

## Abstract - Volunterism in Tourism

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This abstract is based on a questionnaire distributed to the volunteers at the Danish DMO Visit Aarhus (called ReThinkers) as part of an overall research project concerning Value and Volunteerism. In short, the ReThinkers are remnants of when the city of Aarhus was the European Cultural Capital back in 2017, and they have since then been an essential part of the tourism strategy of Visit Aarhus in welcoming incoming tourist. The volunteers were asked to evaluate the intrinsic value of their tasks and perceived value that they contributed with.

The questionnaire was answered by 273 ReThinkers in March 2021 amounting to a 22% response rate. An important observation is that the majority of the respondents (75%) were 60 years or older. This fits with the overall age distribution of the ReThinkers which is 65 years old currently. It does however create a bias in terms of interpreting the results of the questionnaires.

A brief presentation of the results are as follows:

- A considerable amount of the ReThinkers agreed that “Pride” was an essential component in their value contribution. When we asked them to elaborate on this in the open part of the questionnaire, we found that “Pride” had numerous connotations that encourages further research – 1) The pride of doing something for the city/ambassador for Aarhus, 2) The pride of being able to contribute to something meaningful (Specifically related the age bias), 3) The pride of working for ReThinker (as a brand) organization.
- The second most important element was community with the other volunteers, but also with the visiting tourist that the ReThinkers encountered.
- A third relevant result from the survey was the perceived value that the ReThinkers “felt” that they gave to the visiting tourist and guests in Aarhus, and the feedback that this ensued.