



ReInHerit

Redefining the Future of Cultural Heritage,
through a disruptive model of sustainability



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0. Executive Summary

The **ReInHerit Best Practices Guide** aims to enhance the knowledge and skills of the ReInHerit consortium on key topics such as communication & collaboration, conservation/preservation etc. Moreover, practical guidelines including the key implications of the projects towards informing the EU R&I Agenda for Horizon Europe is included. This Guide also aims to compliment current EU best practices on sustainable Cultural Heritage models.

All ReInHerit partners have contributed relevant Best Practices to this Guide, coordinated by ECTN, resulting in an informed guide including current EU best practices on sustainable Cultural Heritage models.

The **ReInHerit Best Practice Guide** is delivered as a digital, online guide, as part of the ReInHerit Digital Hub. The Best Practices are available to be viewed online at:

<https://reinherit-hub.eu/bestpractices/>

The following **specific implications from ReInHerit** are identified as relevant towards informing the EU Research and Innovation Agenda for Horizon Europe programme (ongoing, till 2030):

1. Encourage, support and promote initiatives by museums and heritage sites for enhanced cooperation and communication, involving latest innovative digital tools and smart solutions.
2. Encourage, support and promote initiatives by cultural and heritage tourism destinations in adopting innovative sustainable, responsible and smart tourism practices, towards smart destinations.
3. Support and promote 'European Heritage Label' (EHL) awards and sites, including networks of EHL sites in attracting visitors and developing new sustainable cultural tourism products and services.
4. Support and promote transnational European Cultural Routes, as catalysts for sustainable tourism products development that enhance cooperation between heritage sites and museums across borders.
5. Support latest technological advances (such as 3D, AI, Blockchain, Metaverse) applications in cultural heritage management and smart tourism developments.

6. Encourage, support and promote 'Creativity' based on Cultural Heritage assets (both tangible and intangible), as a means to actively involve audiences (both residences and visitors), particularly youth.
7. Encourage, support and promote the voluntary sector, including through EU funding schemes, for enhancing the operation and visibility of museums and cultural heritage sites, as well as related initiatives for digitalization and smart solutions uptake.
8. Encourage, support and promote the uptake of the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for target year 2030, in cultural heritage management and promotion, sustainable cultural tourism and international cooperation.
9. Promote smart and sustainable mobility and accessibility to/from and within cultural heritage destinations, including zero emission modes of travel and transport, active mobility of cycling and walking, multi-modal information provision for visitors, multi-linguality and assistance.
10. Advance the cultural heritage agenda in policy making at pan-European, national, regional and local levels, particularly in EU institutions, the Council of Europe, Europeana, UNESCO / UN Tourism (formerly UNWTO), in cooperation with relevant organisations and initiatives (European Heritage Alliance 3.3, Europa Nostra, European Tourism Manifesto Alliance, European Travel Commission, European Heritage Hub, European Heritage Label Bureau, European Institute of Cultural Routes, ICOMOS, ICOM, NEMO, EAA, Interpret Europe, European Cultural Tourism Network).

The Best Practices are continuously updated and enhanced online, and more are added by partners, even after the end of the ReInHerit duration. This will contribute to the lasting legacy of ReInHerit and is expected to facilitate the dissemination of the ReInHerit results beyond the project's end, as well as capitalisation by other users (cultural heritage professionals, academics, tourism practitioners, policy makers, etc).

1. Introduction

The **ReInHerit Best Practices Guide** aims to enhance the knowledge and skills of the ReInHerit consortium on key topics such as communication & collaboration, conservation/preservation etc. Moreover, practical guidelines including the key implications of the projects towards informing the EU R&I Agenda for Horizon Europe is included. This Guide also aims to compliment current EU best practices on sustainable Cultural Heritage models (such as those Best Practices resulting from the EU initiative European Capital of Smart Tourism, Interreg Europe and Creative Europe Programmes, as well as Horizon 2020 relevant projects).

All ReInHerit partners have contributed relevant Best Practices to this Guide, coordinated by ECTN, resulting in an informed guide including current EU best practices on sustainable Cultural Heritage models.

The **ReInHerit Best Practice Guide** is delivered as a digital, online guide, as part of the ReInHerit Digital Hub. The Best Practices are available to be reviewed online at:

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Best Practice definition in ReInHerit

A 'Best Practice' is defined as an initiative, project, policy, system, process, technique, strategy, methodology, solution, plan, routine, benchmark, standard, baseline, convention, approach, scheme, measure or model, which has proved to be successful in a specific place or situation and which is of potential interest to other places or situations.

'Proved successful' is when a given Best Practice has already provided tangible and measurable results in achieving one or more specific objectives.

A Best Practice should have potential for transfer to other places and/or situations, in principle (wholly or partly, with appropriate adaptation and/or customisation).

The **Best Practice Guide** complements the ReInHerit 'Handbook on Museums and Heritage sites Communication and Collaboration' (D5.2), which includes guidelines for cultural heritage management and sustainable cultural tourism. The Handbook will also be available in the Digital Hub.

Some of the Best Practices have been identified at the study visits in Brussels (May 2023), as reported in the European Study Visits Report (D5.1).

The Best Practices are aligned with the goal to boost skills in the cultural heritage professions, as per the European Framework for Action on Cultural Heritage, launched by the European Commission to ensure continuing the legacy of the European Year of Cultural Heritage beyond 2018.



'Beyond 2018 – the legacy continues'

2. Themes of Best Practices

The Best Practices cover the following themes or types:

- General Cultural Heritage Management
- Cooperation between Museums and Heritage Sites
- Communication between Museums and Heritage Sites
- Conservation and Preservation
- Virtual Reality / Augmented Reality (VR/AR) Technologies, including:
- Gamification and Immersive Performances
- Innovation (including 3D, AI, Big data, Metaverse, etc)
- Audience and Local Community Engagement
- Pandemic impacts and post-pandemic relaunching of Cultural Heritage and Cultural Tourism
- Environmental and Climate Change concerns
- Marketing and Branding
- Sustainable Cultural Tourism
- Smart Tourism – Smart Destinations
- Travelling and Digital Exhibitions
- Sustainability
- Accessibility
- Other.

Furthermore, the Best Practices are classified in broad categories of:

- Management
- Technology
- Tourism
- Other.

(in the same way as for the RelnHerit Webinars on the Digital Hub).

3. Best Practices Content and Structure

Each Best Practice contains the following information fields:

- Title
- Summary
- Type of Best Practice
- Organisation in charge (Best Practice owner)
- Location (city/region and countries)
- Dates (from-to, or ongoing)
- Description (including relevant illustrations, photographs, and videos)
- Resources needed
- Challenges encountered
- Evidence of success
- Potential for transfer
- Relevant Websites
- Further information
- Keywords

Relevant illustrations, photographs and videos are embedded in the Best Practice description, as appropriate.

The submitting partner is also given.

