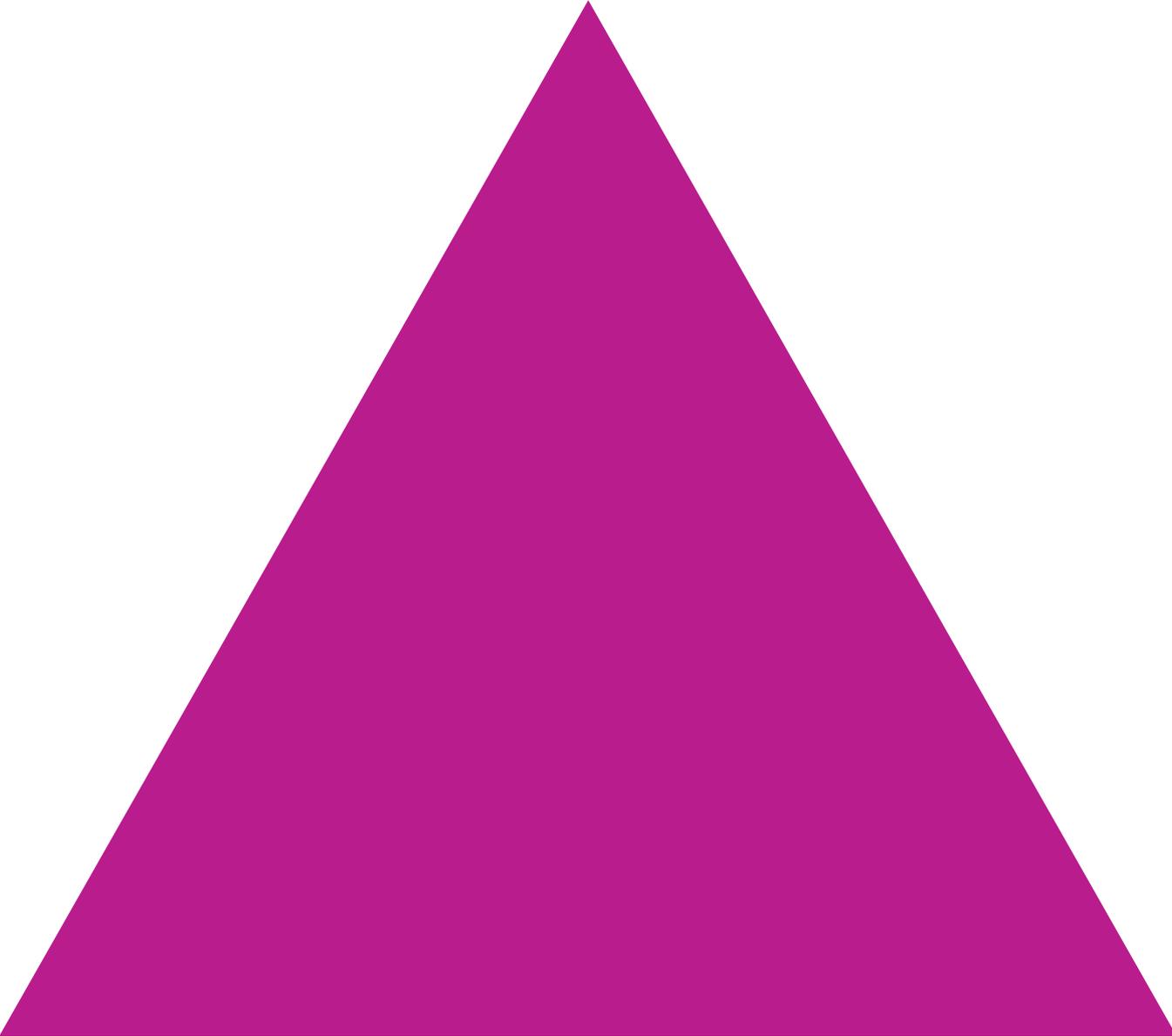


An aerial photograph of a park with a large pink triangle overlay. The park features a green lawn, a curved flower bed with white and red flowers, and a wooden bench. In the background, there are trees with yellow and green leaves and a building with a white facade and dark roof. The text "1 FINLAND" and "- IT WORKS" is centered within the pink triangle.

1 FINLAND
- IT WORKS



FINLAND IS THE MOST FUNCTIONAL SOCIETY IN THE WORLD

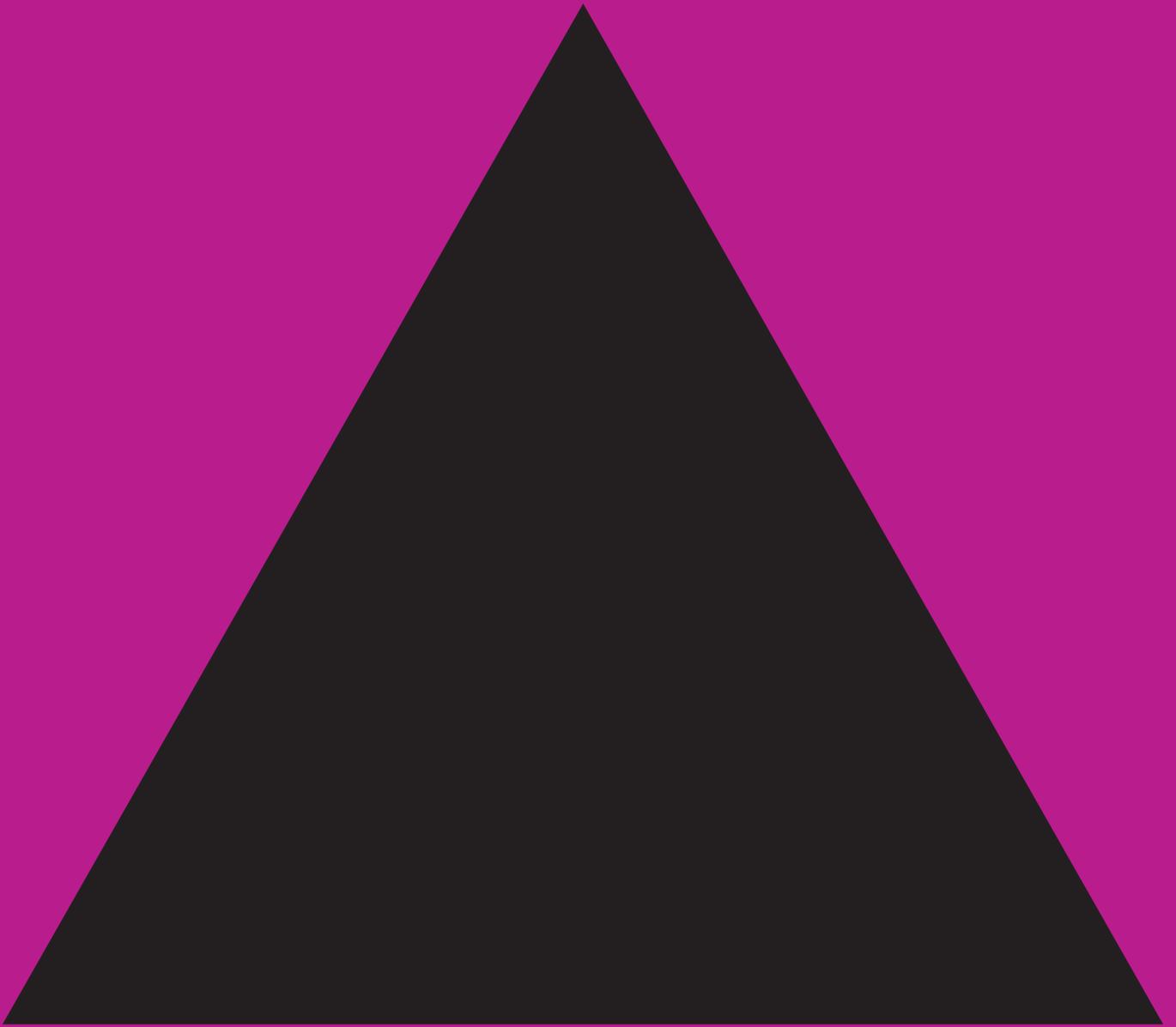
According to a number of international surveys and comparisons, Finland is the world's most functional society. The best way to describe Finnish society is to note that it functions exceptionally well.

The functionality of Finland is based on two aspects that are closely inter-linked. Finns trust each other, and they are quick to find unconventional, non-hierarchical solutions to difficult, sometimes apparently impossible problems.

In Finland, functionality is not based on strong leaders, strict hierarchies and centralised power. Instead, Finland has successfully demonstrated that problems can be solved and people can work together even without orders coming from above. The tradition of talkoot, a community effort based on voluntary participation, largely epitomises what Finnish creative and practical functionality means. Working together and seeking functional solutions is based on mutual trust: we believe and trust in people's abilities and that institutions and individuals alike carry out their promises.

The Finnish business and cultural communities can also offer solid proof of functionality. Finnish products have a good reputation in the world; they are regarded as being durable and reliable. Correspondingly, Finnish design and architecture have their roots firmly in functionalism. Solutions designed by Finns are practical and functional.

When the same principles are applied to discovering how the challenges affecting the whole world can be overcome, Finland's reputation will grow and we will have more work and prosperity.



EVERYONE PARTICIPATE IN FINDING SOLUTIONS

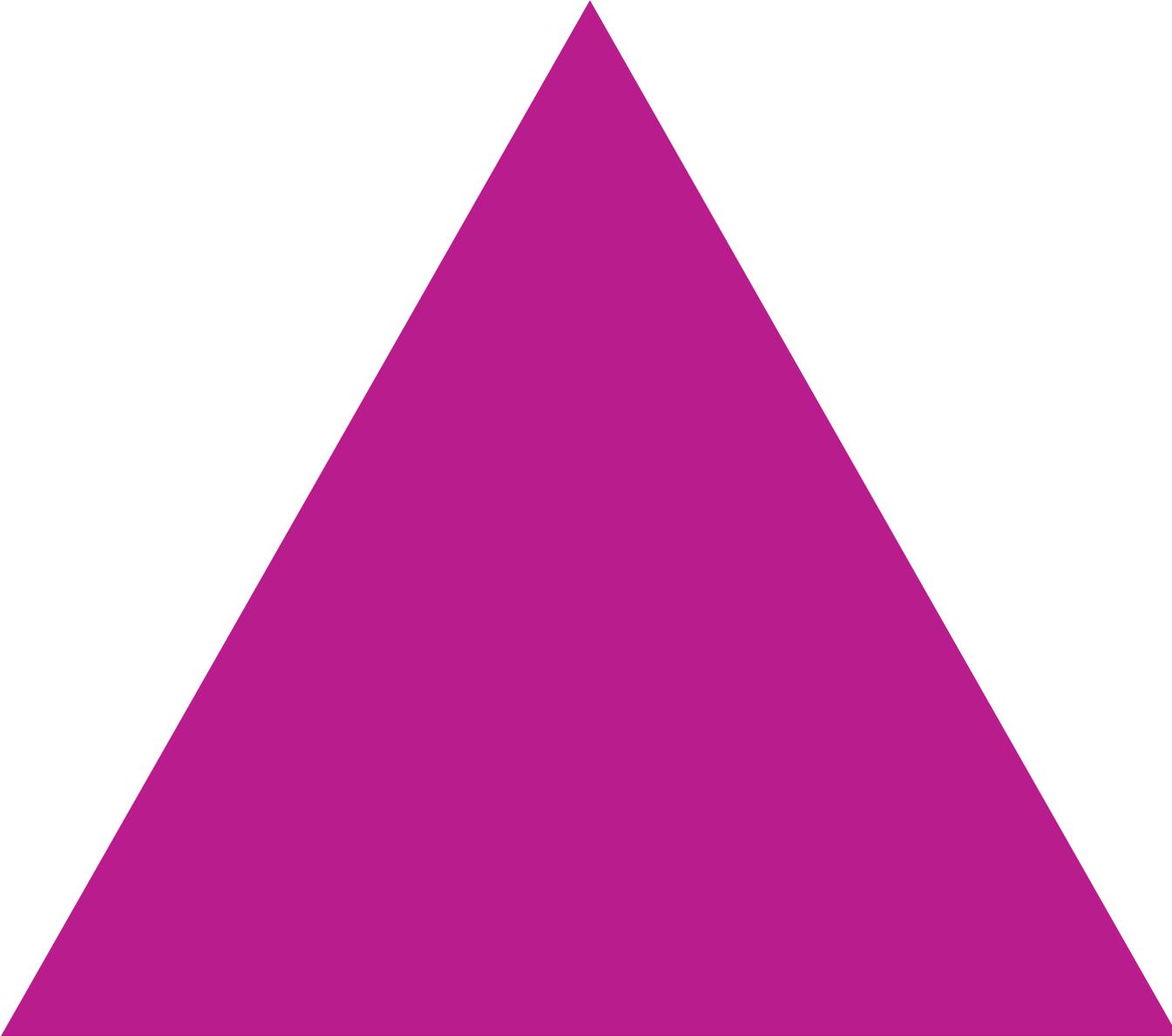
'Just a hobby, won't be big and professional' 25 Aug 91 20:57:08 Newsgroups: comp.os.minix

This statement sparked a revolution. The amateur computer programmer Linus Torvalds had come up with a way of enabling an unlimited number of people to work on the development of the same program source code. This was to prove to be a highly successful approach. Linux, which since then has evolved into a huge success, is one of the most significant open-source operating systems. The Internet would not be possible without a service infrastructure, which is currently largely based on Linux and open source.

