural policy

Of course, managing NAPA's work or determining whether added diversity in project nationalities is not entirely a task for the people directly associated with the Institute. NAPA is one element in the greater network of joint Nordic cultural policy. In a narrow understanding, cultural policy is used to regulate how cultural products are funded and could even be synonymized with arts funding – which is indeed the primary function of NAPA. As was mentioned earlier, cultural policy conveys and promotes values that the different, sometimes competing, stakeholders deem as beneficial for strengthening the public's sense of identity and belonging. For example, a common Nordic cultural policy would promote the establishment of a sense of a common Nordic identity. In NAPA's case, this would include a mutual understanding of Greenland's part in the Nordic community – a bridge between the dimensions of Norden that otherwise seem so far from each other. When it comes to the stakeholders of cultural policy, Duelund mentions the following groups: authorities, cultural institutions, the public, professional artists, amateurs, and the social and educational sector. These groups determine which values form the framework of cultural policy and can be found in any state – and in this case, also within the Nordic region. The authorities in this case are the NCM, but also the individual Nordic governments who the different ministers represent. The autonomous areas do not have a full membership including voting rights in the NCM as independent participants: in the Åland document, the participation dynamics are worded in the following way: the five Nordic states *cooperate with each other*, and the autonomous areas *participate in the work*. The autonomous areas may also endorse the NCM's decisions in the limitations of their self-government agreements. When it comes to cultural institutions, the autonomous areas can apply for a full membership in the boards of institutions located in other Nordic countries, whereas they have full membership in institutions located in

their country: this means Greenlandic representatives have full membership in NAPA's board.⁸⁷

This would imply that while the autonomous areas' participation in the intergovernmental decision-making itself is weaker, they have a more equal status within the institutions and can participate in communicating the institutions' needs and interests regarding policy-making. Given the automatic right to full membership in their so-called "home institutions", the structure seems to emphasize the autonomous areas' right to determine themselves, to which extent they wish to engage.

While the two stakeholder groups mentioned are institutions working and communicating as a unit, the other three groups mainly consist of individuals or individual groups. The public's main interest regarding cultural policy is affordable art, while artists wish to both get fair compensation for their work and freedom to express and utilize their creative abilities. This structure has potential for a clash of interests, and the Nordic model of public support for artists, which NAPA is a part of, is one way to resolve it.⁸⁸ NAPA is currently the only Nordic cultural funding provider that also grants funding to amateur artists without other requirements such as young age. As a Nordic-Greenlandic cooperation body situated in Nuuk, Greenland, NAPA's public as well as the affected artists are theoretically spread around the region. However, according to the data, the factual spread is much more contained. The social and educational sector as well as most amateur artists do not strive to make nor live up to any success criteria, but rather to provide frameworks for their own activities. NAPA seems to have a relationship with this sector also due to project proposals involving schools: 12 mentions in their answers, that schools tend to get an overwhelming number of project proposals from actors that take their participation for granted. As an institution, NAPA needs to consider the needs and interests of all these stakeholders while being itself a stakeholder in the greater scheme of Nordic cultural policy – and

⁸⁷ The Ministers of Nordic Co-operation: The Åland Document

⁸⁸ Heikkinen, Merja. "The Nordic Model of Promoting Artistic Creativity". In *The Nordic Cultural Model. Nordic cultural policy in transition* (Copenhagen: The Nordic Cultural Institute, 2003), 277–304.

in terms of participatory rights, the most effective organ to bring Greenland's interests further in it.

6.2 From colonialism to specially supported partnership – Greenland's status within Nordic cooperation

Greenland has gone through possibly the most modifications, reforms and status changes of all the Nordic countries throughout the history of Nordic cooperation: the formal decolonization journey from a Danish colony to Home Rule to Self-Government is just the factual, objectively perceivable part of it. As has been covered earlier, the formal end of decolonization does not mean the sudden abolishment of colonial power structures or other elements present in the society, culture, and identity of the previously colonized nation. Greenlandic examples of this can be summarized by the fact that the economy is still so heavily dependent on Denmark on many regards that it has been described as dependency-based (Danish: *afhængighedsøkonomi*) – this does not only include direct economic support in form of block grants, but also transfer of competent workforce to manage the welfare system. Getting secondary or higher education is also virtually impossible without the knowledge of Danish or a different foreign language, as educators are still often hired from abroad.⁸⁹ Of course, the long history of Danish influence has contributed with elements the removal of which would not be reasonable or desirable. As Ashcroft and Betts discuss in their works, while visions of a future after colonialism have often built on an imagined precolonial past, implying a “continued narrative” in which the colonial period is but a removable piece within brackets, achieving the very same “untouched” state is nearly impossible, at least in a peaceful way.⁹⁰ On a grassroots level, this includes interpersonal relations, families and bloodlines, and a socio-political example would be the welfare model, which has been generally accepted as a key element of the Greenlandic society⁹¹. This political

⁸⁹ Grydehøj, “Unravelling economic dependence and independence in relation to island sovereignty.”; Thorsteinsson, “Velfærd i Grønland.”

⁹⁰ Betts, *Decolonization*; Ashcroft, Griffins and Tiffin, *Post-Colonial Studies*

⁹¹ Gad, “Post-colonial identity in Greenland”

element adds to the distinct status Greenland has within the Nordic region solely based on linguistic, cultural, and geographical aspects. When Nordic cooperation is observed from a Greenlandic perspective, a duality is visible: on one hand, Greenland would not necessarily be part of the cooperative structure if it weren't for Danish colonialism, which, although formally ended, can be agreed to partially exist in the societal structure and should be uprooted. On the other hand, Nordic cooperation is based on some values Greenland as an independent actor could agree on, such as democracy and the welfare system. Even at the event of complete political sovereignty, the economic, cultural, and interpersonal ties to Denmark would make it impossible not to cooperate to some degree. The most distinctive finding in both the quantitative and the qualitative data directly reflects these close ties, but also reinforce the statement that Greenland would only participate in Nordic cooperation via Denmark. It is impossible to determine if this data mainly reflects the other countries' loose ties to or disinterest in Greenland or Greenland's loose ties to or disinterest in the other Nordic countries – additional deeper-delving research might give hints on this – but the main discovery is that the strongest cultural bridge NAPA has helped build, or maintain, is the one that already is strong and established.