4. Key implications towards informing the EU R&I Agenda for Horizon Europe

Informing the EU Research and Innovation (R&I) Agenda for Horizon Europe involves considering several key implications to ensure the Programme's effectiveness and relevance. Main aspects are as follows:

- **Societal Challenges:** Identifying and addressing pressing societal challenges should be a primary focus. These include climate change and related climate action, triple transition (green, digital and social), inclusivity and accessibility to heritage (both physical and intellectual). Aligning R&I priorities with these challenges aims to ensure that research efforts contribute directly to improving the lives of European citizens as well as visitors to museums and heritage sites in Europe.
- **Interdisciplinarity:** Encouraging interdisciplinary research can lead to innovative solutions to complex problems. Horizon Europe should facilitate collaboration across various disciplines, fostering synergies between different scientific fields and promoting cross-cutting approaches to cultural heritage and sustainable cultural tourism.
- **Open Science and Innovation:** Embracing open science and innovation practices can enhance transparency, collaboration, and the impact of research. Horizon Europe should continue to promote open access to research results, open data sharing, and open source technologies to maximise knowledge exchange and dissemination.
- **Mission-Oriented Approach:** Adopting a mission-oriented approach can provide clear goals and objectives for R&I activities. Horizon Europe should define ambitious missions that address major societal challenges and mobilise resources towards achieving tangible outcomes within specific timeframes.
- **Global Cooperation:** Strengthening international collaboration is crucial for addressing global challenges and leveraging diverse expertise and resources. Horizon Europe should continue to foster partnerships with international stakeholders, including researchers, institutions, and organizations, to facilitate knowledge exchange and collaboration on a global scale.
- **Innovation Ecosystems:** Supporting vibrant innovation ecosystems is essential for translating research outcomes into tangible products, services, and societal benefits. Horizon Europe should promote entrepreneurship, technology transfer, and industry-academia collaboration to facilitate the uptake and application of research results.

- **Ethical and Responsible Research:** Ensuring that research and innovation activities uphold high ethical standards and societal values is essential. Horizon Europe should enhance promotion of responsible research and innovation practices, including ethical considerations, societal engagement, and the integration of social, environmental, and ethical dimensions into research projects.
- **Resilience and Sustainability:** Building resilience and sustainability into research and innovation activities can help address future challenges and risks. Horizon Europe should prioritise research on sustainable development, resilience to environmental and socio-economic shocks, and strategies for transitioning towards a more sustainable and inclusive future.
- **Education and Skills:** Investing in education, training, and skills development is essential for nurturing a talented workforce and driving innovation. Horizon Europe should support initiatives to enhance education and training, promote lifelong learning, and develop skills relevant to emerging fields and technologies. The ‘European Year of Skills 2023’ (extended to 2024) results should be taken into account.

By considering these implications, the EU institutions can ensure that the Horizon Europe Programme effectively addresses the most pressing challenges, fosters innovation and competitiveness, and contributes to the well-being and prosperity of European citizens, in terms of sustainable cultural heritage management and cultural tourism developments.

The following **specific implications from ReinHerit** are identified as relevant guidelines towards informing the EU Research and Innovation Agenda for Horizon Europe programme (ongoing, till 2030):

1. Encourage, support and promote initiatives by museums and heritage sites for enhanced cooperation and communication, involving latest innovative digital tools and smart solutions.
2. Encourage, support and promote initiatives by cultural and heritage tourism destinations in adopting innovative sustainable, responsible and smart tourism practices, towards smart destinations.
3. Support and promote ‘European Heritage Label’ (EHL) awards and sites, including networks of EHL sites in attracting visitors and developing new sustainable cultural tourism products and services.

4. Support and promote transnational European Cultural Routes, as catalysts for sustainable tourism products development that enhance cooperation between heritage sites and museums across borders.
5. Support latest technological advances (such as 3D, AI, Blockchain, Metaverse) applications in cultural heritage management and smart tourism developments.
6. Encourage, support and promote 'Creativity' based on Cultural Heritage assets (both tangible and intangible), as a means to actively involve audiences (both residences and visitors), particularly youth.
7. Encourage, support and promote the voluntary sector, including through EU funding schemes, for enhancing the operation and visibility of museums and cultural heritage sites, as well as related initiatives for digitalization and smart solutions uptake.
8. Encourage, support and promote the uptake of the 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for target year 2030, in cultural heritage management and promotion, sustainable cultural tourism and international cooperation.
9. Promote smart and sustainable mobility and accessibility to/from and within cultural heritage destinations, including zero emission modes of travel and transport, active mobility of cycling and walking, multi-modal information provision for visitors, multi-linguality and assistance.
10. Advance the cultural heritage agenda in policy making at pan-European, national, regional and local levels, particularly in EU institutions, the Council of Europe, Europeana, UNESCO / UN Tourism (formerly UNWTO), in cooperation with relevant organisations and initiatives (European Heritage Alliance 3.3, Europa Nostra, European Tourism Manifesto Alliance, European Travel Commission, European Heritage Hub, European Heritage Label Bureau, European Institute of Cultural Routes, ICOMOS, ICOM, NEMO, EAA, Interpret Europe, European Cultural Tourism Network).

5. Best Practices

The Best Practices are available to view online, on the ReInHerit Digital Hub at:

<https://reinherit-hub.eu/bestpractices/>

Users may download a PDF of the Best Practice of interest.

A sample of Best Practices (one per ReInHerit partner) are given in the Appendix.

The Best Practices are continuously updated and enhanced online, and more are added by partners, even after the end of the ReInHerit duration. This will contribute to the lasting legacy of ReInHerit and is expected to facilitate the dissemination of the ReInHerit results beyond the project's end, as well as capitalisation by other users (cultural heritage professionals, academics, tourism practitioners, policy makers, etc).

References

- European Framework for Action on Cultural Heritage. Commission Staff Working Document. European Union 2019.
- Leading examples of Smart Tourism Practices in Europe from the 2023 European Capital of Smart Tourism competition. European Commission, DG Growth Internal market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (DG GROW), February 2023.
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- Interreg Europe Good Practices Database, 2017-ongoing.
- ReInHerit Deliverable D5.1 European Study Visits Report (Brussels, May 2023), ECTN, October 2023.
- ReInHerit Deliverable D5.2 Handbook for Museums and Heritage Sites Communication and Collaboration, ECTN and AS, February 2024.

Appendix: Examples of Best Practices

Examples of Best Practices by ReInHerit partner are given as follows:

Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation, Cyprus

- ReInHerit Eshop - Collection of digital objects from the ReInHerit museums

Arte Sostenible

- “Museum in Questions” campaign by the Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium

MICC UNIFI

- Co-creative design of Digital Tools for Museums using Smart Interaction and Playful Approach

European Cultural Tourism Network (ECTN)

- European Capital of Smart Tourism, including Digitalisation, Sustainability, Cultural Heritage and Creativity (Pafos 2023)

UNIC

- A Sustainable Cultural Heritage Management Plan for Museums

Materahub

- CulTourData - Supporting data-driven innovation for tourism SMEs in European Capitals of Culture

MCA

- In Touch: making museum collections accessible and open to all people with multisensory disabilities at the Museum of Cycladic Art

Uni-Graz

- The Styrian Iron Route, Austria: Fostering Industrial heritage tourism in Peripheral Regions

CYENS Centre of Excellence

- Enhancing cultural heritage sites through immersive performances - ReInHerit Case Study in Performance Design and Practice

Blue Shield

- Cultural heritage, innovation and sustainable development: the contribution of ReInHerit

ARCADA

- My story, our Europe empathy game for schools and video series on migrant influencers (Helinä Rautavaara Ethnographic Museum, Finland)

Graz Museum

- topotheque Graz - a platform of local, historical relevant material in private hands accessible online



ReInHerit Eshop - Collection of digital objects from the ReInHerit museums

Author(s)

Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation

Publication date

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Type of best practice

Cooperation between Museums and Heritage sites

Keywords

Eshop, collections, audience engagement

The aim is to create a sustainably managed E-shop where needed services for the CH are provided. With the consent of the consortium, printable digital items were created. This means that the users could download and print in 2D or 3D these digital items.