Torvalds understood that a complex system, such as a global network, can only function if there are a large number of motivated individuals contributing to its development. This is expressed in another famous statement made by Torvalds: "Given enough eyeballs, any bugs are shallow". In other words, the difficulty of problems depends on the number of people involved in finding a solution.

Linux, which was created by Torvalds, and other open source systems combine the foremost virtues of Finnish functionality: nurturing the commons in a successful way, and the shrewd use of human resources. Thus it is probably no coincidence that the main impetus for open source came from Finland, from a country where functionality is the highest praise for almost anything.

In order to make things work in Finland, the small nation has involved each and every member of its population in developing common issues. Many important achievements would never have been made, had they been solely based on the efforts or leadership of the elite. It has been necessary to inspire people to make a wholehearted effort, not only at work but also during their spare time. Although open source software is now a billion-dollar business, the lion's share of programs are still produced as a hobby. Or rather: not as a hobby, but because people want the software they use to work better.



OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

The country brand consultant Simon Anholt finds that Finns stand out from other Nordic people by an almost mystical strangeness and an edge. Anholt also sees this to have a grim dimension: madness and a hidden badness that occasionally reaches the surface, but he sees them as mainly positive with regard to the country image. At least we stand out among the nations of the world.

It would be prudent of Finns not to highlight all of the aspects of 'creative madness', heavy drinking, domestic violence or mental problems, as the strengths of its brand. But Finland also has exactly the kinds of originality and strangeness which this day and age call for.

Finnish culture is extremely non-hierarchical and attitudes to social status are highly critical. In Finland, it is almost impossible to use your position to set yourself above other people. The secretary of Kari Kairamo, Nokia's former CEO, remembers how it was quite normal for an office assistant to chastise the CEO for having concluded an ill-advised deal in Germany. The President of the Republic drops in at the kiosk to get a lottery ticket and we find this endearing, although somewhere else this would subject the whole presidential institution to ridicule. In this respect Finns are much more non-hierarchical than even the Swedes or the Danes.

When this lack of hierarchy meets the intense individuality of Finns and the tradition of going about things in your own way, we have access to enormous creative potential. In Finland, people do not aspire to do everything the same way as the others, to dress or to live like others. Rather than the done thing, Finns do what they think is the rational thing to do. Thinking for yourself is valued. If the supervisor's instructions are stupid, they are ignored; we would rather do things in our own way so that the end result is good.

Individual, innovative lifestyles and ways of doing things are also appreciated. Social pressure does not force everyone into the same mould. Instead, any stupid practices that make life difficult or impede work are criticised, and people do not automatically want to do things the old way, if the old way of doing things was inefficient.

MISSION FOR FINNISH BUSINESSES:

Solve a global problem and turn it
into a good business

Growth in the global markets is currently strongest in areas where the world's most wicked problems are being solved. The need for communications technology is increasing, the world is becoming increasingly urbanised, natural resources are being depleted and the proportion of the ageing population is increasing in many countries. The future world-class success of Finnish businesses also depends on finding solutions to these problems. Each Finnish company should identify for itself a major, wicked problem, relevant to the whole world, with respect to which the company could offer an input that will be vital to finding a solution. Solutions emerge through cooperation: the companies and educational institutions relevant to the company's own value chain should be involved. This group will build a comprehensive understanding of the solution to the wicked problem and how solutions can be based on existing Finnish strengths.



In a world where change is accelerating and problems accumulate, this individual, innovative way of solving things is the very thing that is needed. The Finnish way of doing things may seem alien to those coming from other cultures, but it works. Gradually it turns into a global best practice, the new ideal for how things should be managed.

FINLAND'S STRENGTHS – AND THEIR FURTHER ENHANCEMENT

FROM QUALITY PRODUCTS TO CREATIVE SOLUTIONS Finnish products enjoy a good reputation; in the Country Brand Index 2009 survey their image was ranked fourth best in the world. This is an important achievement, as the only countries outperforming us are Japan, the USA and Germany. Finnish products are regarded as being of high quality and Finnish companies as reliable. Finland's good reputation is primarily based on industry, as the Finnish paper, metals and technology industries made their way to the top of the world with respect to quality in record speed.

What makes this achievement particularly significant is that Finland is clearly ranked higher than the other Nordic countries. Where Sweden is especially well-known for its inexpensive, appealing consumer products, Norway for its oil and Denmark for its agriculture, Finland's reputation is based on paper machines, ice-breakers, mobile phones, lifts and forest machinery.

The reputation for reliability and top quality offer a good springboard for getting to the next level. Finnish companies now have an opportunity to assume an even more relevant role in world economy. This requires that in addition to production, they increasingly focus on finding creative solutions to global problems. The problems the world now has to deal with are more numerous and more difficult than ever before. Solving them requires decisiveness, reliability and high-level expertise.

Reliability and expertise are available in Finland, and the development has already started. Industrial companies generate an increasingly large share of their sales from servicing and service. The most successful companies have already clearly shifted their focus to solving the customer's problems. And where the problems happen to be as large and relevant as possible, Finnish companies have excellent opportunities to grow and get a better payoff for their efforts.

Good practices for solving things together have also evolved in Finland – businesses operating in the same sector form clusters, and companies and educational institutions work together. Alone, a company may be too small or too slow to find

MISSION FOR THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE:

The educational level of immigrants
to be raised to the overall level,
immigrants to be trained as teachers

Finland's success has been based on an ability to raise millions of people from poverty and illiteracy to create a skilled, affluent middle class. The basis of the country's competitiveness, equality and trust, was created through progress.

The key to the miracle was education. A window of opportunity is now opening for Finland to achieve a similar success story with immigrants: education is the best route to reinforcing social involvement and equality. Finland has a relatively small number of immigrants. Thus, investing resources in their education will be a profitable investment and the best way of integrating them into society. For the best results, children of immigrant families should be encouraged to train as teachers. Studies indicate that having a teacher with a similar background has a significantly positive impact on the educational achievements of immigrant children.



a solution to a big problem, but if you work together, it can be achieved in record time. This requires creativity at a number of different levels, creativity in how you approach a problem, in how you organise yourselves, in how you commercialise the expertise in a given area.

FUNCTIONALITY IS BASED ON EQUALITY Finland is the most functional society in the world. This is not something Finns alone have observed, but a fact which is backed up by international comparisons and many immigrants themselves. Functionality is based on the fact that we approach problems in a way that is practical, solution-oriented, and pragmatic rather than philosophical.

Objectives aimed at minimising social problems have also played a part in creating this functionality. A particular realisation gained strength in Finland almost throughout the 20th century, which has recently been confirmed by international comparison surveys. In societies based on equal opportunity, there is less crime and substance abuse, and fewer mental problems and other health hazards compared with societies where social inequality prevails. In Finland, which is an equal society, the number of individuals contributing to functionality is large. Correspondingly, there are fewer obstacles to functionality than on average.

In a country with a small, scattered population, it has been important to tap the resources and competencies of each and every citizen. The harsh nature has forced people to pull together. Distances between people and villages have been long, which has meant that problems must be solved locally. Many practical problems, such as roads and water resources management, have been addressed by means of founding an association or administrative committee to see to the matter. In the spirit of neighbourly help and shared responsibility, matters have been taken care of without outside help, with local forces and on the basis of the needs of the individual and the immediate community.

In Finland, those needing help from society use the same public services. From day care to the army and to retirement homes, we remain in contact with almost all Finns of our own age group. We have even managed to find a practical solution to bilingualism, which is an issue which divides many countries. The majority of Finns have at least a working knowledge of both domestic languages.

In a small nation people are quick to find common ground. This has resulted in a culture characterised by a certain kind of simplicity where basically any citizen can contact any public official, no matter how senior.

MISSION FOR SCHOOLS: A Day of Reconciliation

Schools organise an annual Day of Reconciliation, the purpose of which is to practice conflict resolution and negotiations. In addition, mediation professionals such as peace mediation or victim-offender mediation specialists visit schools to talk about sustainable mediation: how to work out a solution that everyone will be happy with. In workshops, schoolchildren can learn what negotiation means in schoolyard conflicts, for example.



WHAT DO YOU MEAN, FINNS CAN'T COMMUNICATE? The Finnish way of communicating is often seen to consist of nothing but tongue-tied silence. In our own opinion, we Finns are not good at marketing ourselves, our expertise or our products. We believe we are rhetorically artless and hanker for a Central European culture and its animated debates. Does this mean that schools should teach rhetoric or debating skills?

This is in many ways nothing but a myth. Even the Nobel Peace Prize awarded to Martti Ahtisaari says otherwise: at least someone in Finland can negotiate -even well enough to win the Peace Prize. President Ahtisaari has shown what we are good at. Finland may not produce the most brilliant debaters, but the method of communication typical of Finns may help in solving different kinds of problems.

Finns are used to being in a tight spot and to negotiate instead of arguing, blustering and quarrelling. When Finns negotiate, nobody leaves the table as a loser. This is a strength that is worth emphasising. After all, the ability to negotiate is needed everywhere: in international conflicts as well as everyday situations in the schoolyard, at work and in families. Also, where a solution is sought for an wicked global problem, there should be a Finn among those sitting around the table.

Finland has a strong history of peace mediation and supporting peace processes, from Sakari Tuomioja to the Nobel Laureate Martti Ahtisaari, from Elisabeth Rehn to Harri Holkeri and Pekka Haavisto. If we so desire, peace mediation could become an element of Finland's brand.

As the term implies, peace mediation means mediating between parties, and mediation and the search for a compromise are also required in Finland. Therefore it would also be good for schoolchildren to learn about how to mediate and consider peaceful ways of solving conflicts.

MISSION FOR THE MINISTRY FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS: The Ahtisaari Convention

Finland hosts an annual global peace mediation event, the Ahtisaari Convention, which brings together international crisis mediators to discuss ways of solving ongoing crises and to educate Finnish crisis management specialist. Universities could organise a series of public lectures on international mediation activities during the convention. For example, public lectures could be organised under the theme 'Discussions with Martti Ahtisaari' by inviting an international guest to Finland with whom Ahtisaari would hold a public debate on the possibilities for peace in a particular country or area.

The Ministry for Foreign Affairs also organises an annual international 'opinion leader programme' in which the themes of peace negotiations are addressed from different perspectives. Leading members of the business community and politicians are invited from around the world to learn about the importance of negotiating skills and mediation. The programme culminates in a seminar in which eminent Finnish and international guests talk about peace negotiations and the importance of negotiation skills in both business and politics.

In connection with the Ahtisaari convention, Finland also annually awards a prize to an individual or a non-governmental organisation for a praiseworthy mediation effort or background work contributing to or supporting the implementation of a peace process (a kind of 'lesser Nobel'). The idea would be to recognise those behind individual initiatives or, for example, diaspora organisations for promoting peace in their own area.

In this way, Finland and its people create a profile for themselves as solid negotiation professionals. At the same time, we will help solve some of the world's most wicked problems by doing nothing less than promoting peace.





MISSION FOR THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE: Decision-making tool for the wiki-democracy of the 100-year-old Finland

Wikipedia is based on the idea that all users can edit the shared encyclopaedia to help make it more accurate. Social development is about the same thing: people's ability to achieve better results through cooperation. During the one hundred years of the Finnish decision-making system, the abilities of the people and the available technology have made huge advances. Yet people's trust in politics is faltering. Finland could develop a new decision-making model that would be closer to the definition of democracy as the rule of the people and further away from the government of a poor, uncivilised nation.