Understanding these aspects that make Greenland more remote than the other Nordic countries helps answer the question asked by I3 at the end of the interview: why does Greenland have their own Nordic cultural support program? The simple answer would be that the country is distant from the others in a multitude of ways and its relationship to the rest of the region needs to be strengthened – but what is it that makes the relationship worth earmarking 3 million DKK annually? Surely, the most recent Nordic cultural cooperation strategies have emphasized inclusion and cultural diversity (instead of the earlier mentioned strive for a unified Nordic culture), but Greenland is also strategically situated between Europe and North America and losing ties to it would bring the Nordic regional border some 1000 kilometers eastward. Speculations of natural resources surfacing as a result of climate change may also add to

Greenland's attractiveness as a cooperation partner.⁹² The fact that no official or unofficial bi- or multilateral cultural funds between Greenland and the other Nordic countries seem to exist apart from the West Nordic funds and the Danish-Faroese cultural fund, which also supports cultural exchange between the Faroe Islands and Greenland,⁹³ also motivates the existence of the cultural support program. It is difficult to speculate whether the alleged shutdown of the Danish-Greenlandic bilateral fund(s) has affected NAPA's popularity. The official publication presenting the newest strategy for Nordic cultural cooperation specifically states that "empowerment of indigenous peoples and national minorities will also be [sic] emphasised.",⁹⁴ which would suggest that NAPA's special status will not be changed during the current strategy period.

6.3 Towards a future of cooperation on equal footing?

If we move back to Nordic cooperation as a whole and Greenland's position in it, NAPA grants the otherwise distant and underrepresented Greenland a strengthened position within the Nordic cultural policy network, but the decline in focus on culture suggested by Strang could affect this advantage negatively. However, the autonomous areas and cultural regions have received additional support and improvements to their status within the cooperative network since the 1980s, and the newest strategy for cultural policy does not seem to end this trend, emphasizing the role of the Arctic and giving credit to matters today regarded closely related to Indigenous people such as the use of traditional knowledge.⁹⁵ While it was previously explained that NAPA can affect Greenland's position within Nordic cooperation, this is also applicable vice versa, one of the possibilities being that if Greenland should obtain a far less distant relationship with the rest of the region and the additional integration efforts were rendered less necessary. The Nordic

⁹² Gad, "Greenland projecting sovereignty"; Grydehøj, "Unravelling economic dependence and independence in relation to island sovereignty.";

⁹³ Hermansson: *Nordiska bilaterala kulturfonder*, Legatbogen: Dansk-Færøsk Kulturfond: <https://www.legatbogen.dk/dansk-frsk-kulturfond>, accessed 13.05.2021

⁹⁴ The Nordic Council of Ministers, *Art and culture – driving force for sustainable development in the Nordic region*, 5

⁹⁵ Duelund and Pedersen: *The Nordic Cultural Co-operation*, The Nordic Council of Ministers, *Art and culture – driving force for sustainable development in the Nordic region*, Strang: *Introduction. The Nordic model of transnational cooperation?*

region's interest in the Arctic and international competitiveness could also result in more encouraged contact with the Indigenous peoples elsewhere in the Arctic – also outside the Nordic region, as NAPA already accepts project proposals from Canada and Alaska due to the Inuit populations. That cultural connection adds to the special status of Greenland, which can be further illustrated by looking at the Nordic region from Kinne's perspective. Kinne lists three formal requirements for the formation of a network: (1) the participating actors, (2) the ties connecting the actors and (3) interdependencies between the different ties formed by different actors within the network⁹⁶. In this context, (1) would be the Nordic countries, (2) the historical, cultural, linguistic, economic and other ties or the Nordic cooperation network, and (3) interdependencies such as co-financing Nordic cooperation but also those between the countries and the autonomous areas. As has been argued previously, the mutuality of these interdependencies can be questioned in Greenland's case: while Denmark's relevance in the Arctic definitely depends on it being Greenland's sovereign state, the impact of Greenland suddenly being cut loose would not be felt as hard on a societal level in Denmark as in Greenland.⁹⁷ The dependency-based economy and the use of Greenland for strategic purposes can give the intended cooperation with Denmark an exploitative tone: Denmark gains a strategic advantage, and while Greenland does get what the society needs for a functioning welfare system, it can be regarded rather as necessities than gains. On the other hand, economy can be seen as one of the big factors concerning the autonomous areas' equal participation in Nordic cooperation. At the time of this writing, Nordic cooperation is being financed by tax revenue from the independent Nordic states, which each contribute with a different amount according to a special distribution plan.⁹⁸ It is well in line with the Nordic welfare model to distribute the

⁹⁶ Kinne, *Network Dynamics and the Evolution of International Cooperation*

⁹⁷ Gad, "Greenland projecting sovereignty" Gad, "Post-colonial identity in Greenland?"; Larsen: "Samfund under pres."