Organisation in charge of best practice

Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation, ReInHerit Consortium

Location

Nicosia and online

Dates

July 2022-end of the project

Description

Taking into account the primary and secondary research, the consortium agreed to create printable digital items instead of tangible objects, responding thus to the need for museums to demonstrate environmental sustainability by making effective and balanced use of their resources through digital needs. This means that the users could download and print in 2D or 3D these digital items that will be available for free through the digital hub. The E-shop presentation has been agreed upon with UniGraz (WP4 leader) and BOCCF (during meetings through M8-10). At the same time, the three

partner-museums proposed some of their artefacts to serve as the inspiration for the E-shop products.

All the digital objects in the ReInHerit eShop are free to download.

Links

<https://reinherit-hub.eu/eshop>

Resources needed

Designers, digital infrastructure

Challenges encountered

communication with designers

Evidence of success

Based on KPIs, more than 200 people have downloaded the products

Potential for transfer

This report could constitute a guide on how to develop an E- shop. It documents the development of the ReInHerit E-shop including the 'how to' process. This could enable other small and mid-sized museums to understand and develop their own E-shop responding, thus, to social imperatives combined with financial pressure such as growth of companies and raise of entrepreneurial initiatives.

Further Information

The Eshop report includes in the annexes guidelines on how to start a successful online shop

“Museum in Questions” campaign by the Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium

Author(s)

Arte Sostenible

Publication date

2023-12-04T13:58:31.538Z

Terms of reuse

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Type of best practice

Communication between Museums and Heritage Sites

Keywords democratization, communication, developement, non-discriminatory, decolonial, art.

inclusivity, dialogic, cultural heritage, decolonial museum, curating, debate, social, diversity

As part of the “Museum in Questions” campaign initiated in the fall of 2021, the Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium are eager to join the debate on current social issues

Organisation in charge of best practice

Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium

Location

Brussels

Dates

Biennial: Exhibition time -21.08.2023 with activities starting from autumn 2021

Description

As part of the “Museum in Questions” campaign initiated in the fall of 2021, the Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium are eager to join the debate on current social issues. Two exhibition rooms contextualize two burning topics for museums around the world: on the one hand, they shed scientific light on the issues of colonialism and diversity, and on the other hand, on the problem of the restitution of cultural goods looted during the Second World War. The Royal Museums aspire to be a laboratory for reflection that will enable us to participate in the construction of the museum of tomorrow, insisting on how scientific research, one of the museum’s primary missions, can contribute to the contemporary debate.

One exhibition room focuses on the complex issue of looted artworks, particularly those taken during World War II. The process of identifying such works involves thorough provenance research, which can be challenging but is essential for restitution.

Another room addresses the responsibility of museums to be inclusive and nondiscriminatory, exemplified by the renaming of a Rubens masterpiece. This action reflects the museum's commitment to fostering a scientifically based debate, acknowledging historical facts and contexts, and responding to public reactions.

In summary, the Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium are using these exhibitions as a platform for reflection and dialogue on important social and historical issues, demonstrating the role of museums as more than just repositories of art, but as active participants in societal discourse.

Links

<https://fine-arts-museum.be/en/exhibitions/our-collection-in-question>

Resources needed

Works of art: The museum would need to have access to works of art that are related to the topic to be addressed. Research: Extensive scientific research would be needed to shed light on the issues of colonialism and diversity, and the restitution of cultural property. This research would form the basis of the exhibitions.

Challenges encountered

The main challenge is to be able to count on the facilities at the political level from the management areas of the museums to open dialogue to controversial social issues. The next challenge is to design a speech appropriate to the understanding of the general public in order to communicate the importance of topics such as decolonization in museums without offending the collective's sensitivities.

Evidence of success

Provenance investigation: A team of experts would be needed to investigate the provenance of artworks, particularly those of questionable origin. This is a laborious task but essential to the restitution process. Information panels: Detailed information panels would be needed to provide context and answer questions about the artworks and topics being addressed. Inclusive policies: The museum would need to implement inclusive policies to ensure that exhibitions are non-discriminatory and responsive to public reactions. Facilitation of dialogue: Resources would be needed to facilitate constructive dialogue around the issues raised by the exhibitions. This could include guided tours, discussion forums or interactive exhibits.

Potential for transfer

The initiative can be adapted to museums that have in their collections works obtained under conditions similar to those of this museum. The initiative to address a controversial topic requires, for its adaptation to different museums or institutions, the support of the management and an

adequate museography in terms of respectful discourse. In the case of discussion sessions, it is essential for their adaptation to count experts on the topics as spikers.

Further Information

This Best Practice was identified by Arte Sostenible during study visits in Brussels by ReInHerit Horizon 2020 CSA partners in May 2023.

Co-creative design of Digital Tools for Museums using Smart Interaction and Playful Approach

Author(s)

University of Florence - MICC

Publication date

2024-01-23T22:47:50.120Z

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Type of best practice

VR/AR & Technologies, inc. Gamification & Immersive performances

Keywords

CoCreation, Mediation, Interdisciplinarity, Development, Design, Digital Tools

The development of digital tools involves mediation between different disciplines and dialogue with users. The main goal of digital innovation is not only to provide a tool, but to promote a transdisciplinary development process. This involves promoting collaboration and the integration of knowledge from different fields, creating a dialogue and mediation between different disciplinary fields. Following this model, the ReInHerit Toolkit has been designed and tested using a co-creative, bottom-up approach. An Interdisciplinary community participated in the creation process through inclusive and collaborative workshops and hackathons.

Organisation in charge of best practice

MICC - UNIFI and MateraHUB

Location

Matera ITALY

Dates

1 week

Description

Mediation and co-creation process can be considered a best practice in digital tool development, to address innovative and sustainable frameworks in cultural heritage. This approach includes the active involvement of communities in the creative process through **interdisciplinary hackathons**. Co-design methods are used throughout the process to empathize with diverse

audiences, understand their needs, define problems, generate innovative solutions, and test prototypes.

Following this approach, the ReInHerit Toolkit has been tested and redesigned during

****interdisciplinary hackathons**** organized as part of the AI/XR Summer School in Matera in July 2023. During the one week event, international speakers and experts discussed the theme "Innovative and Sustainable Approaches for User Engagement and Digital Interaction with Cultural Heritage," presenting the main results of studies conducted within the ReInHerit H2020 research project. Young PhD students actively participated in refining the toolkit, using open-source codes provided by the Digital Hub.