This kind of wiki-democracy makes the argumentation relating to decisions widely visible and allows people to comment on it. As with Wikipedia, each and every Finn could, within the limits of their abilities, suggest ideas on the criteria on which decisions should be based and how decisions should be implemented. Rather than mass meetings where everyone would get to take the floor, it would be a forum that would enable everyone to develop the criteria for decision-making. This would enhance the participatory dimension of politics, as well as make it more understandable to the public. An appropriate milestone for implementing wiki-democracy is 2017, Finland's centennial year, and planning should be entrusted to the Ministry of Justice, which monitors the implementation of democracy.



WE LEARNED TRUST AS CHILDREN Finland regularly scores highly in different surveys measuring trust and confidence. For example, on the basis of the European Social Survey, Finns have greater trust in the police, the judicial system and other public institutions than other Europeans.

Professor Lea Pulkkinen has studied the life course of one generation of Finns from the age of eight to over fifty. This *Lapsesta aikuiseksi* [From childhood to adulthood] survey has spanned more than 40 years. Within the past ten years, the focus of the work published by Pulkkinen's research team has increasingly shifted to how initial social capital explains the later well-being of the individual. Children who have been able to trust their parents and other adults have better opportunities to become emotionally, mentally and socially healthy adults who trust the people and institutions around them and who are also worthy of trust themselves. This gives rise to a functional society. Pulkkinen's conclusion concerning the importance of trust fittingly describes Finnish society and the foundation of its functionality.

Finland has not had a complicated system dividing people into different classes, as for a long time the majority of Finns were poor. Schools, nursery schools and public health services later reduced gaps in well-being, created shared experiences and reinforced the trust people had in each other and in society. A particular merit of these Finnish institutions is that they have made a major contribution to guaranteeing the well-being of children, which has also been strengthened by means of the system of child welfare clinics, as well as the maternity and parental leave system.

The unusually good ability of Finns to agree on things is also based on mutual trust. Historically, political parties have been more capable of reaching a consensus in Finland than in many other countries. No chasm opens up between the extremes. Coalition governments have seen Finland through major crises, such as the economic downturn at the beginning of the 1990s. Thus, the basis of our democratic system is that we can trust one another and that our goals are sufficiently close.

MISSION FOR THE STATE AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES: One percent to culture

One percent of the budgets of significant public projects should be allocated to culture. Society must pose complex questions to specialists in the field of culture, questions to which new, visionary solutions are sought.

The ethos of giving one percent for art can be extended to social, diplomatic and traffic projects. Planning the specific culture and art for each project also helps society in general to understand the importance of art for well-being.

The works should draw on the distinctive characteristics of each issue and location. In the best case scenario, residents and users will also make their voice heard in the planning of art and needs assessment. The perspective of culture may also help experts representing different fields to see their work and problems through new eyes. For artists, cooperation offers valuable opportunities for explaining and deepening their art.



SUSTAINABLE AND FUNCTIONAL FINNISH DESIGN Aino Aalto, Kaj Franck, Tapio Wirkkala, Timo Sarpaneva, Maija Isola, Eero Aarnio, Vuokko and Antti Nurmesniemi – it is easy to name examples of world-class Finnish designers. After the era of Alvar Aalto and functionalism, the 1950s saw the emergence of modern design styles that achieved international renown for Finnish design.

The Finnish national identity was created rapidly over the last decades of the 19th century and the early years of the 20th century. Influence was sought in the strong trends in contemporary art. The National Romantic style and the Arts & Crafts movement in particular left their mark on Finnish art and design. The Arts & Crafts movement emphasised the role of craftsmanship in design, architecture and art, as well as the goal of creating beautiful products equally for all people.

Finnish design found its inspiration in this holistic idea that emphasises the user's needs. This is also demonstrated by the fact that the concept of design has been understood widely in Finland. Finnish design has covered everything from everyday clothes to modes of transport and homes, even entire city quarters.

The Sunila pulp mill and its residential area, designed by Alvar Aalto for the Ahlstrom company, are a textbook example of the state-of-the-art architecture of the time and a testament to holistic, functionality-oriented design that combines the needs of industrial production with those of the people. On the other hand, the Paimio sanatorium is an archetypal example of architecture based on a holistic view of people and the healing process. Light, fresh air, silence and the pinewood forest are part of the hospital, the focus of which is on supporting the individual's recovery from tuberculosis.

Finnish tableware design can be regarded as a symbol of how the focus of design has been the creation of durable products suitable for everyday use. At some point Finnish companies had to choose whether to focus on inexpensive items and transfer production elsewhere, or to focus on high-end products and try and keep production in Finland. This led to the decision to develop solutions that are functional albeit not the cheapest. Glasses designed by Aino Aalto are suitable for the cottage as well as the traditional fine-dining Savoy restaurant.

In interviews, Finnish designers often mention the parameters that guide the design: the products must be stackable or go with other styles, match and complement each other. Not just fit for one single purpose but functional and practical in many ways.

One of the basic principles of Finnish design is the idea of complementarity: although they cannot necessarily afford to purchase the entire set at once, consumers have been able to trust that certain tableware designs will remain in production and that new items will be introduced, which allows them to gradually build up their collection over the years and as their prosperity increases. Sustainable, ecological thinking – from the start a high-quality and timeless design that will last and can be handed down to future generations.

MISSION FOR DESIGNERS: From chairmakers to social developers

Solutions that support the everyday life of the elderly or a low-emission lifestyle, reducing learning difficulties at school, and communication between people whose mother tongues are far apart. In order to overcome these and many other social challenges, we need new problem-solvers.

The world talks about 'design thinking' which is used to design solutions in the same way as products were designed in the past. Thus, the user-oriented thinking of designers would now be in demand. The Finnish universities of applied arts should now offer their expertise to the public sector as well as other actors to be used in solving problems.



MISSION FOR FINNISH ENTREPRENEURS:

Finnish culture to be included
on the shopping list

Just like purchasing Finnish products, the consumption of culture is a means of supporting Finnishness. Art purchases have traditionally been a part of the corporate social responsibility of companies. Art and culture construct the meanings through which the value of Finnish products can also increase in the future. This is why Finnish businesses are now in need of high-quality culture.

Public funding currently accounts for 95 percent of the funding for higher forms of art. To ensure the success of Finnish culture at a time in which resources are becoming ever scarcer, the funding base must be expanded. The Finnish business community will play an important role in this regard.



MISSION FOR VOCATIONAL EDUCATION:

Vocational school for DIY

Vocational institutions could provide training for ‘tuners’ who could repair various types of goods which Finns possess and think of ways to re-use and recycle them. Manual skills are in demand in Finnish society. The problem now is how to increase the attractiveness of such occupations.

Finland has become wealthy, and the volume of second-hand goods needing repairs is larger than ever – holiday homes and storage units are filling up. At the same time, DIY and the repairing of old goods have become popular hobbies. Companies using the label Finnish=Repairable, which proudly proclaims the repairability of their products, would obtain skilled employees who can also innovate.



FINNS ARE CREATIVE WITH THEIR HANDS For many Finns, working with their hands is a way of relaxation: an increasing number of people are finding it a good counterbalance to abstract information work. Building your own house, the 'little red cottage with a potato patch', is still the dream and ultimate form of happiness for many a Finn. Even high-powered individuals build, or take part in building, a home or holiday home for themselves: the previous Prime Minister of Finland achieved fame with the house he built himself in Nurmijärvi.

Most Finns are at most one generation away from an agrarian economy: either we ourselves or our parents come from rural areas. In Finland, urbanisation started relatively late, not until the 1950s. The agrarian background is still evident in the Finnish language. Many of our idioms have their origin in the world of agriculture.

Finns speak admiringly of the how the President of the Republic is just like anyone else and of her practical interests: Tarja Halonen has a small cottage in an allotment garden, and she can be seen browsing the bins containing fabric remnants in shops selling inexpensive fabrics. According to Geert Mak, the Dutch historian and author of *In Europe (In Europa)*, a classic account of the recent history of our continent, Finland is the only country where the largest department store in the country can market an expensive business suit for women with the slogan 'for women who have better things to do than make themselves important'.

Finland has never had a large wealthy class that could have employed servants to take care of everyday chores. Thus, everyone has also had to be able to take care of manual tasks when necessary, irrespective of their social standing. At their summer villas, the educated class stepped into the role of people taking care of ordinary tasks, who could make repairs to the property and grow vegetables in the garden for their own needs. In European terms, Finland is still not a service society; instead, most people wish to take care of as many things as they can themselves. Home cooking is appreciated, and using laundry services is not something to brag about. All kinds of manual crafts are pursued, and this has nothing to do with how wealthy you are. Executive directors may roam the forests looking for mushrooms or berries, and the new elite in Helsinki consists of those who use a bicycle or who can sew garments based on their own design.

MISSION FOR THE MARTHA ORGANISATION: The ‘adulthood package’

Thread, needles, a screwdriver and a hammer – these can be found in almost every home in Finland. However, many lack the skills to use them. Together with the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, the Martha Organisation could put together an ‘adulthood package’ which every Finn would receive on attaining the age of 18 years and which would provide them with instructions on how to use these tools.

The best Finnish cartoonists should be commissioned to provide amusing and easily understandable instructions on basic skills: how to sew a button, repair a bicycle tyre or mount a painting on the wall. This will improve the level of manual skills, and the tools will be put to good use.



MISSION FOR GRANDPARENTS:

Pass on your manual skills

Working with your hands is an efficient way of improving the faith in your own abilities and competencies. Teaching manual skills to family members and others is also a meaningful way of spending time together. The population is ageing, which means we will soon have an even greater number of grandmas and grandpas – blood relatives or honorary ones – who possess an incredible amount of skills and are very handy.

Instead of perfect results, emphasis should be focused on learning, sharing and spending time together. It does not matter if the cake comes out lopsided, so long as you have fun. In Finland, everyone must have the right to do, to learn and to teach. Doing may mean anything from making a willow whistle or a snowman to baking a cake or editing a wedding video. By teaching manual skills to children, we also offer teenagers the opportunity to see the results of their labour and to take pride in their skills. Public facilities should be made more extensively available for informal learning. By exchanging skills we help create a new culture of ability.



MISSION FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND THE STATE:

Public procurement to promote
energy-efficient products that can
be maintained and repaired

Many local authorities already aim to apply the principles of macroeconomics, which are a part of sustainable development, to public procurement. Giving preference to repairable products supports this target. Maintenance agreements help prolong the life cycle of products. At the same time, this will create demand for repairable products and repair services, as almost one-third of Finnish consumption occurs through public procurement.

This will create service industry employment in Finland and reinforce the position of Finnish businesses, which is based on good maintenance. Furthermore, the quality of skills maintained and re-generated by the public sector will become increasingly diverse. In this way, good public procurement becomes a measure through which the local economy can be strengthened.