⁹⁸ Nordic Co-operation: Financing, accessed 16.05.2021, <https://www.norden.org/en/information/financing>

financing responsibilities according to population, GDP, and other factors, but as of now, the autonomous areas are exempt from financial contributions – if this were to change at the event of complete independence, it would mean another cost to cover, although in exchange for an heightened chance to influence inter-Nordic decision-making. NAPA’s role in this would be to help argue that this price is worth paying. It is more likely to be if the relationship between Greenland and the rest of the region becomes more equalized – otherwise there is a danger that NAPA, and Nordic cooperation simultaneously, will be seen as a remnant of the times of dependency. Having Greenland identify itself as an equal player in the Nordic field could enhance the sense of a Nordic identity, earlier identified as one of the cornerstones of cooperation. The issue specifically brought up by I2 during the interviews illustrates this identity- and culture-based gap: equal participation is difficult, when cooperative projects often contain an element of exoticism. According to the data, manifests either as the non-Greenlandic actors emphasizing their interest in Greenland as something different and exotic, something that needs to be improved by them (instead of mutual development and learning) or as them expecting special treatment because they imagine themselves as “rare guests” entitled to a warm reception and cooperation without consulting the Greenlandic part’s willingness or needs. These examples contain nuances very similar to the colonialist mindset of “bringing civilization” to Greenland. While attitudes recognizing and combatting this have existed within NAPA, so have attitudes that agree to an alleged “need” for Nordic interference in Greenlandic matters. The equal relationship is nowhere near but still somewhere between the extremes of exotification and perceived cultural assimilation, both of which contain elements of colonialism. As an equal Nordic cooperation partner, Greenland needs to be recognized for its differences, but without putting the country on a special pedestal, be it in a positive or a negative light. It can also be argued that in a more integrated and inclusive Nordic region, the cultural bridges connecting Greenland to the rest of the countries are more equally built than they appear to be based on the data presented in this thesis.

7 Conclusion and suggestions for further research

By now, it has been established that Greenland's status within Norden is distinct on many respects. While being geographically remote and culturally as well as linguistically distant from the rest of the region, the country's political position is perhaps the most meaningful for this thesis. The former Danish colony has taken some significant steps towards independence, but can from several perspectives still be observed to be in the middle of a decolonization process reaching further than its formal, political status. Greenland's status within Nordic cooperation is still characterized by the country's relationship with Denmark, and there is a risk that Nordic cooperation is perceived as another Danish structure. As solving the issue of the economy being heavily dependent on Denmark is a key component of Greenland's potential future independency, this perception is not desirable should Norden wish to hold on to Greenland. But what is NAPA's role in this, and how does the institute's cultural support program reflect Greenland's status within Nordic cooperation?

Firstly, it is to be noted that NAPA's existence is in itself a manifestation of Greenland's distinct status and distant placement in the cooperative structure. The Institute was founded to bring the country closer to the rest of the Nordic region, but it seems to be enhancing – or at least reflecting – the currently strongest link binding Greenland to Norden. This can be seen clearly in the statistics created for this thesis: Danish applications amount to 25% of all received as well as successful applications processed by NAPA. Other relatively active countries include those in Greenland's immediate geographical and political vicinity – Iceland and the Faroe Islands. These connections are both logical and easily explicable, but this division of applications is not necessarily the most desirable, if the goal is to create an integrated and inclusive Norden.

Another point clearly expressed by the statistics and the interview data was that NAPA's cultural support program contains examples of Nordic cooperation's informal nature and the importance of interpersonal connections. The statistics show that applications from both

Norway and Sweden tend to be relatively successful, and this success was explained in the interview data by interpersonal connections and communication. It also goes the opposite way: Åland's extreme underrepresentation is motivated by lack of communication with the Ålandic Nordic institution, although some interviewees state that the two institutions have a good relationship on a directorial level.

While this thesis has explored Greenland's status within Nordic cooperation from different perspectives, it should be noted that the main perspective has been Scandinavian as well as administrative – this thesis has observed Greenland's status within Norden but only touched upon the question of whether Norden is relevant for Greenland. A more Greenlandic perspective would be very welcome, as well as one observing NAPA's work with the applicants, participants, and members of the public as a starting point. As was mentioned in the interviews – NAPA has been missing concrete tools on contributing to other Nordic countries' cultural lives, and those could be derived from further research. Studies on the impact of cooperation would aid the planning of future cooperative efforts as well as bring gain to the academic community, as much of Nordic cooperation research is Scandinavian-centered and focused on institutions. A deeper delve into the ties between Greenland and the individual countries underrepresented in NAPA data would also be welcome to further answer the questions posed in this thesis.

Overall, it can be stated that the cultural bridges NAPA wishes to build between Greenland and the rest of Norden are important for a continued, inclusive cooperation. As of now, however, it seems that the strongest bridge has been built to the historically most convenient location – if a more equal cooperation is to be achieved, it would be desirable to focus on strengthening the less obvious ties.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Consent form

Master's thesis on Nordic cultural collaboration in the operations Nordic Institute of Greenland

University of the Faroe Islands, Master's Programme in West Nordic Studies

Consent to take part in research

- I, voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.
- I understand that even if I agree to participate now, I can withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any question without any consequences of any kind.
- I understand that I can withdraw permission to use data from my interview within two weeks after the interview, in which case the material will be deleted.
- I have had the purpose and nature of the study explained to me in writing and I have had the opportunity to ask questions about the study.
- I understand that participation involves participating in an online interview via Zoom. Follow-up questions may occur, yet taking the time to answer them is entirely optional.
- I understand that I will not benefit directly from participating in this research.
- I agree to my interview being recorded.
- I understand that all information I provide for this study will be treated confidentially.
- I understand that in any report on the results of this research my identity will remain anonymous. This will be done by changing my name and disguising any details of my interview which may reveal my identity or the identity of people I speak about.
- I understand that disguised extracts from my interview may be quoted in the Master's thesis and the presentation of said thesis.
- I understand that if I inform the researcher that myself or someone else is at risk of harm they may have to report this to the relevant authorities - they will discuss this with me first but may be required to report with or without my permission.
- I understand that signed consent forms and original audio recordings will be retained in a protected hard drive as well as a cloud drive until October 2020.

- I understand that a transcript of my interview in which all identifying information has been removed will be retained for two years from the date of the exam board.
- I understand that under freedom of information legalization I am entitled to access the information I have provided at any time while it is in storage as specified above.
- I understand that I am free to contact any of the people involved in the research to seek further clarification and information.