Teams of interdisciplinary PhD students collaborated with tailored experts, focusing on two main themes, "Gamification and Playful Engagement" and "Smart Interaction and Digital Content." Exploiting the Digital Hub's open-source codes, they adapted these technologies to local museum collections. This co-creation process introduced new technological developments, various interaction scenarios, and novel design elements to improve engagement, collaboration and inclusivity.



The bottom-up development process, mediating between different disciplinary fields, strengthens the vision of digital transformation. This vision aims to enable a collaborative network that facilitates the testing and development of the innovative ReInHerit Toolkit. In this dynamic innovation process, both ICT developers and Cultural Heritage professionals play active roles in creating usable tools. Users are an integral part of the co-creation and design process, with the emphasis on dialogue and deep understanding of their needs. Overall, starting these co-creative mediation and development processes aligns with a sustainable and future-oriented digital innovation strategy.

The students' proposals, created during the hackathons, have been showcased during the event through interviews, videos and lectures at local museums. The contribution of **MateraHub** and the **MICC Center** was crucial in beginning a collaborative process with the local museum community, creative industries and technology experts. This collaborative effort is expected to continue with further co-creation events in other local museums, including the **MagmaFest 2023** at the Giovanni Ridola Archaeological Museum. The engagement of local stakeholders and policymakers highlights the broader impact and relevance of the mediation and co-creation process in fostering meaningful connections between technology, culture and local community.

Links

<https://reinherit-hub.eu/summerschool/>

Resources needed

Resources include open-source codes from the ReInHerit Digital Hub, essential for adapting technologies to local museum collections. The process involves international experts, young students, and tailored specialists, emphasizing themes like "Gamification and Playful Engagement" and "Smart Interaction and Digital Content." Crucial resources encompass the AI/XR Summer School, MateraHub, and the MICC Center, fostering collaboration with local museums, creative industries, and technology experts. This sustainable and inclusive strategy demands ongoing engagement, showcasing the broader impact of mediation and co-creation in bridging technology, culture, and the local community.

Challenges encountered

Coordinating diverse expertise during co-creative workshops and hackathons proved challenging, requiring effective communication to bridge disciplinary gaps. Adaptation of the Digital Hub's open-source codes, while valuable, presented technical challenges in terms of compatibility and integration, requiring some level of technical expertise. Involving local communities and stakeholders in the co-creation process posed challenges, requiring a delicate balance between different needs and expectations. Sustaining momentum beyond the initial development phase proved challenging, requiring continuous effort to ensure ongoing collaboration, participation and relevance in following co-creation events. These challenges underscore the complexity of interdisciplinary projects, highlighting the need to address communication barriers, technical complexities, and community engagement issues for the lasting success and impact of innovative digital tools in the cultural heritage sector. Despite these challenges, the ReInHerit Toolkit's ability to overcome obstacles and achieve success highlights its resilience and the importance of its transdisciplinary approach in fostering meaningful connections between technology, culture, and local communities.

Evidence of success

The design, improvement, and customization of toolkit applications were accomplished through inclusive workshops and hackathons, involving a diverse community of international experts, young PhD students, and specialized professionals. This collaborative approach ensured a rich exchange of ideas, perspectives and expertise from various disciplines, contributing to the comprehensiveness and relevance of the toolkit. Also the design of new types of interactions and applications based on the reuse of existing open source codes is a sign of success, even without considering the actual development of such applications.

Potential for transfer

The collaboration with MateraHub and the MICC Center further strengthens the evidence of success. Their crucial roles in initiating a collaborative process with the local museum community, creative industries, and technology experts underscore the toolkit's broader impact and relevance beyond academic settings. Cultural Convergence and the engagement of local stakeholders in following events like MagmaFest 2023 at the Giovanni Ridola Archaeological Museum (Matera) signifies the toolkit's influence in bridging the gap between technology, cultural sectors and the local community.

<https://reinherit-hub.eu/news/07fa5b02-9213-449d-adf3-6e0725736e69>

Further Information

A reasonable duration for a productive Hackathon is 1 week; can be shortened to a few days when considering a preliminary on-line preparation.

European Capital of Smart Tourism, including Digitalisation, Sustainability, Cultural Heritage and Creativity.

Author(s)

ECTN

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Type of best practice

Smart Tourism - Smart Destinations

Keywords

creativity, cultural heritage, digitalisation, smart tourism, sustainability, sustainable tourism

Pafos applied for the European Capital of Smart Tourism Award in June 2022 and was selected by a jury of experts as a finalists amongst 6 other cities. Following a presentation at a EU institutions jury, it was selected as European Capital of Smart Tourism 2023 (together with Seville, Spain). The advantages of Pafos were the strong involvement of the Municipality in smart city initiatives and applications, previous European Capital of Culture (2017), the DESTI-SMART Interreg Europe project (2018-2022) and its UNESCO World Heritage Site status.

Organisation in charge of best practice

Pafos Regional Board of Tourism

Location

Pafos, Cyprus

Dates

June 2022 - December 2023, Main actions started January 2019, completed October 2023+

Description



Pafos as a destination has long been incorporating the concepts of sustainability, accessibility, innovation/digitalisation and cultural heritage-creative tourism into its planning. Pafos is motivated by a vision of being a quality destination where visitors can enjoy a diverse range of experiences while also contributing to sustainable tourism growth, respecting the natural environment and cultural heritage.

Pafos has evolved from a classic mass-tourist sun-and-sea hotspot to a sophisticated and innovative tourism destination. After over 15 years of evolution, the destination is now successfully incorporating sustainability themes into its comprehensive smart tourism strategy and operations.

Pafos, is well served by the Pafos International airport, offers outstanding hotel establishments, excellent quality services, broad range of recreational activities, beautiful rural areas, open spaces, cultural /religious retreats and much more. Visitors are happy to explore the broad range of assets more than 300 days of sunshine!

Pafos is currently reinvesting heavily in the region's infrastructure, tourist products, services & experiences offered, tourism technology and environmental protection.

Some of the most important best practice aspects towards Smart tourism, Smart destinations are:

-Enhancement of the old town Pafos with renovation of buildings, new pedestrian areas, installation of smart parking facilities, smart LED lighting, smart bus stops etc -Continuous upgrades in Public

transport by introducing low carbon public transport (electric minibus), provisions for e bikes and e cars like charging stations etc -Accessible tourism facilities at attractions such as braille signage, wheel chair friendly routes, e buggies and more Continuous upgrades of Hotel establishments (rooms, public areas, spa, catering facilities etc) Introduction of renewable energy installations (photovoltaic), NO plastic policy, paper recycling, as well as water treatment/recycling facilities - Development of new cultural routes (The Myth of Aphrodite-goddess of love and beauty, St Paul's footsteps route, Myths & Legends -Development of Smart app for the UNESCO Archaeological park inc. audio guides and content in several languages, 360 touring, videos etc. Smart app about the Myth of Aphrodite including AR and more -Introduction of Smart signs (QR codes) as a way to provide better interpretation and interaction while at the same time eliminating visual pollution by replacing the traditional static, large in size, signs.(Smart signs include content in several languages, 360 touring, video, photo gallery, audio guiding etc) -Launch of an innovative digital campaign in 8 countries using a latest technology with an algorithm which traces potential visitors that show active travel intentions.