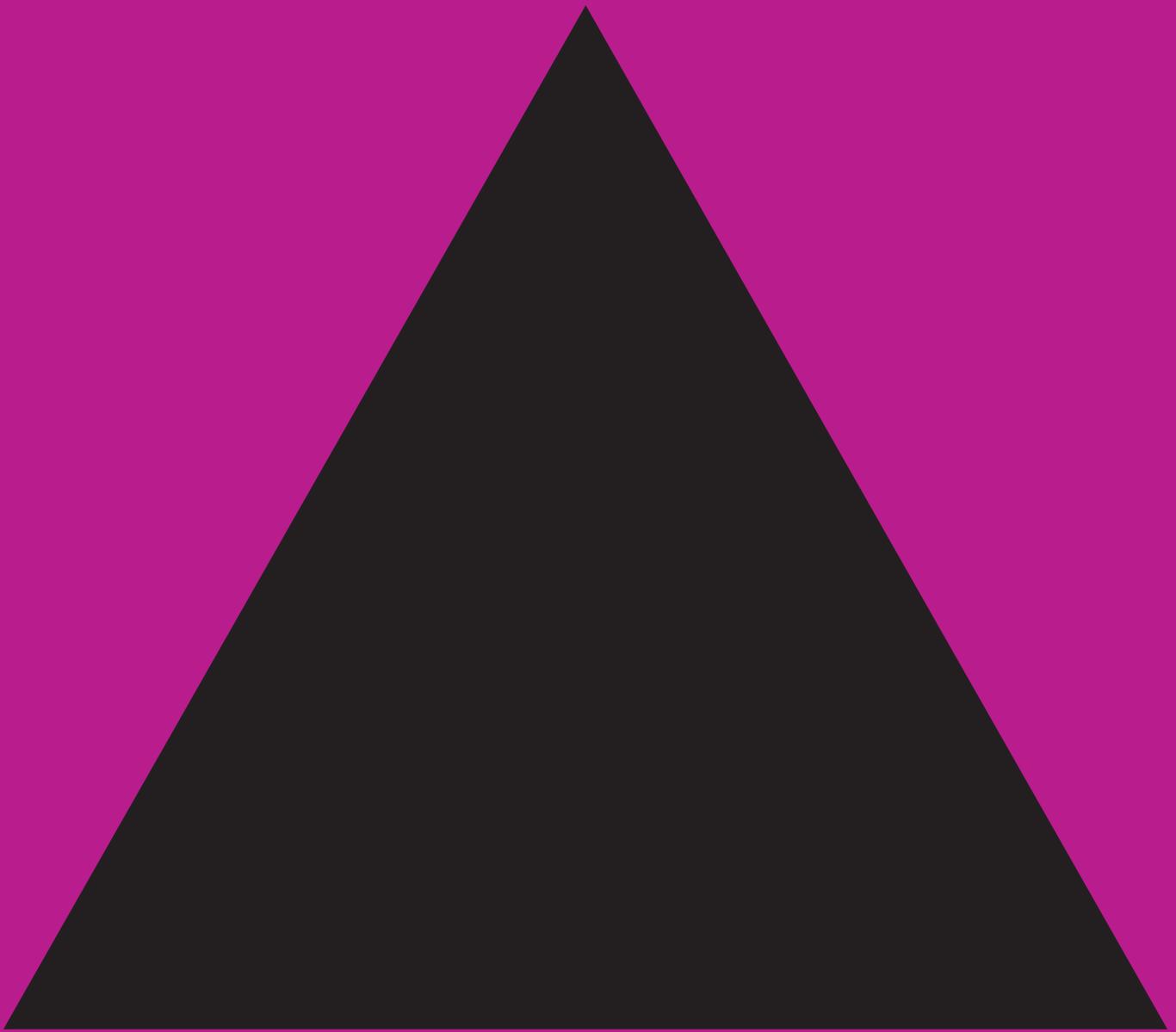


THE POOR CANNOT AFFORD NOT TO BUY QUALITY In the words of Armi Ratia, the founder of Marimekko, “A good designer is quite a sensible and wise person”. Sensibility and wisdom have provided the foundation for Finnish design ever since the early 20th century. In Finland, people are used to demanding that objects should be durable and last for a sufficiently long time. According to an old saying, quality is more important than price. However, instead of being just a popular saying, this notion has also played a role in the development of the Finnish industrial sector. High-quality products, especially ones that you can get a lot of wear out of or that you can modify, have been the trump cards of Finnish industry for a long time.

Finnish design is not just about designing beautiful articles for everyday use, it equally concerns paper machines and other sustainable design for the needs of heavy industry. Metso’s paper machines, Konecranes’ hoists and Ruukki’s steel structures for the construction industry are intended to endure several decades of use. However, this will not be possible without careful planning of the entire life cycle of the product. Skilled design, maintenance and repair services are a precondition for a long product life.

In the end, the insight of Finnish industrial companies is very simple: repairing a broken piece of equipment is more expensive than continuous maintenance. Repairs keep the equipment out of service for a long period of time: first, you must wait for the repairman to arrive, then the problem must be identified and finally repaired. From the user’s perspective, it is a huge advantage if the supplier can prevent the equipment from breaking down. The way to achieve this is through good maintenance service, which prevents defects and minimises the need for expensive repairs.

This insight has resulted in a functional business model: instead of equipment, it pays to offer a service that guarantees the continuous availability of equipment for the user. Ruukki, which is known for its heavy ingots, recently announced that for the next few years, the company’s strategic focus will be to focus on developing its service business. Metso Paper generates more than one third of its revenues from maintenance services.



FAITH IN TECHNOLOGY In Finland, the approach to problems and challenges does not consist of visions and declarations; instead, we divide them into smaller issues and divide the work. In Finland, problems are usually not solved by eradicating the cause. Instead, we seek ways of solving the problem, often with the help of technology. The entire history of the Finnish welfare state is a narrative of how we come up with solutions to allow us to live in the Nordic conditions and yet thrive.

A technology-oriented mindset is not solely a special trait of those with an educational background in the field of engineering. New technologies interest the whole nation, not just a particular group of pioneering innovators. For example, electricity and the telephone arrived in Finland very soon after they had been invented, and Finnish IT skills and the readiness to adopt new technologies brought about Nokia's success.

The idea that a mobile phone belongs in every hand is Finnish in origin. Finland had the world's highest mobile phone penetration rate the 1990s. The use of mobile phones is one phase in a long continuum in which various networks and equipment (the railway, comprehensive school, radio, TV and now, gradually, the broadband) have spread throughout the sparsely populated country. Finland was also the first country in the world to enact a law on the right of all citizens to a broadband connection.

The fact that a number of people who have received a technical education can be found in every group of friends, hobby group and housing association has helped spread the technological mindset in Finland. The Finnish labour force now includes some 70,000 engineers with a post-secondary degree and almost as many with a master's degree. This means an engineering work force of more than one hundred thousand Finns. That is more than five percent of the Finnish workforce.

The faith in technology is easy to see by studying Finnish politics in the 2000s. In the past ten years, a huge amount of political resources have been spent on making energy policy decisions. Now, almost every Finn has an opinion on what kind of technology should be employed to solve the energy issue.

Thus, problems are rarely political, let alone moral. This belief in how the world can be modified to suit humankind brings with it a fundamental attitude to life. Finland is a country where engineering skill provides the answer even to the disposal of nuclear waste. In other countries this would be an ethical problem, here, it is a practical one.

MISSION FOR HOUSING ASSOCIATIONS AND NEIGHBOURHOODS:

Organise a party

Talkoot used to be fun - there were always jokers telling funny stories, the food was a little better than at home, and even shared physical labour was motivating. But what are the best parties? The best parties occur when you have achieved something. When a large number of people have pulled together to attain a shared goal that is of interest to everybody, when you have made things work. This calls for a celebration. This is why joint events, meetings of the housing association and getting together to put the yard in order must be turned into a party. They offer an opportunity for learning how to do things together.



MISSION FOR ECONOMISTS AND THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE:

Calculate the value of voluntary, peer and domestic work in Finland

In Finland, like in other countries, it is usual to calculate the value of the financial economy and the related tax revenues alone. If we genuinely wish to appreciate and develop other forms of doing things together in Finland, this 'hidden wealth' must be made commensurable and visible. This way, Finland will be able to strengthen its key competitive edge.

For the purpose of implementing this task, the Ministry of Finance should begin to calculate the monetary value of voluntary work and to seek ways of increasing this wealth. Education targeted at this goal should be provided for economists; in other words, their education should be upgraded to consider value creation in a wider context rather than simply as an aspect of production subject to the laws of the financial economy.

TALKOOT, THE FINNISH WAY OF PROBLEM SOLVING Talkoot, a community effort based on voluntary participation, is a Finnish concept that describes a typical way to solve problems. Such efforts have been (and are) organised at the level of both individuals and society. Historically, the tradition of talkoot has played a decisive role in the development of the Finnish civic society. At the beginning of the 20th century, almost every village in Finland built a community hall and a youth association hall, and in smaller villages often a school, through a community effort. Without these buildings erected together, many amateur theatre performances and meetings of workers' associations would not have been held.

Such events are based on voluntary participation; no-one can be forced to take part. The contributions people bring to the effort need not be of equal size. Everyone does what they are best at, and as much as they can. Together, the various inputs of different magnitude (also referred to as microcontributions) make up the whole. Making coffee for those participating in the effort is just as important for the success of the talkoot as wielding a chainsaw. Talkoot events are associated with a positive atmosphere, which is created first through working together for a shared, meaningful purpose and then unwinding together afterwards.

Another basic aspect of such community efforts is reciprocity. If you organise a community effort, it is expected that when the opportunity presents itself, you will participate in an effort organised by someone else. And once the work is done, you have a party. This fits with the Lutheran work ethic. Beer tastes better, and you have more fun once you have first fixed the roof as a group. In other words, the best parties are those following a shared achievement.

Finland repeatedly comes out close to the top in different international surveys on happiness. On average, Finns answer the question 'Do you feel happy?' more positively than people in other parts of the world. According to researchers, social relationships and meaningful cooperation are the key building blocks of happiness and well-being. Thus, the Finnish ways of doing things together and talkoot events may not be a part of people's everyday life, but the ability of many people to work together on common issues has a wide-ranging impact on the well-being as experienced by Finns.

MISSION FOR MUNICIPAL MANAGERS: Local authorities to engage in productive cooperation with associations

The third sector creates significant benefits for society in Finland, usually somewhat in passing or without anyone noticing.

Local authorities have good experiences of third-sector cooperation in health care and social services, but the third sector could be more efficiently utilised in other fields as well. This is why local authorities should carry out an analytical survey of associations in their area and the opportunities for developing cooperation with them. An effort should be made to eliminate sectoral boundaries, and the expertise of associations should be trusted. This way the competencies of large groups of citizens can be harnessed for the common good.



FIFTEEN MILLION FINNS When put together, Finnish associations and societies have around 15 million members. Thus, each Finn is a member of three associations on average. Through associations Finns organise themselves in occupational groups, compete in sports and pursue arts and craft activities. This voluntary work is widely appreciated. Through societies and civic activity, both professionals and civic activists may offer a similar level of competence and ability. Professionals do not customarily regard volunteers or self-educated individuals as being below themselves.

Compared with talkoot, which can be organised at short notice and the person doing the organising brings the coffee, founding an association is a complicated process. First, you have the constitutive meeting, where those present jointly draft the rules for the association. Next, you register the association, and in many cases the registration authority even amends the rules to comply with the Finnish Associations Act.

In return for the bureaucracy related to the founding of an association, the members receive clear, democratic ground rules for working together. Decisions are only made when a sufficient number of people are present, and the decisions are recorded and implemented with energy and vigour. Even today, associations are a functional instrument through which considerable civic activity is organised.

The importance of associations and being involved in their activities have a vital role in society. Although the Finnish public sector bears a major share of the responsibility for various services, the third sector has traditionally complemented the service offering. A large share of public-sector services stem from work carried out by third-sector actors. The Medi-Heli rescue helicopter makes a good case in point. It was launched as an emergency medical helicopter service by a group of individuals in the Uusimaa region in 1993, and the Medi-Heli association continues to be responsible for the service even today. At the beginning of 2006, hospital districts assumed the responsibility for the medical side of Medi-Heli's operations. Medi-Heli is used to support other emergency treatment services, and its purpose is to provide hospital-level emergency care as quickly as possible to people who have a sudden, serious illness or injury. While private fundraising continues to account for a significant part of Medi-Heli's overall funding, work is carried out in cooperation with the public sector.



LET'S FIND A SOLUTION TOGETHER The Finnish operating culture is characterised by processes that progress bit by bit on the basis of individual contributions. For example, the public sector even takes pride in the fact that we do not set targets and make promises, but that everything stems from a commitment to continuous improvement through doing. When results are produced as a result of a process, leadership is shared and no heroes emerge.

Finns are also criticised for modesty, as we are shy of blowing our own trumpet and it is in fact not tolerated. On the other hand, there is less need to see your own name at the top of the list or to use your elbows, when recognition is given not just to the manager but to other participants as well. And managers rely on the motivation of people to do their job. The entire public sector has its origin in cooperation. In Finland people have faith in the belief of 'I can' and it provides the foundation for society as a whole.

MISSION FOR COMPANIES OPERATING IN INDUSTRIALISED AREAS:

Finland to be developed into a Silicon Valley
of social innovations

The value of industrial products is decreasing in the global market. China manufactures cheap goods at a pace that leaves others far behind. However, the value of solving wicked problems is high. Climate change, population ageing, a resource crisis and migration are problems for which solutions are in high demand, at least at the moment.

The employees, facilities and equipment of Finnish companies form a pool of resources, a large proportion of which goes unused. Factories being abandoned and the available labour form a resource which can be exploited. Finland should utilise this resource for the purpose of developing and promoting social innovations. The Young Foundation in the UK has developed a model in which small user- and employee-oriented organisations develop new initiatives, and factories and major organisations use their own efficient machinery to implement them. This model can be put to use in industrialised areas in Finland to develop new production, new kinds of activities, which promote the export of social innovations.