*Pauliina Oinonen, Master's student
West Nordic Studies, University of the Faroe Islands*

Signature of research participant

Signature of participant

Date

Signature of researcher

I believe the participant is giving informed consent to participate in this study

Signature of researcher

Date

Appendix 2: Interview guide

Interview guide in Danish

1. *Kan du huske nogle tendenser angående ansøgninger eller typiske ansøgere fra din tid som direktør/ansat?*
2. *Synes du, at der har været problemer med at kommunikere den nordiske dimension af NAPA og støtteprogrammet til de grønlandske deltagere/ansøgere?*
 - Har der været ansøgninger, der ikke har haft nogen nordisk relevans?
3. *Har du erfaring af, at ansøgere fra udenfor Grønland har haft det svært ved at forstå den grønlandsk-nordiske dimensionen eller relevansen?*
 - a. Har der været ansøgninger, der ikke har haft nogen grønlandsk relevans?
 - b. NAPA bevilliger også ansøgninger fra udenfor Norden i særlige tilfælde. Inden for de seneste 8 år er der blevet modtaget ansøgninger fra f.eks. Baltikum, Canada, Tyskland og Frankrig. Har der været ansøgninger blandt disse, der ikke har haft nogen nordisk relevans?
4. *Inden for de seneste 8 år, er der kun kommet en og en halv ansøgning fra Ålandsøerne. Hvad synes du, dette kommer an på?*
5. *De allerfleste ikke-grønlandske ansøgninger kommer fra Danmark (ca. 25% af alle ansøgninger inden for de seneste 8 år), men lænder med et lavt antal ansøgninger plejer at have et højere succesprocent (Eksempel: ca. 2,5% af alle ansøgninger kommer fra Sverige, men af alle svenske ansøgninger, bliver ca. 94% bevilliget). Spiller landet en rolle i udvælgelsen? Findes der en tendens eller opfordring til at bevilge ansøgninger fra de "atypiske" lande?*
 - a. Har NAPA (haft) et kvotesystem angående bevillinger per land?
 - b. Er der blevet gjort indsatser for, at antallet ansøgninger fra de forskellige lande skulle fordeles mere ligt?
6. *Har du andre kommentarer angående den nordiske dimension i NAPA's virksomhed?*

Interview guide in Swedish

1. *Kommer du ihåg några mönster eller typiska ansökare från din tid som direktör/anställd?*
2. *Tycker du, att det har funnits problem med att kommunicera den nordiska dimensionen av NAPA och stödprogrammet till de **grönländska** deltagarna/ansökarna?*
 - a. *Har det funnits ansökningar som inte riktigt har någon nordisk relevans?*
3. *Har du erfarenhet av att ansökare från **utanför** Grönland skulle ha haft svårigheter med att förstå den grönländsk-nordiska dimensionen eller relevansen?*
 - a. *Har det funnits ansökningar som inte riktigt har någon grönländsk relevans?*
 - b. *NAPA beviljar också i särskilda fall ansökningar från utanför Norden. Inom de senaste 8 åren har det kommit in ansökningar från t.ex. Baltikum, Kanada, Tyskland och Frankrike. Har det funnits ansökningar från utanför Norden som inte riktigt har någon nordisk relevans?*
4. *Inom de senaste 8 åren har det bara kommit en och en halv ansökning från Åland. Vad tycker du, det beror på?*
5. *De allra flesta ansökningar från utanför Grönland kommer från Danmark (omkring 25% av alla ansökningar inom de senaste 8 åren), men länder med ett lågt antal ansökningar brukar ha ett högre framgångsprocent (Exempel: ca. 2,5% av alla ansökningar kommer från Sverige, men av alla svenska ansökningar beviljas ca. 94%). Spelar landet någon roll i urvalet? Finns det en tendens eller uppmaning att bevilja ansökningar från de "atypiska" länderna?*
 - a. *Har NAPA ett kvotsystem angående bevillningar?*
 - b. *Har det gjorts något för att göra antalet ansökningar från de olika länderna mer lika?*
6. *Har du andra kommentarer angående den nordiska dimensionen i NAPA's verksamhet?*

Interview guide, translated into English:

The interviewees were asked the following questions:

1. *Do you remember any tendencies related to applications or typical applicants from your time as a director/employee?*

2. *Do you think there have been issues in communicating the Nordic dimension of NAPA and the cultural support program to Greenlandic participants/applicants?*
 - a. Have there been applications that lack Nordic relevance?
3. *Have you experienced that applicants from outside Greenland have had difficulties understanding the Greenlandic-Nordic dimension or relevance?*
 - a. Have there been applications that lack Greenlandic relevance?
 - b. In special occasions, NAPA gives grants to applicants from outside Norden. Within the past 8 years, applications have been received from, e.g., the Baltic countries, Canada, Germany and France. Have there been applications lacking Nordic relevance among these?
4. *In the past 8 years, NAPA has only received one and a half application from the Åland Islands. What do you think is the reason behind this?*
5. *A vast majority of the non-Greenlandic applications come from Denmark (approx..25% of all applications in the past 8 years), but countries with a lower number of applications tend to have a higher success percentage (Example: approximately 2,5 % of all applications come from Sweden, but out of all Swedish applications, about 94% are awarded a grant). Does the country matter in the process of choosing which applications are given a grant? Is there a tendency or is it encouraged to award grants to applications from “atypical” countries?*
 - a. Does NAPA have or has it had a quota system regarding awarded grants per country?
 - b. Have efforts been made to equalize the numbers of applications from different countries?
6. *Do you have other comments regarding the Nordic dimension in NAPA’s work?*

Appendix 3: Interview data

Here, the answers given by the informants have been combined under each question, marked with their interviewee ID (Interviewee 1, 2, or 3). The answers have been translated into English to be in cohesion with the rest of the text and to avert speculation of the interviewees' identities. Discourse markers and other such elements have been removed to enhance clarity, and comments deemed irrelevant for this thesis are not included in the translation. The answers have been further anonymized wherever needed – this includes the removal of markers of the interviewee's identity as well as removal of any third-party identifications. Additions made by the researcher to provide further clarity where it is due are presented within square brackets.