-Pafos has adopted the UN Sustainable Development Goals as they apply to tourism sustainability, in particular 5 of the 13 SDGs -18 blue flag beaches, Quality Coast Gold Award 2013 -2023, part of the EU Green Destinations -Over ten nature trails have recently been revalued and upgraded, and they are now all promoted through unique portals such as Komoot, Alltrails, and others. -Most of the hotel properties are ISO140000 certified Continuous upgrades of the green & public areas - Introduction of 9 new cycling routes covering the whole destination (installed parking places, digital maps and signage) Balanced economic performance of tourism, Rising, all-inclusive customer expenditure in the Pafos economy. Several developments aided this strategy, including the introduction of free "Meet the Locals" walking tours, the improvement of the Old Town and local transport, the expansion of direct flights and international access, the establishment of local arts and craft workshops and much more. -Ease seasonality by investing in infrastructure and supporting the organisation of international sporting and cultural events such as the Cyprus Gran Fondo road cycling race, the Cyprus Marathon etc. Among other initiatives, Investment in digital marketing, and enhancements to the destination's experiences to be more FIT friendly.

-During off season the destination offers on a weekly basis, free Walking guided tours "Meet the Locals" -Launch new cleanliness program, recycling programs, door to door pick up

-“Pafos Smart Parking” is a solution of effective parking management. Citizens and visitors to the municipality of Pafos can be notified and identify free parking spots swiftly and precisely by utilising Internet of Things (IoT) and Mobile Communications (Smartphones) technology.

-Intangible heritage-Phytiotiko weaving. As a first successful step, all participating partners have managed to register the Phyti embroideries in the ICH of Cyprus. The second phase is presently underway, with the goal of standardising the techniques for this specific weaving and moving on with the preparation of the application for the ICA's world heritage list.

-European Cultural Route: "In the footsteps of St Paul, the Apostle of nations". The region of Central Macedonia in Greece, the Lazio region in Italy, the Pafos Regional Board of Tourism in association with the Municipality of Pafos in Cyprus, and the European Cultural Tourism Network based in Brussels, Belgium, have agreed to form a European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) that develops, implements, manages, promotes, and supports the European Cultural Route: "In the footsteps of St Paul, the Apostle of nations,"

.The above founding members of this EGTC have signed a memorandum of understanding and cooperation in which they have pledged to collaborate on the development, implementation,

management, promotion, and support of the transnational cultural route for final accreditation by the Council of Europe.

-Pafos Aphrodite Festival. The festival encourages cultural tourism by promoting the intangible heritage of opera and related CCIs. Pafos Aphrodite Festival has celebrated 20 years of success. - Creative destination-awards. Pafos was awarded the best creative destination award in 2016 and the 'Best Strategy in Creative Tourism Development 2020', by the Creative Tourism Network (CTN). - Innovative & creative private and public offerings. The Municipality of Pafos has established the KHAN, an artist space where local and visiting artists can exhibit their work. Private funding has also been provided, resulting in Pafos Creative Tourism uncovering hidden Cyprus for arts, handicrafts, and traditional products.

Pafos has gained the title of the European Capital of Smart Tourism 2023 because has a plan, commitment of residents, local authorities and stakeholders, resources and willingness to change things for a Smarter Pafos, thus for a better and a Smarter Europe.

Pafos has been**European Capital of Smart Tourism 2023,** together with Seville. Pafos Regional Board of Tourism currently holds the Presidency of the European Cultural Tourism Network (ECTN).

The selection was made by a jury composed by representatives of EU institutions (European Parliament TRAN Committee 1st Vice President, Committee of the Regions NAT Commission President, senior officers of European Commission DG GROW).

The announcement was made in Brussels today, following presentations of all finalists to the Jury and the decision of the Jury. In breaking the news, a member of the Jury stated:

"Pafos is a city full of initiatives, has become a smart leader, thanks to your forward looking approach, so well done for that! We were particularly impressed by the commitment to meeting ambitious sustainability objectives, with constant monitoring at the same time and a strategy retune in place. And we were also pleased with you realizing your plan to work together with previous winners of this competition. You had a series of successes! You were a capital in ancient times, a former European Capital of Culture and now on top of this, well done, a 2023 European Capital of Smart Tourism, well done again!"

This is the first time that a tourist destination in Cyprus wins this contest. Pafos and Seville are the two Capitals of Smart Tourism for 2023, selected amongst seven finalists. The finalists had been selected by a panel of independent experts with specialist knowledge covering each award category (accessibility, sustainability, digitalisation, cultural heritage and creativity), who evaluated all submitted applications. This is the first time that a tourist destination in Cyprus wins this contest.

The cities that had been shortlisted for the **European Capital of Smart Tourism 2023** award were **Aarhus (Denmark), Gijón (Spain), Pafos (Cyprus), Porto (Portugal), San Sebastián (Spain), Seville (Spain), Zagreb (Croatia)**, as finalists selected from 29 candidates from 13 countries. All shortlisted cities presented their candidatures in front of a European Jury in Brussels on 9 September.

Coming with the title of 2023 European Capital of Smart Tourism, communication and branding support throughout 2023 will be provided to the winners. This includes a promotional video, a specially designed hashtag sculpture for the city to display, and tailored promotional actions designed to increase visibility at EU and global level and increase the number of visitors.

Smart tourism, according to the European Commission's definition, responds to new challenges and demands in a fast-changing sector, including the evolution of digital tools, products and services; equal opportunity and access for all visitors; sustainable development of the local area; and support to creative industries, local talent and heritage.

ECTN has supported this EU initiative from the outset and the candidature of Pafos.

Transforming quantity into quality with innovation and creativity

Pafos is one of the most popular tourist destinations in Cyprus and it attracts most of the visitors coming to the island. The whole city is included in the UNESCO world heritage list and people can discover important places of interest, such as the UNESCO

Archaeological Park of Kato Pafos, the Medieval Castle by the ancient harbour, the Old Town, among others. This rich area attracts then over 550,000 international visitors with an average duration of stay of 8 days, has the capacity of 12,000 license tourist beds and it is estimated that the tourism industry within the city of Pafos employs around 14,000 people. The city is currently investing heavily in the region's infrastructures, tourist products, services and experiences offered, tourism technology and environmental protection. Pafos has transformed from a traditional mass sun-and-sea tourism hotspot into a modern and innovative tourism destination.

Where myth meets technology

Pafos is at the heart of the myth of Aphrodite, with the beach of her birthplace. The city then offers a new experience to visitors with the possibility – coming soon – to download the Myth of Aphrodite app for free, after the success of the pilot project using AR (Augmented Reality). Users will be able to scan relevant photos of Aphrodite in three different places on the beach, to enjoy Aphrodite in a real environment through their smart devices. The scenes include the mythical goddess emerging from the foam of the sea, sitting on a rock, and reading a book on the beach. Users can then interact, and find information on the app, with locations and description. Culture lovers or explorers, all can download the app and enjoy it.