WHO, ME? OH, IT'S NOT THAT IMPORTANT In 2002, Kuukausiliite, the monthly supplement to the Helsingin Sanomat newspaper, began a thorough investigation into the history of text messages. Among those interviewed was Matti Makkonen, an engineer with a master's degree, who was born in Suomussalmi in 1952, and with years of experience in developing mobile phone technology. Makkonen described the progress of the development, but did not name any individual person as the man behind the idea. Several interviews later it began to dawn on the journalist whose idea short text messaging originally was. The idea had been Makkonen's own, and he finally admitted, although somewhat reluctantly, that he was the man who invented text messages.

A culture of equal actors is associated with openness. Decisions made by public administration bodies and their reasons are in the public domain on a statutory basis. This also applies to the work of associations. However, besides a legal obligation, this is also an internalised principle of the operating culture, which is sustained by the trust Finns have in one another and in institutions.

The open-source ethos, where individual, often anonymous, contributions are made towards a shared objective, seems to suit Finns. Prime examples include the Linux operating system and the MySQL database software developed by Michael Widenius. Finns are also enthusiastic wikipedians. The Finnish-language Wikipedia was the fourteenth language version of the encyclopaedia to pass the 200,000 article milestone. Considering the size of the linguistic area, this is quite an achievement.

The practical approach to problem solving based on a joint effort finds concrete expression in social innovations, which are produced and implemented by associations as well as the public sector. Solutions have often evolved from the bottom up.

MISSION FOR TEKES: Open innovation camps as tools for creating innovations

Howard Gardner, Professor of Cognition and Education at Harvard University, says that working life is currently steered by three things: money, the market, and individual career development. However, younger employees in particular prefer work which provides meaningful outcomes, working with others and the achievement of relevant goals. This has led to the development of open innovation camps, the purpose of which is to allow people to gain these types of experiences. Open innovation camps bring together people from different companies and organisations for the purpose of solving problems in an informal and relaxed setting. The problems are identified by the individuals themselves, and no targets are set in advance.

The ideas and seeds of innovation discovered at the camps may be freely used and implemented by all the participants. Thus, best practices and potential business models can be rapidly disseminated. Research indicates that the camps improve employee motivation and produce friendships, which are more valuable in the present-day network economy than traditional business relationships.



When we talk about Finnish inventions, innovations, the first products we think of are those created within the sphere of trade and commerce: mobile phones, paper machines or stainless steel. However, from the perspective of the development of society, the social innovations Finns have been able to produce are perhaps even more interesting. The book compiled by Ilkka Taipale depicts Finnish social innovations such as the single-chamber parliament, the over-the-sink cupboard for draining dishes, the jetties for washing carpets, talkoot, tripartite bargaining and Linux. These are all examples which have helped enhance the functionality of Finnish society.

A major share of these social innovations are the result of work carried out by the public sector, by local and state authorities. Many ideas have been motivated by the need to solve an everyday problem. In 1938, a decision was taken in Finland to improve the situation of families with limited means and the health of their children by distributing maternity grants and maternity packages. A precondition for receiving the package has been that the expectant mother visits a maternity clinic in good time before the birth. This has helped reduce child mortality to a level that is among the lowest in the world. The maternity package provided by the state comes in the form of a cardboard box containing various supplies. The fact that even today, many Finnish children sleep their first weeks in such a box is something of a miracle on an international scale.

MISSION FOR EMPLOYERS: Promote teamwork

Even though equality in the Finnish organisational culture is at an exceptionally high level, management trends – particularly when times are hard – aim at streamlining processes and at defining and dividing tasks in an increasingly detailed manner. Clarifying roles and responsibilities offers an easier path than developing cooperation regardless of job titles and positions. For this reason Finnish employers, in the private and the public sector alike, must invest in ways that allow people to develop solutions to problems as a group. Solutions cannot be imposed on people from the top.



FINNISHNESS SUPPORTS THE LACK OF HIERARCHICAL STRUCTURES

Compared with the rest of Europe, hierarchy in Finnish society and Finnish organisations is low, and operating cultures are open and direct. The independence of the individual is valued. These traits are visible in many ways in the decision-making culture, operating methods and results.

The low hierarchy has a historical background and it is reinforced by the structures of the welfare society. It is based on social equality. In Finland, class distinctions have been relatively minor. The newly independent Finland emerged into a world in which the idea of equality had become a powerful political principle. In the welfare society, an equal wage policy, income transfers, a social security policy which catches everyone and the same schools for everyone have implemented this principle and ensured that social differences remain small.

You often hear it said that the Winter War united the Finns. At least one of its effects was that representatives of the poorer classes also had to be promoted to management. A wage policy based on solidarity is aimed at ensuring sufficient consumption opportunities for everyone. The tax policy has favoured state-owned companies which – until recently – provided few opportunities for growing rich, even for the management. The market has been small and niche markets even smaller. At school, you could not tell the director's son from his clothes.

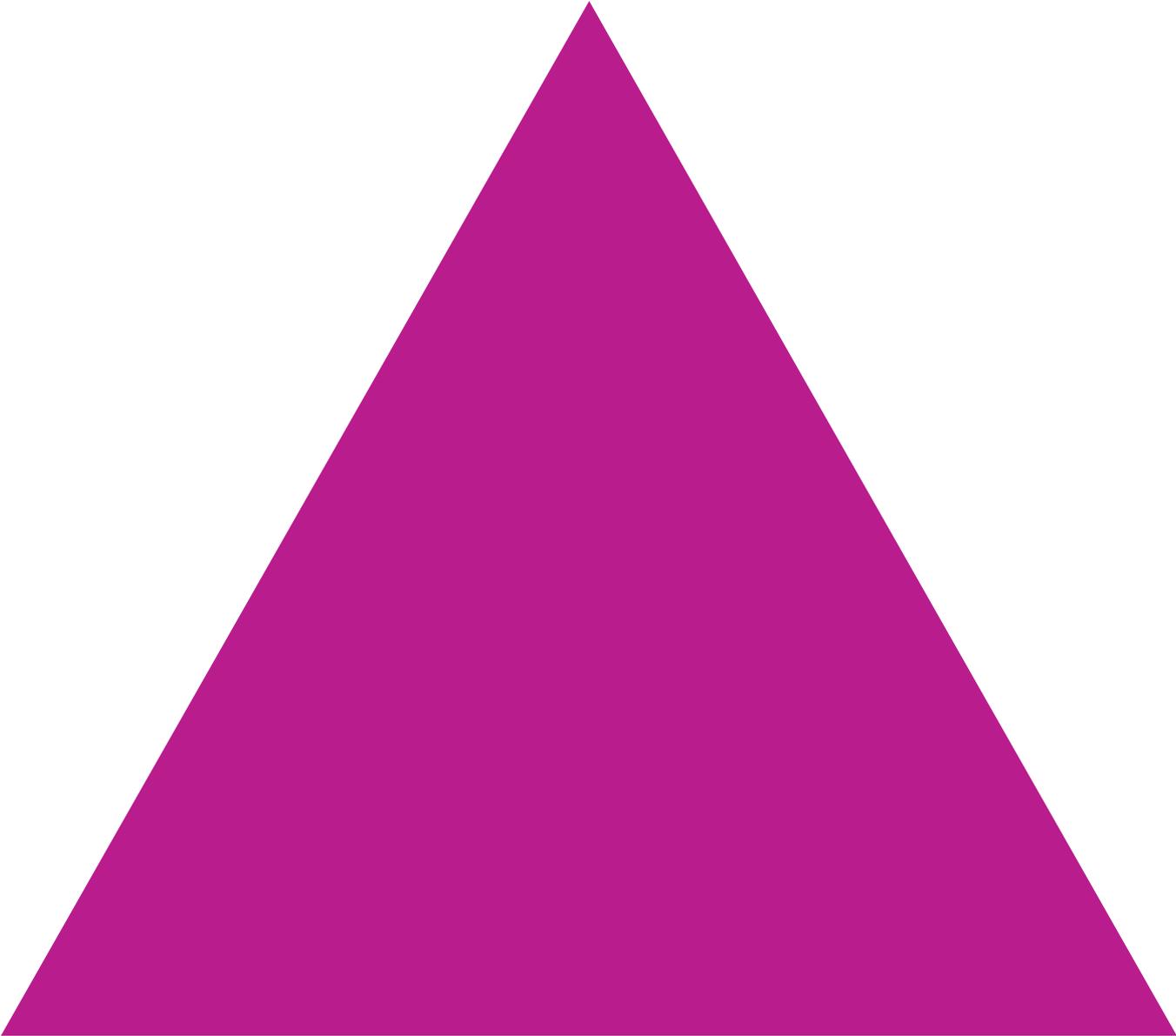
MISSION FOR SCHOOLS OF ECONOMICS AND MANAGEMENT CONSULTANTS:

Create models for management by partnership

The organisational models taught and disseminated in Finland do not always support the idea of a low hierarchy. We should develop and create a name for a Finnish organisational model based on genuine equality and teamwork, and market it so that it is adopted in Finnish working life.

Rather than hierarchical directives and orders, management by partnership is based on negotiations and dialogue. It may also be called dialogic leadership. In organisations which apply a leadership model based on partnerships, informality and equality are the starting points. The various parties respect one another's views and competence, and there is a genuine effort to find solutions together, to engage in dialogue.





MISSION IN FINLAND:

Public-sector openness
to become active



With regard to functionality, the next major step is to open up the vast public information resources, to make more effective use of them for the benefit of society. This will create a Finland where anyone interested can easily obtain the best possible picture of society, its challenges and potential solutions.

Finland is the promised land of statistics. In Finland, people know more about issues that are vital for the functioning of society than just about anywhere else. The secret of this success is that Finland is also the promised land of registers. For example, Statistics Finland obtains the majority of its raw data from administrative registers. When public administration officials need information on something, they unearth a relevant register rather than start interviewing people. This is why decision-making in Finland is based on systematic information and research to a larger extent than in many other countries.

“Knowledge is power” said Francis Bacon, the father of modern science, as long as four hundred years ago. He was referring to scientific knowledge of the world obtained through physics, chemistry and biology. In Finland in the 21st century, knowledge means even more power than possibly ever before in the history of the world. However, this time knowledge also applies to people and society, and it is highly complex.

In this day and age, steering people through orders and force is a considerably less effective method than before. This makes it even more important to develop an accurate understanding of what is actually going on in society and how people really act. This is why so much detailed information is collected in registers and statistics in Finland. However, the state or local authorities will never have enough resources to fully utilise this data, which is why a larger group of actors is needed.

The major trend concerning information society development in the 2010s is the opening up of public information resources for use by all interested parties. The guiding principle is to give everyone access to information compiled with the taxpayers' money and to facilitate the development of thousands of applications that make life easier, help solve society's problems and create new business opportunities.

In principle, information resources compiled through budgetary funding are available even now for anyone to use. For example, Statistics Finland provides data for free. However, a significant proportion of the publicly compiled data is only known to those who ordered and compiled the data. This means that there is no public body with an overall responsibility for public information resources. Even less thought has been given to whether the data could be used for other purposes than the ones for which it was compiled by the officials. Much more could be achieved with the same effort, if opportunities for utilising the data were considered from a wider perspective.



For this reason the job descriptions of Finnish officials should be revised. They should be open public data officers who help others find ways of utilising public information resources. A public official is an enabler of information-based solutions for common problems.

This thinking is extremely suitable for Finnish society, which is characterised by low hierarchies and based on the idea that everyone should have the opportunity to contribute to the development of society. It would make an excellent next chapter in the Finnish narrative characterised by the spirit of open source thinking, the previous chapters of which were public libraries, free schooling from pre-primary education to universities, and the construction of an information society spanning the length and breadth of the country. It is relevant in a time when people not only consume information but also actively use and refine it.

It is impossible to anticipate the solutions which will result from the opening up of information resources. What will happen once various databases are merged and displayed as location information on a map? Who will create these solutions, and who will utilise them? We may see innovative solutions to issues such as energy efficiency in housing, car pools, care of the elderly, the development of neighbourhood activities, balancing the expenditure of local authorities, improving the efficiency of public procurement and many other of the major challenges in society.