The answers have been coded by highlighting parts of them with the following markers:

Nordic identity

Interpersonal relationships

Center-periphery divide

Greenland and Denmark

Greenland and the rest of Norden

Denmark's overrepresentation

Greenland's overrepresentation

Assumption of NAPA as a Greenlandic body

Assumption of NAPA as a Danish body

Colonial structures or mindsets

Exoticism

Cultural policy

Dilemma between project quality and country representation

General misconceptions

It is to be notified that the codes sometimes overlap: a statement can contain more than one relevant meaning, and thus, more than one code. This has been expressed by overlapping highlights.

- 1. Do you remember any tendencies related to applications or typical applicants from your time as a director/employee?***

Interviewee 1:

There is a very, very broad variation of applications: the sums vary from 2000 DKK to 2 million. Therefore, it is important to also look at them from a broad perspective. There are no tendencies per se, but one can say that some countries are more observant of Greenland – for example Denmark, as we are both part of the Unity of the Realm (“rigsfællesskabet”). I think that both Norway and Sweden are further away than Iceland and the Faroe Islands are, and Åland is also closer to us. It also fits the fact that there is no Nordic House in Norway or Sweden to back up cross-border cultural interaction. That’s why it might not be so strange that it’s Denmark and Greenland [that dominate the charts], because we are like brother and sister, and the others are our cousins – Iceland and the Faroes – and the others – Norway and Sweden – are more like cousins, but a little more distant. But Åland... Because they have the [Nordic] house in Åland we have a close relationship primarily on a directorial level, I think. It has given us trust to co-create and make joint decisions like: ‘Okay, this year we will support this’, and we will support each other’s projects, if you get what I mean. It makes it enormously effective. We have these forums we meet up at to present different ideas – either one’s own or ideas one would like to bring home with them. Then we promise to make sure to bring whatever they want us to bring to Greenland. Backing each other up has also something to do with economy. That’s a strong element.

Interviewee 2:

If you are talking about individual applicants, they did have quite a few established expectations. I’m immediately thinking about these festivals that have embedded NAPA’s cultural support program as a regular part of their financing, the music school in Nuuk that came back with a Nordic participation project year after year with similar connections, a similar project called Nordleik... But the most obvious was Greenland in Tivoli. They book Greenlandic artists and almost expect their travel expenses to be covered by NAPA. The event didn’t really have any kind of development of ideas or long-term economic solutions. It was more about a regular grant than a project. Things were going in the same direction with Arctic Sounds. We had a close dialogue with the music association and the festival’s director and other actors, so that they understood that NAPA supports projects – we don’t give operating grants [to established institutions]. We need to know what we are supposed to develop, we talked a lot about competence and exchange of experience and such things needed to further the festival. It’s funny, because I think that dialogue led to a lot of innovative thinking and I think it has supported the growth and establishment of the festival. People have done a good job to increase the Nordic and perhaps also international relevance of the festival. The point is to start the dialogue before the application phase. If we hadn’t had that conversation with them, I think they would have just continued to tell artists going to Sisimiut to apply for travel grants.

There are some returning applicants, absolutely. They are mostly Greenlandic.

So applicants from other countries don’t send recurring applications as often?

Well, Greenland in Tivoli does make sure that the artists, who are Greenlandic, apply, but the organization itself is Danish. They have never applied themselves, but told the

artists to apply, I think. I don't remember there being anything similar from the other Nordic countries.

Interviewee 3:

There is a tendency that everything is either Danish or Greenlandic. To be very concrete, I have rejected some applications that have aspired to present Greenlandic hunting culture in the Nordic region, or in some of the Greenlandic houses in Denmark. It's just... That's also a tendency, isn't it? There are many applications from Denmark, and I think we are missing some innovative thinking. And Nordic relevance, which we just defined as something that stretches beyond the very well-established relationship between Greenland and Denmark. If we support too many projects, activities or other things like that, it will be difficult to communicate the real breadth of our cultural support program. If many of them revolve around conveying Greenlandic culture in the Nordic House in Århus, that's a very rough generalization, it's hard to communicate that our real purpose is actually different – that the application might just as well be from someone in Åland willing to do a project with Greenlandic artists. So, I think it's very important to strive for diversity in the distribution of grants. I have personally gotten very tired of this tendency in a very short time, but we have had a meeting about this.

2. Do you think there have been issues in communicating the Nordic dimension of NAPA and the cultural support program to Greenlandic participants/applicants?

Interviewee 1:

No, I think we actually managed quite well to take a new direction, make people understand that you need someone to do things with – that [NAPA] isn't just about Greenlandic-Greenlandic cooperation projects. I actually think people did start to understand that, and I think there was a good understanding of that. When I first started [my professional relationship with NAPA], the situation was different. We did a lot of communication. We got a new website up fast, and new [communication channels] came. Facebook and social media have made it easier to communicate with one another, like we're doing right now, but that was something new at that time. We debated on going on Facebook and other matters one would take for granted nowadays. You can present things on your homepage, but communication happens on the other social media platforms.

Interviewee 2:

It has been a challenge. People expect to be granted cultural funds from NAPA, the Greenlandic Self-Government, NunaFonden etc., they think that as a cultural actor you are automatically entitled to these funds. We have had to work hard to correct that perception [and communicate that] NAPA wishes to create a Nordic benefit. This money is not for supporting Greenlandic culture policy, it's for supporting a Nordic cultural policy. In my experience, no one has directly been opposed to the

idea, but at the same time it's difficult to know how it really is received. This is a difficult question. This has been something we've had to work on, and I think we have managed to communicate it, but I'm finding it hard to comment on how it has been received [by the public].