Pafos Aphrodite Festival – Opera in a UNESCO city

Since 1999, the Pafos Aphrodite Festival has taken place in the city in early September. It promotes the intangible heritage of opera and has been established as a cultural event of international recognition with high preconditions for artistic performances and administrative efficiency. Every year, there is great interest from an international audience of holidaymakers and visitors, with 3-day performances, and it always goes sold-out. With the imposing Medieval Castle of Pafos and the sea as a backdrop, the event attracts sponsors, who support it. This event has been successfully attracting cultural tourism for 20 years.



Links <https://www.visitpafos.org.cy/pafos-european-capital-of-smart-tourism-2023>

https://smart-tourism-capital.ec.europa.eu/pafos-winner-2023-competition_en

Resources needed

All involved stakeholders including local authorities, tourism related union and association, the state all contributed for the implementation of the actions. Key players though was the Pafos municipality and the Pafos Regional Board of Tourism where since 2016 have invested hundreds of thousands euro, human resource, Natural resources, resources (urban heritage, arts, archaeological values, traditions, science values, folk crafts and subcultural formations) and much more. A well qualified and committed team of tourism, smart cities and cultural heritage professionals. Commitment by the city authority Municipality and Mayor. Strong involvement of stakeholders, such as museums, heritage sites, tourism sector, etc., etc

Challenges encountered

Pafos Region is a relatively small area and all resources are limited, thus the only way forward was to act smarter. A great effort was placed to ensure that the City, the residents, businesses, and others are dedicated to smartness and sustainability. By nature people are resistant to changes, so a great effort was placed for citizens and stakeholders to convince them about the plan to accept the new way of thinking. Human resources with expertise in all four themes sustainability, accessibility, digitalization and cultural heritage creativity was not widely available. Securing financial resources was also a great challenge since money was not easily or readily available to implement projects. Be flexible and align on the team vision and goal. Keep up team engagement. In an era with fast changing travelling habits, emerging technologies and rational climate changes, a set of new challenges faced and had to adjust the initial plans and adapt to the new needs. In addition to the above, the collection of data for creating this digital database was a significant challenge as well as overcoming the restrictions and legislations from municipalities and councils. Last but not least had to face communication breakdowns, conflicts, lack of trust sometimes and difficulties in integrating diverse perspectives. However with effective leadership by the Mayor and the Tourism Board and open communication have managed to overcome these challenges.

Evidence of success

Pafos (Cyprus) and Seville (Spain) were selected as the winners of the 2023 European Capital of Smart Tourism, following a European Jury meeting in Brussels on 9 November 2022.

Potential for transfer

The key Good Practice features to share and transfer are: -Have a plan, the commitment of residents, local authorities, stakeholders and others, secure resources and show willingness to change things - Sustainability: Recognise that we are part of problem and part of the solution and actively provide solutions -Accessibility: Adopt the motto, every single thing accessible to every single person and become more and more accessible every day -Digitalisation: Great success for Pafos was the change in the way we think! Digital Transformation Journey should accelerate. Introduce new initiatives and lead the way for more successful stories -Cultural Heritage and Creativity: Our slogan is Bridging Continents, Linking Cultures. Safeguarding and sharing culture, enhance local and European cultural heritage through a number of policies and programmes. To potential organisations that should have to act as a role model we recommend: -Have an innovative mechanism for collaboration, sharing values, and the ability to overcome obstacles. -Set clear values which are accepted from all involved parties. -Present passion, trust and ability to inspire. -Demonstrating commitment to goals and willingness to invest the necessary resources to achieve success. -Past and present successful initiatives and stories must share. All of the above contributes towards a smarter tourism, smarter destinations!

Further Information

The journey towards smart tourism, smart destinations is ongoing. Actions and initiatives need to be accelerated in the coming years. As a destination, the focus in the next years is to continue incorporating the concepts of sustainability, accessibility, innovation/digitalisation and cultural heritage-creative tourism into strategic planning. Some of the actions that are in progress by Pafos Municipality and Pafos Regional Board of Tourism are: - Water management system, to achieve optimal use and quality of water, - 'Pafos Now' app, for all services in the region. ECTN members Bremerhaven and Cork were finalists in the 'European Capital of Smart Tourism 2024' Award. ECTN is proud that two of our members, Bremerhaven, Germany, and Cork, Republic of Ireland, are selected in the seven finalists for the European Capital of Smart Tourism 2024 Award. ECTN has supported the European Capital of Smart Tourism Awards since the launch in 2019.

Cultural Heritage and Creativity, as well as Sustainability are two of the four components of Smart Tourism directly linked to Sustainable Cultural Tourism that ECTN facilitates and promotes.

A Sustainable Cultural Heritage Management Plan for Museums

Author(s)

University of Nicosia - School of Law

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Type of best practice

General Cultural Heritage Management

Keywords

Cultural Heritage Management, Cultural Heritage Management Plan, Museums, Cultural Heritage institutions, Audience, Young people, Local communities, Sustainability

Cultural Heritage Management (CHM) is the main vehicle for helping museums to face challenges, secure sustainable competitiveness, be resilient to climate change, natural hazards and pandemic risks, and redefine themselves in a constantly changing world. This best practice contributes to the understanding of how to establish a state-of-the-art management plan for museums, which takes into account the latest developments in the field. It offers clear and concise information on the cultural heritage sector needs, challenges and opportunities, and bring forward the main issues and principles that need to be taken into account during the drafting procedure of a CHM plan.

Organisation in charge of best practice

University of Nicosia

Location

Nicosia, Cyprus

Dates

01/03/2021 - 29/02/2024

Description

Introduction

Many museums and cultural heritage (CH) institutions, especially smaller ones, continue to suffer from inefficient management due to lack of funding and support, as well as the pressures of ongoing crises. In this respect, it is crucial for each them to create a realistic, detailed and sustainable Cultural Heritage Management plan (CHM plan) within the digital transformation and innovation context in order for them to be relevant to contemporary societies. In the context of the RelnHerit project, the University of Nicosia developed a model of how to establish a state-of-the-art CHM plan for museums and CH institutions, which takes into account the latest developments in the field. It brings forward the main issues and principles that need to be taken into account during the drafting procedure of a CHM plan, explores current state-of-affairs of professional practice in the CH sector across Europe, offers clear and concise information on the CH sector needs, challenges and bottlenecks, and eventually, provides practical recommendations that need to be taken into account

so as to support communication between CH professionals and their various audiences, with special focus on young people and local communities.

What is a CHM plan?

A CHM plan is a document that explains management issues, approaches and requirements relating to museums and sets a framework for decision making over a given period of time. It is a clear and coherent plan for action, a guide to the future. It identifies areas of strength to build on, weaknesses to be addressed and opportunities to be exploited. Overall, it is a management tool for museums to use in planning their future activities and operations.

What are the main objectives of a CHM plan?

The main objectives of a CHM plan are: to protect the values of CH for present and future generations, to promote effective sustainability practices, to improve museums' operation, and to help museums reposition themselves in an ever-changing world, in order to be more relevant and better serve society.

What is the first step in preparing a CHM plan?