MISSION FOR THE PUBLIC SECTOR:

Public officials as warriors of
an open information society

Increasing the transparency of information on society and citizens is a world-wide trend. Opening up public information resources increases civic activity and business opportunities alike. In order to reap the maximum benefits, it is important to guide the opening up of information resources from a user-oriented perspective. This is why the public sector needs to adopt a warrior-like attitude to opening up the resources and making them available for all.

MISSION FOR SCHOOLS:

Schoolwork to be based on open information

One of the weaknesses of the acclaimed Finnish school system is its theoretical nature. In Finland, teaching occurs in classrooms and is based on textbooks, even though the real world has interesting material to offer. Opening up public data resources offers excellent teaching opportunities in many subjects: mathematical problems can be based on genuine data, and in social sciences, teachers could draw on real-time information on the local community, for example.

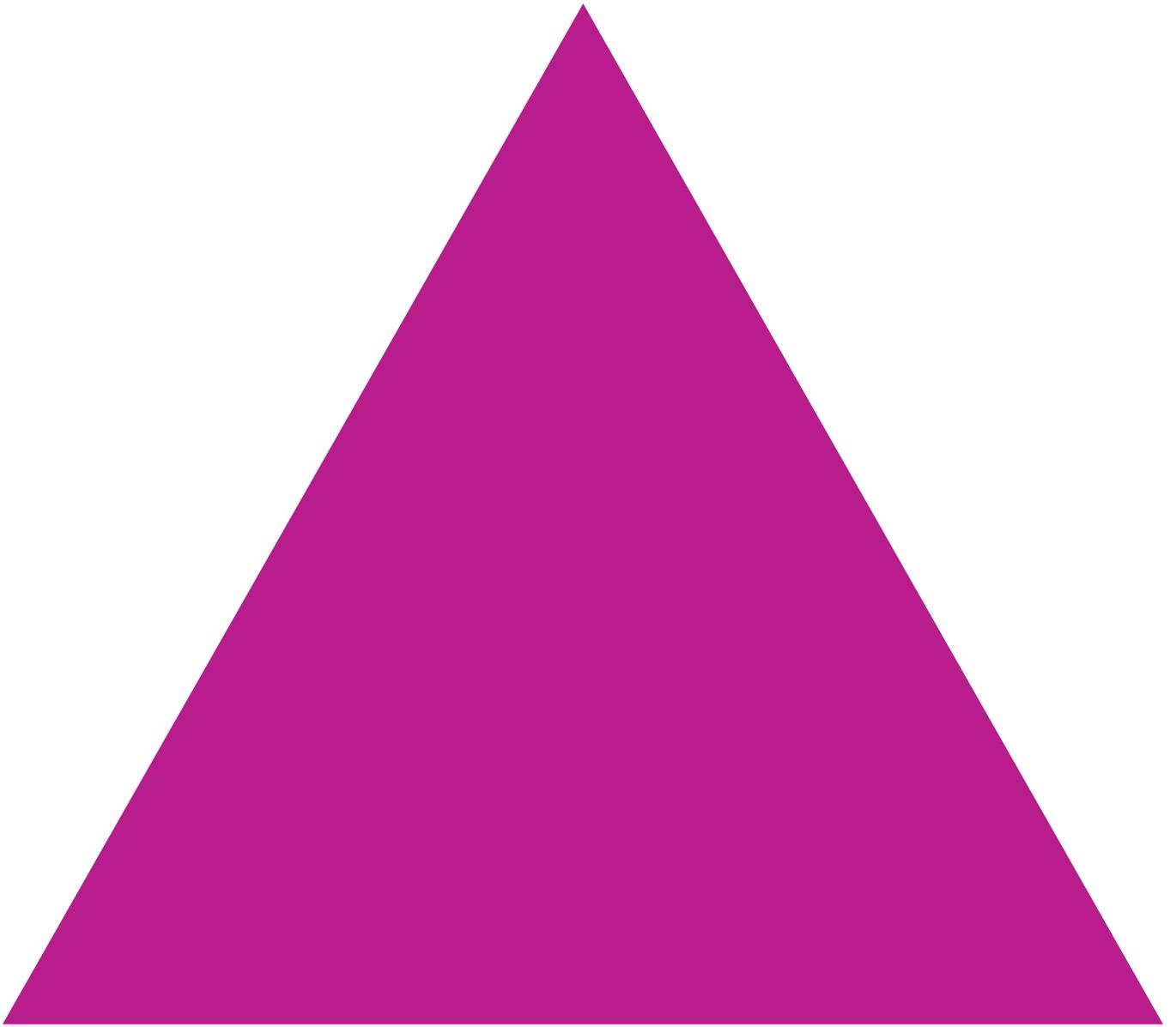


MISSION FOR UNIVERSITIES:
Academic openness into practice

At the moment, a large share of academic publications are distributed solely as academic publications published by major publishing houses. Utilising them outside universities is difficult and expensive. Thus, the ideal of open access to academic resources is not being fully implemented. The University of Helsinki has already decided that any articles published by its research staff in international journals shall also be stored in the university's own, open publication archive.

This practice should also be adopted by other Finnish universities.





WHY?

A FUNCTIONAL SOCIETY CAN NO LONGER BE BASED ON CONTROL The global trend of development is towards the model of the Finnish society. Dismantling hierarchical systems, increasing equality and emphasising the rights of the individual – these are some of the means that poor countries have employed to create their prosperity. The ideal of a safe and functional society is turning towards a hierarchy-free model. The old route to controllability was through control, the suppression of information, and the threat of violence.

A competing model is based on the notion that the best thing to do is to remove obstacles to insecurity and a lack of functionality. For this to be possible, equality and trust must be created in society through a sustained effort. The peace and safety of Finnish society is based on the idea of ‘more keys, more problems’ – the more there is to lock away, the more there is to control.

COMPETENCE FOLLOWS A GOOD QUALITY OF LIFE Because of the global market and its fluctuations, it is difficult to anticipate the kinds of competencies needed in the future. It is difficult to say whether nano- or bio-specialists will be needed, or whether ICT experts could best lead the way to national prosperity. The only thing we know is that we will need as large a pool of flexible and adaptable competencies as possible and people capable of re-learning.

It is not possible for any country to continuously train just the kind of expertise that is needed. This is why the ability to attract labour will be increasingly important for the success of countries and cities. A clear shift has been observed, both in Europe and the USA, in how people seek to settle in a country or a city. Previously, work was the principal factor of attraction: most people made no bones about it but moved where the jobs were.

Today, many people first consider what their chosen lifestyle requires, then identify the areas where the desired lifestyle is possible, and only then start looking for a suitable job. This is particularly common among the well-educated. This explains why companies dependent on skilled employees are increasingly moving to areas where factors enabling a high quality of life are present.

The increasing emphasis given to the quality of life is reflected in the quality of life survey published by the Newsweek magazine in August 2010, in which Finland was ranked number one, and the annual Quality of Life survey carried out by the Monocle magazine, in which Helsinki has reached fifth place three times.



In the country and city rankings, societies characterised by functionality come out on top: in the Newsweek list, Switzerland was ranked number two, while the two cities heading the Monocle list were Zürich and Munich.

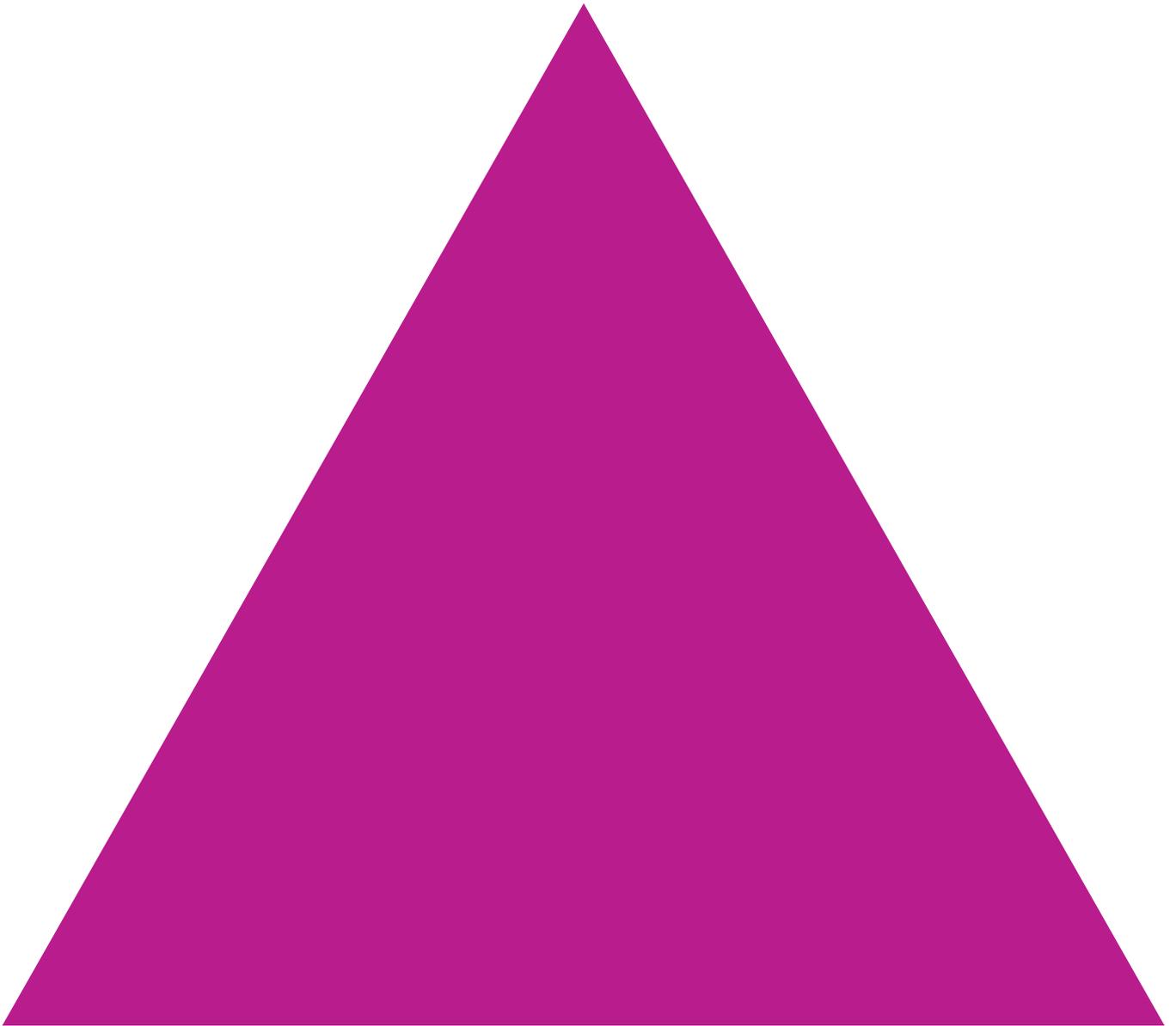
TECHNOLOGY KNOWS NO BOUNDS The 20th century was the century of science and technology. It is justifiable to assume that their role will not at any rate be diminished in the current century. New areas of research will be identified, and the discoveries made in these fields will have an impact on society similar to that resulting from the discovery of penicillin, the nuclear bomb or the radio. The need to understand the world as seen through science will be emphasised.

Maintaining a closed society will become increasingly difficult, as information technology opens up routes to information and makes it transparent. The dissemination and non-dissemination of information is a key factor in the creation of power structures. The Internet, wireless communication devices and the mobile phone – the use of which has now spread even to African villages – offer new ways of distributing information and data. This will break down hierarchies all over the world.

The shift to knowledge-intensive work also accelerates development. Although it is naive to assume that developing countries will directly follow the road marked by industrialised countries, we may be relatively certain that individualisation is catching. Even in China, which actively monitors Internet content, people use various peer-to-peer services, and are used to the free nature of information on the Net and distribute it further. Although Chinese people do not watch Internet pornography, they read blogs and use Facebook. Thanks to technical tools, the world is growing increasingly individualistic, and in such a world hierarchies do not work as well as they used to. People refuse to be subjects in the same sense as before. The essential fact is that the number of people interested in individualism is growing throughout the world.

Ubiquitous technology also creates a new form of dependence. Everything has a technological surface layer. We have arrived at a paradoxical situation: the functionality of society is increasingly linked to the governance of technology, yet technology has rendered many of the existing instruments of governance inefficient. Therefore, sustaining functionality requires both a modern technological system and a social one.