Interviewee 3:

I think that, generally, yes. It's not just the cultural support program but NAPA as a whole that has had difficulties communicating their functions. And I think the new efforts to reboot the strategic work and profiling of the cultural support program do help, but my experience is that it has been hard to make Greenlandic artists understand that NAPA's funds are not the typical cultural funds that come from Denmark, for example. We are not a Danish organization – we are a Nordic one, and it's a coincidence that I, for example, happen to be Danish – I might just as well be Swedish. That's why I think it's good that the staff is a mix of Norwegian, Finnish and half Swedish people – to show exactly that, that we are Norden. Historically, Denmark has supported Greenland in many ways, and perhaps that's what makes it so easy for the artists to think that NAPA is just another one of those [Danish means to support Greenland], and the fact that we typically communicate in Danish also reinforces that. So it's a big task to communicate the Nordic dimension instead of the Danish-Greenlandic one.

a. Have there been applications that lack Nordic relevance?

Interviewee 1:

A lot of them. There are also some that never get shortlisted to further processing because the project period isn't right and the whole thing has been "shot past the target".

Interviewee 2:

Absolutely, quite a few of them. There are many bilateral applications between Denmark and Greenland or a similar relationship that has very restricted potential for Nordic benefit, where the focus is on the Danish Unity of the Realm or something else. Then there are projects with no actual potential for Nordic benefit, just Greenlandic benefit. I can't really come up with examples, but I know there have been many of those that get discarded fast. In the end [of my period] we did make the new handbook and established the rule according to which applicants must be Nordic residents. There have been many people who, for example, have lived in Germany and applied from there, and gotten rejected quickly.

Interviewee 3:

Yes. The last one I can remember was a very good and exciting project per se, with touring ambitions and exciting people involved, that didn't make the cut because of the lacking Nordic relevance. Everything was good, well-thought through, with smart budgeting etc., but where was the Nordic element? If they had wanted to do a Nordic tour, it could've been different, but the project description they had written did not contain anything Nordic. We've discussed whether or not this is something we should get involved in by telling the applicant that this is a good project, can it be made Nordic? Can we, as NAPA, take care of the Nordic side? And I think that we should do that to some degree, help the projects we could obviously steer in a Nordic direction. So, the Nordic relevance has been missing. The projects either haven't stretched out to Norden, or they've been only Greenlandic.

3. Have you experienced that applicants from outside Greenland have had difficulties understanding the Greenlandic-Nordic dimension or relevance?

Interviewee 1:

I think there are those, who already are Nordic in one way or another, who have a mindset that they carry further on with themselves after having been in contact with [the Nordic dimension] somewhere and been "raised Nordic" in some way. We did these school projects where we had classes from Åland and Finland visiting and interacting to implement the Nordic dimension in them – the way to look at things [from a Nordic perspective] and understand why it's important. Then there are those who have not met this [Nordic dimension] elsewhere and who have a completely different starting point when it comes to communication. What is this, and why is it important?

Interviewee 2:

If the point is that one should create Greenlandic-Nordic benefit or effect, then I understand it as a project that contributes with something but also provides the creator with something to learn and to take home with them. There are quite a lot of applications for what we a bit sloppily call "savior projects" whose aim is to solve a Greenlandic problem without the applicant learning anything or going through self-development in the process. Those aspects are often underrated, especially by those who motivate their projects with socially preventive or pedagogical arguments or objectives. They tend to be very strongly one-sided.

Interviewee 3:

No, or at least not as often [as the opposite]. I don't think that's where our communicative problems lie. I think those applying for our grants are aware of the Greenlandic aspect as they apply. They know Greenland. But it doesn't seem to go the other way with us and the cultural, grant, and political history. So you can't

assume that the Greenlandic artists know that. But I can't remember to have seen an application that doesn't [have the Greenlandic relevance]. The argument that there is no Nordic relevance may still hold, but I haven't seen any that wouldn't have had Greenlandic relevance.

a. Have there been applications that lack Greenlandic relevance?

Interviewee 1:

No, I think the ones applying wish to include Greenland in one form or another, or are attracted by Greenland in one way or another, as it is very exclusive and different from other places in Norden. The projects haven't always been realizable due to lacking knowledge, but we can help with that.

Interviewee 2:

That's hard for me to say. It's really hard to assess the quality of Greenlandic relevance but if we do it the simplest way possible – that one includes Greenlandic actors and establishes collaboration with Greenlandic actors to do a project together with them – then I think nearly everyone has had that [kind of relevance]. There have been applications with a very vague idea but the preparations have been poor, with no cooperation contract or any kind of contact with the Greenlandic part. That has existed. But those applications often get told to do some homework already in the application phase: get back to us once your cooperation contract is in place, then we can get involved with this. I think those projects are often planted in cooperation with schools, for example. Schools aren't only a target for projects NAPA is involved with, but they also receive a large number of project proposals when people think pupils have all the time in the world to engage with the projects. There's a certain tiredness of projects in the school world, which is fully understandable, as they try to have time for their own education plans that get trampled by these initiatives. I think there is this very, very naïve expectation from actors from the rest of Norden that if they come visit, the others must be very happy and willing to cooperate, which can lead to false assumptions that there's no need to take the cooperation contracts and planning so seriously.

Interviewee 3:

I don't think so, not that I remember. Could you imagine NAPA receiving an application between Åland and Sweden... We could basically support that. But it makes most sense to apply for our grants because we're [a] Greenlandic [institution].

b. In special occasions, NAPA gives grants to applicants from outside Norden. Within the past 8 years, applications have been received from, e.g., the Baltic countries, Canada, Germany and France. Have there been applications lacking Nordic relevance among these?