In order to prepare a successful CHM plan it is important to look outside the organization and understand how the external environment is changing. In other words, the first crucial step is to understand the needs, challenges and opportunities of this era. An in-depth understanding of the current situation in the CH sector will facilitate CH professionals to develop a CHM plan that provides a vision, aims and actions designed to address these needs. The ReInHerit project mapped the current status quo of the CH sector in Europe in order to provide an overview of the current needs, challenges and opportunities. In a nutshell the following needs were identified:

- a) Need for interdisciplinary collaboration so as to avoid fragmentation;
- b) Need to redefine the management of collections based on evolving ethical standards and new trends;
- c) Need for sustainable business models resilient to changes and crises;
- d) Need for climate and energy responsible museums;
- e) Need to redefine the relationship between museums and their various audiences (relevance and inclusivity).

What are the major issues that almost every CHM plan should address?

Taking into account the needs and challenges of this era, as well as the potential opportunities, museums should proceed to the second step, which is to design a CHM plan. The design of a CHM plan should be based on:

- a) a people centered and environmentally friendly approach to CHM with an open minded, "out of the box" and holistic vision;
- b) a clear orientation towards the ideas of sustainability and resilience as a framework for the development of long-term strategic cultural policies and the rethinking of patterns of consumption and current practices, modes of operation and managerial organization;

- c) a commitment to the concepts of inclusivity, relevance, innovation, accessibility, democratisation, ethics, diversity, professionalism, cooperation, and community participation;
- d) a clear vision on the application of digital technologies, which are of relevance to the CH sector.

Key issues in the designing process of a CHM plan are:

- a) a thorough understanding of the character of the CH (tangible or intangible) to be managed;
- b) an excellent knowledge of the wide set of legal instruments (hard and soft law ones) for safeguarding CH;
- c) a knowledge of all resources, both human and financial;
- d) a knowledge of the relevant key stakeholders that are involved in the protection and development of CH.

However, taking into consideration the “big picture” (needs and challenges), an updated and modern CHM plan should include clear strategies for the following issues: Collections Management, Energy and environmental Management, Intellectual Property (IP) Management, New ‘Business’ Models and Financing, and Audience engagement.

What is the importance of a CHM plan?

A CHM plan has the potential to help museums to tackle a complex reality with multiple challenges and bottlenecks that create specific urgent needs. Museums that develop a CHM plan are better prepared for the present and the future and are more likely to engage more people with CH and provide them enjoyable and meaningful experience compared to museums, which continue to follow traditional operating methods that do not respond to the needs of the modern era.

Links

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aT8jx -My2k&t=10s>

Resources needed

In the drafting procedure of a Cultural Heritage Management plan Financial Resources, Physical Resources, Intellectual Resources, Human Resources, and Digital Resources are needed.

Challenges encountered

In an ever-changing world, where rapid transformations (economic, social, technological, environmental) are taking place, museums and cultural heritage institutions must be constantly vigilant in order to respond to new needs.

Evidence of success

This research provided a solid background for the successful implementation of the next phases of the ReInHerit project. More specifically, it has paved the way for the development, communication, dissemination and exploitation of the ReInHerit Toolkit in WP3, the Digital Hub in WP4, and the Travelling and Digital Exhibitions Pilot Phase in WP6.

Potential for transfer

The focus is on how this CHM plan has been communicated to professionals through publications, conferences, and the ReInHerit Project (e.g. factsheets on the platform, the actual Plan published, webinars).

Further Information

<https://reinherit-hub.eu/factsheets/>



CulTourData - Supporting data-driven innovation for tourism SMEs in European Capitals of Culture

Author(s)

Materahub

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Type of best practice

Innovation (including 3D, AI, Big data, Metaverse, etc)

Keywords

culture, tourism, data, creative industries

CulTourData is a European project born to strengthen the arrangement of a multidisciplinary ecosystem involving players in tourism, Creative and Cultural sectors and digital fields. The project enhances data-driven, accessible and transformative cultural tourism across Europe by organizing a two-fold support scheme that targets both tourism SMEs and European Capitals of Culture. The project will stimulate the rise of better accelerator programs in the ECoCs.

Organisation in charge of best practice

Materahub

Location

Italy, Spain, Portugal, Germany, Netherlands, Belgium, Slovakia

Dates

January 2022 - January 2024

Description

The project targets tourism SMEs in the European Capitals of Culture and supports them to: Develop a data-driven approach beyond the right website, tool or application, helping them grasp the

importance of making data and analytics part of the tourism business strategies, offers and products, of their organizational processes and culture, if they want to be competitive, sustainable and attractive; Build the link between tourism destinations and tourism SMEs; the project focus on European Capitals of Culture and stretches the year event over a long- lasting period – from about ten years before the bid to a very long legacy – and actively involves tourism SMEs in the co-creation of the event, so as to spur sustainable tourism and sustainable development; Create a multidisciplinary business approach that leverages synergies between tourism, culture, creativity and digital technology; Experience a challenging funnel-like support scheme that includes capacity building, mentoring and learning, along with a collaborative creativity-oriented matchmaking, other than opportunities for financial support; Immerse themselves into a fun, evidence-based assessment process that combines communication, impact evaluation and self-assessment.

Links

<https://www.cultouriscapital.eu/cultourdata/>

<https://www.youtube.com/@cultouriscapital4899/playlists>

Resources needed

Cascade Funding of 70.000 euro - Online platform -

Challenges encountered

Engagement of SMEs in the call for funding.

Evidence of success

Over 30 cities past, current, future and running ECoCs supported the action - 60 projects funded for the cooperation between tourism SMEs, CCIs and data experts - longlist of 150 CCIs and data experts from all over Europe

Potential for transfer

Applicable in other European Capitals of Culture - Applicable in any area of Europe where the CCIs and Tourism are ready to cooperate with tech and digital experts.

Further Information

<https://deuscci.eu/cultourdata/> <https://www.cultouriscapital.eu/cultourdata/>

In Touch: making museum collections accessible and open to all people with multisensory disabilities at the Museum of Cycladic Art

Author(s)

Museum of Cycladic Art

Publication date

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Terms of reuse

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Type of best practice

Accessibility

Keywords

accessibility, mobile showcase, multisensory experience

The Museum of Cycladic Art has developed inclusive educational activities which were developed and implemented by the museum for children and adults with visual impairment and children and adults who are deaf and hard of hearing. The museum managed to increase accessibility and available programs which supported inclusion. This happened through research in the field of accessibility through the participation of the museum in EUfunded projects and through direct collaboration with schools for the blind. As a result, the permanent collections are accessible by people with hearing loss while the Cycladic Art collection is accessible by people with hearing loss and people with blindness.

Organisation in charge of best practice

Museum of Cycladic Art

Location

Athens

Dates

This is supposed to run throughout the year.

Description

The program "IN TOUCH" launched in 2022 to enable people with sensory disabilities (vision and hearing impairment) to access the permanent Cycladic Art exhibition. The program was realized within the framework of the European Erasmus+ Programme and is implemented with the support of Eurolife FFH, a strategic partner of the Museum of Cycladic Art.

It was designed in close cooperation with the Non-profit Civil Partnership (AMKE) "Me Alla Matia" and HandsUp - the first sign language interpreting agency in Greece - and was launched after a successful pilot run involving focus groups with individuals with sensory impairment.