CONSUMPTION DRIVES PRODUCTION The industrialised countries have entered an era in which basic needs steer consumption in name only. At the same



time, our relationship to material goods has changed: when material goods are plentiful, the search for meanings directs consumption choices. More and more people have come to understand that in terms of their own quality of life, quality replaces quantity when it comes to consumption. Well-designed, functional and durable products stand out and appreciation of them increases. Good, user-focused design becomes an important competitive advantage in the consumer market, where competition is already fierce, thanks to cheap production.

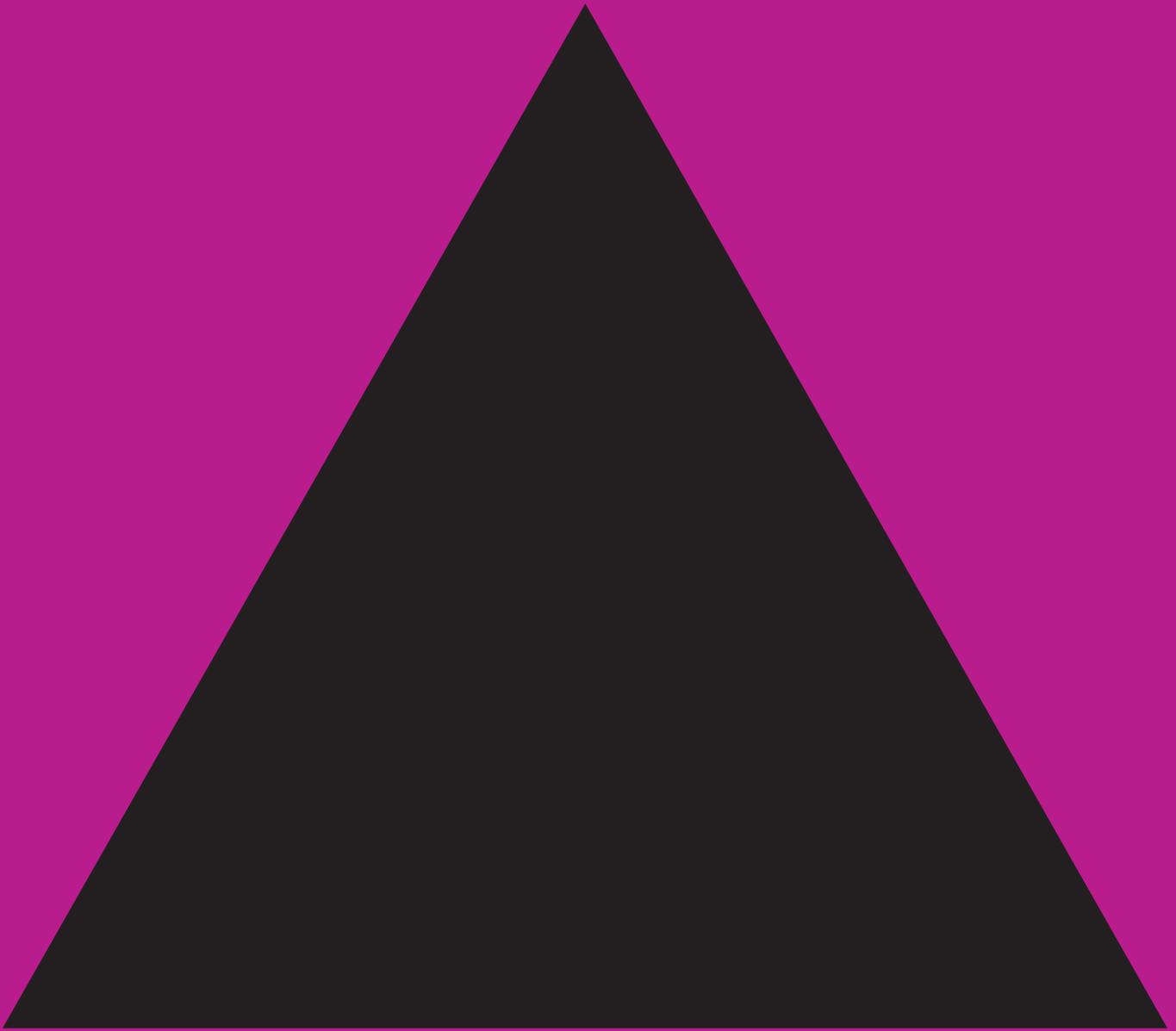
Challenges related to the climate and resources result in companies, consumers and public organisations emphasising durability, practicality and serviceability in procurement. The material and energy balance, which spans the entire life cycle of products and systems, becomes the parameter which determines whether the product will be brought onto the market or into the scope of procurement decisions.

CHALLENGE: THE FUNCTIONALITY OF A MULTICULTURAL FINLAND

The foundation on which the functionality of Finnish society rests was created at a time when the challenges were different from those the world is facing in 2010. Finland was a strongly homogeneous society, the choices available to the poor and uneducated nation were few and the opportunities of the government to regulate society were extensive. Many choices made at the time were wise and are now repeated through thriving institutions and structures, as well as through a culture of functionality. This culture exists and is further propagated in Finland through education, at workplaces and through the work of associations.

However, the age of a strong homogeneous culture is inevitably over. Society is diversifying due to a number of factors, not solely as a result of immigration. We must find new ways to build trust within society. This requires strong intervention by political decision-makers and the public sector. It is important that informed political steps are taken to build trust. This will maintain and reinforce the legitimacy of the democratic system. We must be able to regularly revise the promise of Finnish society concerning the involvement of all.

In this world, the contributions Finns make increasingly come about through cooperation with people from different cultural backgrounds. It is obvious that Finnish practices and the ideals of functionality cannot be implanted in multicultural organisations and communities just like that. For this reason it is important to consider what constitutes the core of Finnish functionality that can overcome cultural boundaries. Determining this issue will certainly require bold experimentation. This will also teach us more about being Finnish.



FUNCTIONALITY: FINLAND WILL OFFER THE WORLD DURABLE PRODUCTS AND SYSTEMS

1. WE WILL REPAIR IT – DURABLE PRODUCTS FROM FINLAND

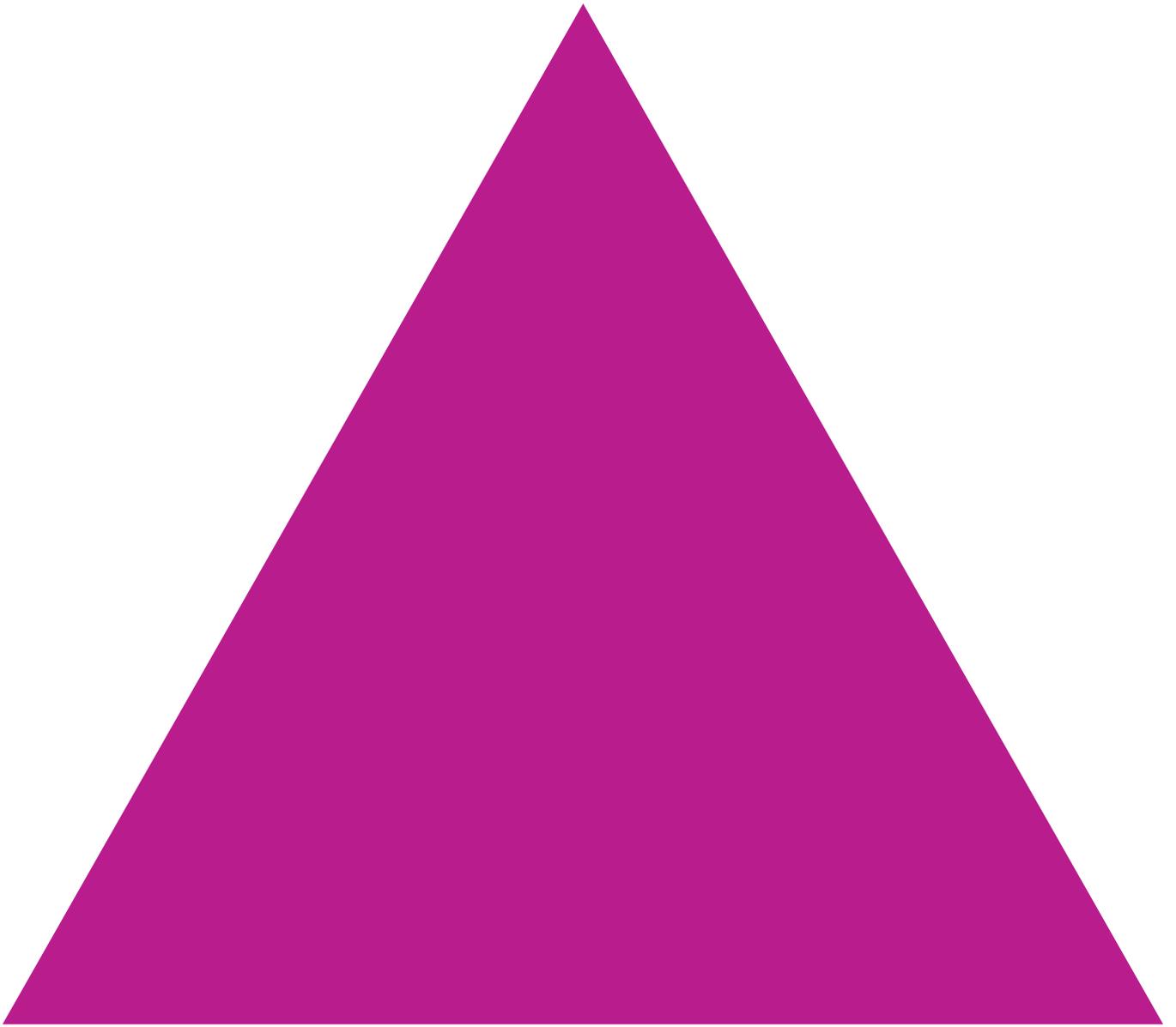
Finnish design companies should turn repairability into a strong brand as part of the World Design Capital 2012 effort. The joint promise of Finnish companies for the future is that Finland will design and produce products that have a long life and are repairable. This will raise Finland's profile as a pioneer in sustainable development. The message of the Finnish business community is: buy Finnish, buy for life. New maintenance and repair services for private individuals and organisations alike are an important way of increasing brand loyalty and commitment to purchasing Finnish products. Services related to repairs and maintenance also offer companies opportunities for creating new business.

Industrial manufacturing is easy and cheap, and consequently our homes are full to bursting with superfluous material goods, and our relationship to material possessions has changed. When production is cheap, we are quick to discard things. It is easier – and often also cheaper – to buy a new product and throw away the broken one rather than have it repaired.

The world needs a credible alternative to the extravagant consumption culture. Besides returning to a lower level of prosperity, there are two routes available to us: either we efficiently recycle all raw materials and refine them, applying the latest knowledge of physical chemistry and material physics. Or we prolong the service life of products through design, making them easily repairable, modifiable and combinable.

The illustrious tradition of Finnish design is based on the 1950s idea of everyday design. In a poor but equal country it was no shame to design products for the masses. The functionalist architecture of Alvar Aalto and the Teema tableware by Kaj Franck are both examples of the design of an equal Finland: beauty in everyday objects for all, irrespective of social status or wealth. Teema tableware items are bought as gifts for the home because of their high quality and because they can be mixed and matched with other items. This philosophy is still alive and strong, as is demonstrated by the clever slogan of Iittala: Design Against Throwawayism. This kind of thinking is increasingly welcome.