Interviewee 1:

*I'm sure there have. There was something at the end of my period from the Baltics that made me think, what are they doing in the Arctic, when I talked to people. There wasn't a lot of understanding for that. It was a decision made by the Secretariat which we will follow. But there have surely been those. But like with the other things, there has been some kind of **desire to get closer to Greenland**, which is wonderful.*

Interviewee 2:

*I remember one, actually. What we assess is the production of Nordic benefit – that can be participating in the Berlin film festival with a joint Nordic stand or a Greenlandic stand that invites the other Nordic countries to participate or something like that, which I think is fine. **I remember a film project with young movie makers in Palestine that was [only] intended to be bilateral between Palestine and Greenland. There may have been something with France, too. But those things disappear in the application process.***

Interviewee 3:

*I can't remember to have processed such applications. The Baltics are Nordic, right? The NCM's policy does include the Baltics, but I can't remember having read an application from there. **We have received an application from Germany that got rejected because the applicant lived in Germany, same thing with France. In the French case, we encouraged them to reapply and fix the residence problem, because the project was really good. The formalities just needed to be in place.** Can't remember to have received an application from Canada, either.*

4. In the past 8 years, NAPA has only received one and a half application from the Åland Islands. What do you think is the reason behind this?

Interviewee 1:

It can sometimes be because we haven't met, [as meetings often start a] Domino effect in the network. Like, if one has been to a festival in Helsinki and met someone and done something together. Joint events where people are mixed often set the ball rolling when it comes to new projects, so it's very important to organize those. Not necessarily to produce something, but to get to know each other and how things work. So, I don't really know how it works [in Åland] and I don't know their director, and I think this depends on that. And as a director, one is eager to come out, [present their institution] and tell people about the possibilities at the other [institutions].

Interviewee 2:

That was a complete surprise, I didn't think it was so bad. I don't understand it, to be honest. They even have NIPÅ [The Nordic Insitute in Åland], which is an important information channel for NAPA, so I do not know. But I saw your numbers and noticed that [my home country] had zero applications in 2012, and in 2013 there were... [3. Interviewer elaborates on statistics from the following years.] I didn't think communication was so important in this area. It's completely obvious that when I start [my professional relationship with NAPA] with the network I have, [word] will spread in [my home country] for sure. It is also during our own projects that we come up with connections and encourage the actors to engage in cooperation. It's clearly noticeable that in Greenland and Denmark, there is a well-established knowledge that these forms of [financial] support exist and one can turn to them. I didn't think the communication efforts were so... I thought we got further [than we did]. A lot further, and that we reached more culture producers in Norden than we did. But I think it obviously depends on personal contacts. It probably depends on the board and on who spreads information and such. I think there's a surge, although marginal at that, in Finnish applications in 2013 because we had an intern from Finland at that time.

Interviewee 3:

It's due to lacking cooperation with NIPÅ. If we had been good enough at cooperating, there could have been a bit more applications. This is way too little. Sister organizations should work together on communication, but we have given up on that right now as we are going to do bigger marketing [efforts] through the channels best suited for that. We do that for example with our podcast. We want to generally reach further out in Norden. There are very, very few applications from elsewhere in Norden, and that's not good.

5. A vast majority of the non-Greenlandic applications come from Denmark (approx.. 25% of all applications in the past 8 years), but countries with a lower number of applications tend to have a higher success percentage (Example: approximately 2,5 % of all applications come from Sweden, but out of all Swedish applications, about 94% are awarded a grant). Does the country matter in the process of choosing which applications are given a grant? Is there a tendency or is it encouraged to award grants to applications from "atypical" countries?

Interviewee 1:

It is possible to make accommodations for countries with whom the connection is weak, it makes sense if one wants to build a network. But it doesn't necessarily mean that the project is better than those coming from the usual places, so you need to have a strategic eye. There needs to be a conscious strategic assessment of

favoring applications from the countries we normally don't get them from. That can accumulate some more projects and more sustainability. So, it has to be a board decision to say we would like to favor this.

Interviewee 2:

To be honest, there has definitely been a tendency like that, if one has received an application from, say, Finland and thought, wow, this is nice, or we have restricted relations [to this country] so we need to encourage this. Or Norway, there was a Norway-wave going on for a while. But regarding Sweden's extreme success, I think it depends a bit of what I said earlier: the people [we] know in Sweden and talk to, encourage them to do a project. Knowing [personally] sounds a little wrong, I mean people that we know of. So there's an idea of what's possible to do and an opportunity for closer counseling. Danish applicants know the program and fill in an application without thinking about the objective, or they have received grants for years and apply routinely. I think you can find a lot more recurring applications among the Danish ones.

Interviewee 3:

If I'm processing an application related to Tasiilaq in East Greenland, or some other cities or places that aren't Copenhagen, Denmark or Nuuk, Greenland, I'm more willing to accept it. It also has to do with us wanting to go out and stretch our cultural support program out so that it's being showed and used in the entire Norden. Applying from there comes with an advantage. That being said, projects that aren't good or coherent [don't get accepted]. But we get a lot of applications, and most of them are good, so this is a luxury problem. We reject a lot of very good applications, too. I think one tends to not reject an application from an atypical place. If one sends an application from Copenhagen, it needs to be a very good project and a very good application, there needs to be good documentation and so on. A less good project can be accepted, if it's from somewhere else than Copenhagen or Nuuk.

- a. Does NAPA have or has it had a quota system regarding awarded grants per country?

Interviewee 1:

Not in my time.

Interviewee 2:

It's just something based on feeling, there isn't a real quota system. We mentioned that about Norway, and that about Åland, it's clear that we know [about these

things] but I don't remember it having been so gloomy. We did talk something about it in presentations and so on. But a quota system... The board has discussed if a part of the resources should be allocated to children and young people's own initiatives. One would earmark a part of the cultural support funds only for projects initiated by children and young people. We have discussed that earlier.

Interviewee 3:

Not that I know. But you should take this with reservation, because I haven't been dealing with the budget when I have evaluated applications. I have only expressed my views in the qualitative matters, not the economy. But I would guess no, because representing the whole Norden is more important than quotas. So you could imagine, in theory, that if there suddenly were very many applications from other Nordic countries, they would be favored regardless of quotas.

- b. Have efforts been made to equalize the numbers of applications from different countries?

Interviewee 1:

No. During my time there wasn't... We did of course talk about how we can get more applications from this and this and this, and it was a task for me. It meant simply going around and trying to break through to Norway and Sweden by getting some Greenlandic artists to visit and such things that one can do alone. This was on top of the applications, the fund applications are another side of the job along with building networks and opportunities. One needs to be conscious of their choices and which strategy to adopt.

Interviewee 2:

No, there isn't a Nordic cultural institution in Denmark unlike in Finland, Iceland, Åland and the Faroe Islands, and those have been our main information channels. An effort was made in connection with the new handbook but there hasn't been any special marketing campaigns since. Maybe that has also depended on the fact that there's been a good and stable application flow and one has had concerns related to the increased workload in administration if an actual marketing campaign was made. I really think efforts focused in the rest of Norden should be prioritized. They are the ones participating/benefiting of this and one can see from the applications that they are happy about this opportunity, and it is a unique opportunity that should be communicated more clearly to the rest of Norden. There's a difference in the budgets of applications coming from Greenland and Denmark and those coming

from other countries, where there's a much higher personal contribution, I want to say. Applications from other Nordic countries have a much broader financing. There's a humbleness in the project descriptions regarding the opinion that it's is a fantastic opportunity to participate in building cultural bridges with Greenland.

Interviewee 3:

Not during my time.

6. Do you have other comments regarding the Nordic dimension in NAPA's work?

Interviewee 1:

It's just so very important to have NAPA in Greenland. It's very, very important on many different levels, I think. Both on a very practical level, and also as a little guard dog of cultural policy and the importance of strategies. One has to be a little eager to get things through in the Greenlandic system. And simultaneously to maintain respect. It's so important that NAPA exists.

Interviewee 2:

I think we have been missing good tools for Greenlandic cultural life to contribute to something in the other Nordic countries, both in the supported projects and in our own projects. There's a lot of participation in the other Nordic events financed with... Right, you know that Greenlandic cultural actors are coming to create some kind of benefit in Norway for real. There have been few projects like that and it's a bit sad that one couldn't reach longer in that respect. It's hard to say if the participation is really on equal terms. There's often some kind of an exotic element involved instead.

Interviewee 3:

The Nordic funding system is confusing – I can allow myself to say this both as an artist, because I have applied for funds in that system before coming here, and during. But now that I have worked with it and needed to have a professional perspective, I think it's messy. It's very, very hard to understand for someone coming from outside, it's a little bit like the EU, but smaller. As an artist, I have given up on applying for EU funds, because it's so complex and the documentation requirements are horrible – I heard someone had hired someone to do all the bureaucratic work needed. The Nordic system is a little bit like that: there are so many pools, requirements and deadlines. I think it is confusing, and that's why I have suggested to Nordic Culture Point that we get together with them or some of the other pools and make a joint Nordic application site, where anyone who in any way thinks they should apply for Nordic funding, can go. One enters the site and is guided to the relevant funding pools by dynamic search and surveying tools in the software. That, or some kind of

communication of the Nordic systems inspired by the Danish Association of Composers.

[I'm also thinking], why does Greenland have a cultural support program and the others don't? Why has one thought that Greenland should have about 3 million DKK, but the other houses shouldn't?

Appendix 4: NAPA

The following information was gathered during a Practice Learning period at NAPA in Autumn 2019 and first presented in the Practice Learning Report written about said period.

NAPA, the Nordic Institute in Greenland, was established in 1987 and allocates approximately 3 million DKK in form of grants annually to support Greenlandic and Nordic cultural initiatives. The grants are categorized by whether they are aimed for covering travel expenses related to a project or for supporting a project by other means (e.g. covering accommodation, materials etc.) –these categories will later in this report be referred to as travel grants and project grants. When applying for a grant, the applicant specifies whether they wish to apply for a project or a travel grant and motivates their application so that it can be deemed relevant for at least one of the three themes listed above. If the project is granted funding, the director will decide the final category into which the project will be sorted. Applications for grants above 100 000 DKK need to be processed by NAPAs board, while applications for smaller grants are being processed continuously. Eligible applicants can be both professionals, semi-professionals and amateurs and apply both individually, in groups or on behalf of an institution, organization or association, but they must be residents of a Nordic country or a self-governing area and the project has to be embedded in both Greenland and at least one other Nordic country or self-governed area. However, Alaska, Canada and the Baltic states (Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) are exceptionally treated as eligible collaboration countries. Some of NAPAs funds also go into realizing their own projects.⁹⁹

NAPA's personnel typically consists of 3-5 individuals, one of which often officially employed by the Nordic information service Info Norden. NAPA also receives occasional project employees and interns. As is the case with all Nordic co-operation bodies and institutions under the Nordic Council of Ministers, employees are hired for a 4-year contract with a potential extension by another 4 years; therefore, the maximum period of employment at NAPA by principle cannot exceed 8 years. In addition to in-house personnel, NAPA's work is administered by a board consisting of 5 permanent members and 3 alternates from the Nordic countries and self-governing areas. The board is re-established every 2 years, and the Greenlandic representative is selected by the Greenlandic Minister of Culture.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁹ NAPA: About NAPA's Cultural Support Programme, accessed 23.12.2019, <https://napa.gl/en/funds/About-NAPA's-Cultural-Support-Programme>; NAPA: *NAPA's Cultural Support Program*

¹⁰⁰ NAPA: *NAPA's Cultural Support Program*

Described as ‘a bridge between the Arctic and the Nordic region’, NAPA is a cultural institution under the Nordic Council of Ministers. Its work is based on the Cultural Strategy of the council. The Cultural Strategy setting the framework for NAPA during the period studied in this thesis was in force from 2013 to 2020 and consisted of five different themes: *The Sustainable Nordic Region*, *The Creative Nordic Region*, *The Intercultural Nordic Region*, *Young People in the Nordic Region* and *The Digital Nordic Region*. The different Nordic institutions may choose, which themes they would mainly like to promote and how, and in NAPA’s case these were *Young People in the Nordic Region*, *The Intercultural Nordic Region* and *The Sustainable Nordic Region*.¹⁰¹

¹⁰¹ Ibid.