The next step in the narrative of Finnish design is to increase the dimension of repairability, modifiability, replaceability and recyclability. Inspiring examples are already available. Repairability and maintenance and security of supply are





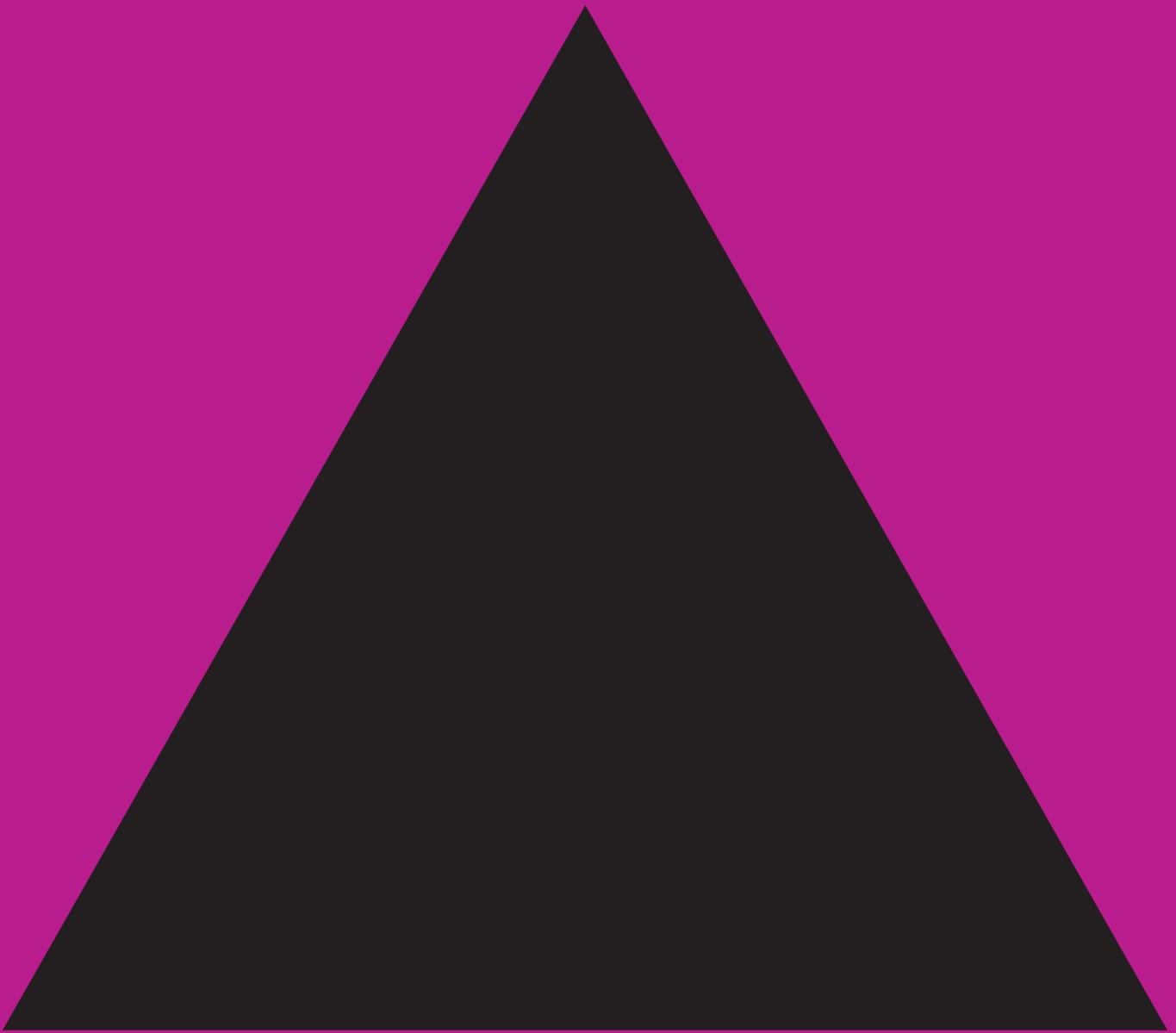
already a core element of the operations of many Finnish companies. Finnish reliability means employing an engineering mindset to help the customer prolong the service life of even complicated products. The starting point is a high-quality product based on a successful design. Repairability and maintainability are already taken into account at the design stage. The success of Kone and Wärtsilä is increasingly based on the efficient repair services they offer. A few examples can also be found in the consumer sector. For quite a while now, Marimekko shops have offered its customers a service through which Markiisi bags in need of repair can be sent to the company's production plant in Sulkava.

The idea of a long-term relationship between the company and the consumer also supports the fundamental Finnish virtue of reliability. Fair trade means that even at the time of purchase, Finnish companies can guarantee that their product will not fall flat at the very first hurdle. A Finnish product intended for lasting use is something you can sell with pride.

People will only develop deep, personal relationships with objects which are meaningful and permanent, have a clear story, and the durability – or even repairability – of which they can trust. This means practical products with a long life which can be easily repaired and maintained. By offering customisation services, Finnish companies also help consumers to adapt the product according to the current style of fashion or the occasion.

Service thinking, which has already established itself in the industrial sector, will also be increasingly effectively applied to products aimed at private consumers. All of the major design-driven companies will be brought together under a joint campaign. A joint symbol communicating repairability and a long service life will link life-cycle thinking with the idea of Finnishness as well. The symbol and the products bearing it will serve as a concrete expression of Finnish reliability, technical expertise, solution-oriented mindset and commitment to sustainable development. This will sustain the best ethos of the golden age of Finnish design.

2. THE NEW WAVE CHALLENGE The New Wave challenge links Finnish expertise with the need to find new solutions to serious global problems. Through initiatives and support from Finland, as many people as possible around the world will be involved in generating new ideas to solve crucial problems. Finland is creating an open-source environment for solutions and joined-up thinking, and funds ten scholarships annually. The New Wave challenge allows us to communicate the Finnish way of solving things: through a community effort.



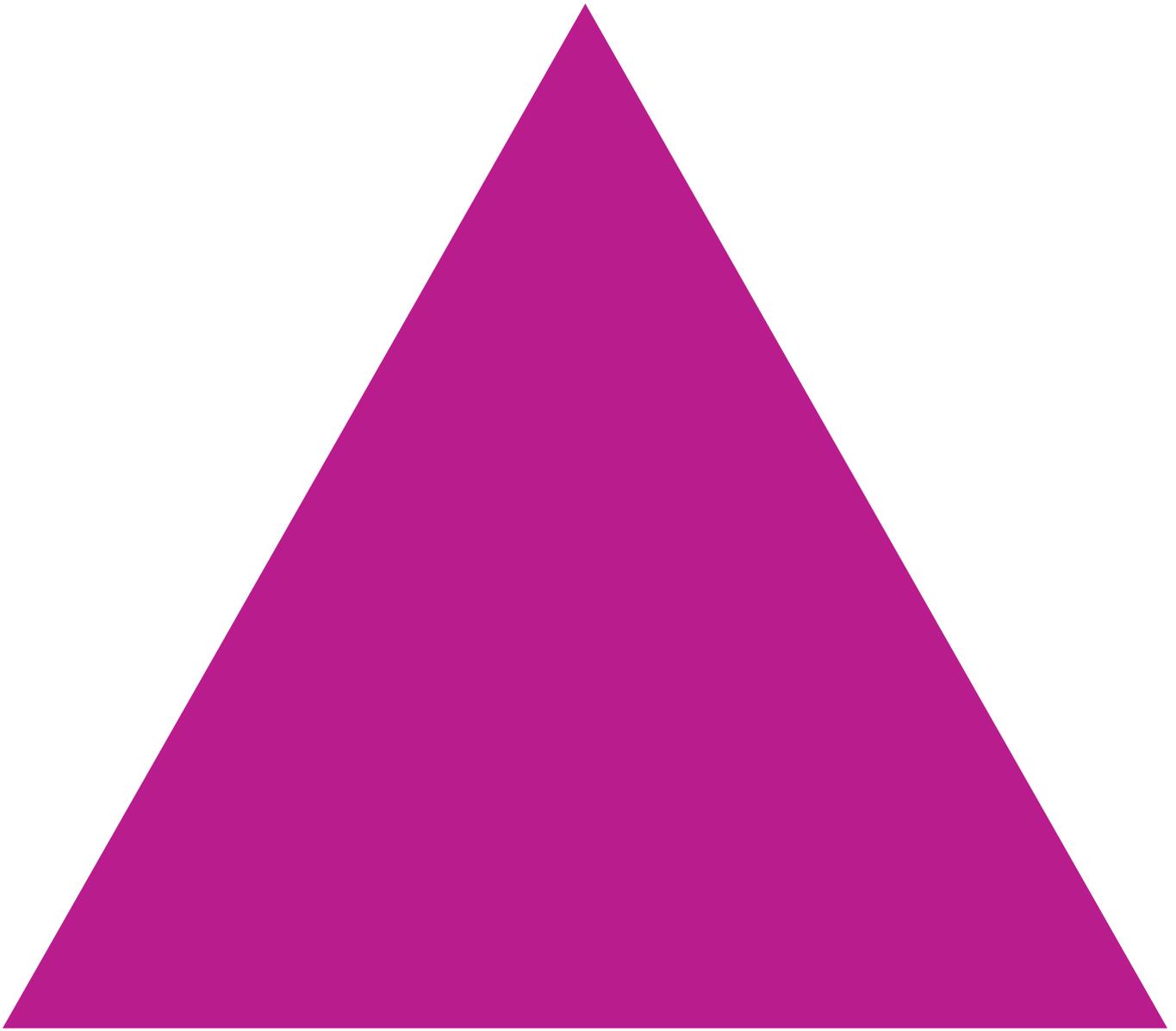
It is no coincidence that the ideas for Linux and MySQL, the principal tools used for organising peer-to-peer content creation, originated in Finland. Linus Torvalds has said that even the most complex problems can be solved, provided there are enough people looking at and solving them. Another example demonstrating this principle is the rebuilding of St. Olaf's church in Tyrvää, which was badly damaged in an arson attack in 1997. Cooperation taking the form of a community effort, which is based on trust and enthusiasm and involves the voluntary participation of community members, is a typically Nordic concept. International comparison and attitude surveys also show that Finland has a strong culture of cooperation and mutual trust.

The whole world is struggling with serious problems that threaten the lives and well-being of people. Climate change, population growth, poverty, hunger, a lack of clean water and a low level of education – these are examples only of the types of issues which it seems cannot be solved through a leader-driven approach. The tradition of acting together and allowing different voices to be heard is well suited as a method for solving global problems. Even today, Finland's efforts in development cooperation, for example, focus on many such areas where the former colonial powers cannot act because of the historical baggage. The tradition is also linked to Nokia's famous slogan: Connecting People.

Under the New Wave challenge, problem-solving does not start from process diagrams drawn up in advance. Instead, everyone is encouraged to act as developers, as everyone has something to give. The New Wave brings together thinkers, influential community members, financiers, designers, engineers and young people. Scholarships will be granted to people who will be chosen from all over the world and who have the courage to employ new modes of thinking and the ability to involve others and promote an atmosphere of trust and sharing.

For their part, the holders of scholarships will seek to involve others within their sphere of influence in the problem-solving effort. They will be guaranteed proper resources for finding solutions, provided that they share their results and thinking with everyone. An open-source platform will disseminate the insights developed in the work, seek new ideas from new actors and take emerging modes of thinking further. Finnish universities and research institutes will support the scholarship holders through their networks and expertise.

3. THE TACIT FACTORY – HAVENS OF QUIET Tacit Factories, havens of quiet, will be established as the flagship applications of Finnish soft diplomacy. They will be the modern global version of the Finnish library system.



Tacit Factories will provide mobile information workers with quiet, comfortable work environments among their peers, practical information and skills, and a library professional with specialist skills in solving problems the Finnish way. Membership in the Tacit Factory club will be free, but it brings with it an obligation to share your work and expertise. For example, a member can take others to a unique park he or she knows in the city and teach them to use the opportunities it provides, or teach the use of new Web applications.

The library system is one of the key institutions in Finnish society. Finland has almost one thousand libraries that are open for all, and garrisons as well as many other institutions have their own libraries. The notion deriving from popular education that information must be available for all has spread not only through schools and educational institutions but also through libraries. Public space has also been considered important in Finland. Cities must have places where people can go to even if they cannot buy anything. Modern libraries are an excellent application of this idea.

In the post-tourism age, Tacit Factories will be global centres which can be found in the most important metropolitan hubs. For the purpose of knowledge transfer, every member of the club will create a profile specifying what he or she can teach and would like to learn. Tacit Factory profiles will include information on how much time the user is willing to spend on instructing other members. The profiles and a positioning system will allow club members to keep track of who is present in the factory and what you can do together.

The club will operate on the basis of a score system, and each factory will issue honorary memberships. If you have used the premises a lot but not taught anyone, your score will be negative. On the other hand, if you have instructed several people and used the premises a lot, you will have a high score. The score will also serve as a networking tool – when a member with a particularly high score is going to be present, other members with high scores will be especially welcome.

Each Tacit Factory will be managed by a Finnish library professional with specialist skills in problem-solving and information searches based on human needs. Comfortable and inviting, the Tacit Factories will be global representatives of a modern culture of sharing and serve as empirical constructors of Finland's brand. They will be the spearhead projects of Finnish soft diplomacy. The end products of Tacit Factories will be the relationships forged and networks created, the things learned and experiences shared, and we can but guess at their positive cumulative effect.