The program includes the following:

1. Thematic tour and a mobile showcase for persons with visual impairment.

The thematic mobile showcase includes copies of key exhibits of the permanent exhibition of the museum and also texts in Braille. More specifically, the mobile showcase is a mobile unit with drawers containing copies of artifacts, tactile maps and other materials. These enable visitors with sensory disabilities (visual and auditory impairments) to experience the exhibits for the first time. Accompanied by trained museum staff, two or more individuals at a time will be able to follow a thematic route, taking them on a multisensory tour of Early Cycladic art and culture. Moreover, a floor plan of the exhibition space, tactile maps of Greece and the Cyclades, and real-size copies of exhibits and figurines made of marble or resin are also included. Apart from texts in Braille for the visually impaired, there are texts in large print available for visitors with partial vision, as well as an audio tour of the Collection of Cycladic Art, available in both Greek and English.

2. Multi-sensory museum kit related to Cycladic Culture, featuring the marble figurines of the Cycladic collection of the museum and the associated geographical/historical background.

The museum kit is created to take Cycladic culture also outside the museum. The museum kit contains an embroidered map, a tactile water map, stones, threads, and fragments of replica figurines. A video aimed primarily at teachers and programmers explains how the museum kit can be used for a journey through space and time.

3. A series of actions to make the Museum accessible to deaf or hard of hearing persons.

The permanent exhibition of Cycladic Art includes a video of a recorded tour in the Greek Sign Language, accompanied by Greek subtitles, and in International Sign, accompanied by English subtitles.

It is important to involve the direct target groups of the actions in all stages of development of the material and decision-making and not just present them with a final product. In this way, the material is produced and developed in a co-creative environment. Fostering collaboration between museums and local disability advocacy organizations to gain insights, feedback, and partnerships in implementing accessibility initiatives can lead to more museums becoming more accessible.

For the implementation of this Best Practice it is important to organize focus groups and several brainstorming sessions as well as pilot sessions with the direct target groups to ensure that the action designed will be relevant and useful.

Links

<https://cycladic.gr/en/koinonikaprogrammata/se-epafi/>

Resources needed

Designers specialized in accessibility, staff trained in inclusion and accessibility as well as museologists to produce relevant content. Material to produce copies of the objects will also be relevant.

Challenges encountered

The main challenge is to create a multidisciplinary team of people to collaborate and create a product that will be useful, relevant and practical. To overcome such difficulties, it is important to present all collaborators with a clear vision and objectives. Frequent team meetings and updates will ensure that everyone is on the same page. Another challenge encountered is to produce appropriate content with texts which will increase accessibility of museums. Therefore the close collaboration of inclusion and accessibility professionals with museum professionals is crucial for high quality descriptive texts in Braille.

Evidence of success

The programme "In Touch" has received a warm reception both by the communities of people with multisensory disabilities who felt welcomed to the museum and the local community in general. Its successful implementation and the fact that the mobile showcase, the museum kit and relevant tours and actions are part of the museum's standard practice is also evidence of its success.

Potential for transfer

This best practice is highly transferrable to a wide range of institutions from museums and galleries to libraries and archives. A special research needs to be conducted involving expert designers, inclusion scientists as well as museum professionals.

Further Information

More information is available here: <https://cycladic.gr/en/koinonikaprogrammata/se-epafi/>

The Styrian Iron Route, Austria: Fostering Industrial heritage tourism in Peripheral Regions

Author(s)

University of Graz

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Type of best practice

Cooperation between Museums and Heritage sites

Keywords

Cultural institutions, cultural marketing, cultural management

The region of the Styrian Iron Route is known for its rich mining and iron processing heritage with the still active Erzberg ore mine being an highlight. Additionally, the region also has a range of other cultural features (city, mineral, water works museums, etc.) present in various locations within the region. To raise the visibility and professionalism of the cultural offer and its tourism value a museum association was founded. This best practice presents the work of the association and its benefits for the cultural heritage organisations in the area.

Organisation in charge of best practice

MUSEUMSVERBUND BETRIEBS Ges.m.b.H., Mag. Susanne Leitner-Böchzelt

Location

Styria, Austria

Dates

2004 - current

Description

When we talk about the Steirische Eisenstraße, we do it in the context of being a regional association (VESTE) and a LEADER region. Both organisations cover parts of the industrial and mining area. The LEADER region includes 17 municipalities, the largest being the town of Leoben. It is the regions administrative, economic, urban and cultural centre with about 25.000 inhabitants. Furthermore, it is home to a polytechnical university, specialising in mining, metallurgy and material sciences. Also, the iron ore mountain still operates, being the biggest ore mining site in Europe. Other industries are

also still in place with the VOEST Alpine steel maker, being the one with the most international recognition.

In 2004, 12 regional museums in the region agreed to pool their resources and to form the Museum Association Steirische Eisenstrasse (Museumsverbund). The network is mostly composed of smaller heritage institutions with a narrow thematic focus. The overall aim of the cooperation is to raise the visibility of the different small museums in the area and improve the cultural offer via the pooling of resources, the support for joint funding applications, and knowledge exchange between the participating institutions.

At the centre of the association is the MuseumCentre Leoben/Kunsthalle, which is situated in the regional capital and has the biggest numbers of staff and visitors, providing stable and professional structures for the network. This is especially important in the regional context, as the themes covered by the different regional museums are wide, but their organisational structures are similar: they are mostly based on voluntary work, which leads to little time and workforce for new concept development or proper archiving. In this case, the association helps to maintain and improve the offer of the single museums without threatening their unique displays and themes by sharing staff and experiences, as well as lobbying for joint funding. Additionally, the association undertakes joint marketing efforts, constituting an umbrella brand and a platform, for shared marketing and therefore helping to raise the profile and the outreach of the regional offer mainly in a national context.

Due to the established network and exchange, the institutions now profit from an increased quality of their exhibitions, new funding, an increased outreach and joint archiving efforts. Overall, the cooperation has helped to build capacities in a rather dispersed heritage landscape outside the tourism mainstream, marked by many small, volunteer-based cultural institutions. Since 2016 the museum association, together with the „Abenteuer Erzberg“, is part of the European Route of Industrial Heritage (ERIH), further raising the profile of the cultural offer in the region.

Thereby, the Erzberg is one of the few public accessible surface mines of its kind in Europe and constitutes a USP. Also, a range of sports related offers are available, with the annual motocross event „Erzbergrodeo“ taking place right in the Erzberg mine. Furthermore, also the „Rostfest“, an already well established and known festival full of music, art interventions and discussions with links to the region's industrial heritage takes place. All and foremost it aims at exchange through creativity: Visitors talking with residents, thereby learning more about the region, providing impetus for participation and creative outputs. A best practice for regional development in peripheral areas through culture and tourism. Nonetheless the region has lost its once important position on the regional tourism market due to a lack of investment in infrastructures and high competition in the domestic market.

Links

<https://www.eisenstrassenmuseen.at/> <https://pages.facebook.com/eisenstrassenmuseen/>

Resources needed

The Association was founded thanks to the efforts of the involved museums: it needed therefore human resources (even if just on a voluntary base), and the financial support of the regional administration (AUT LEADER region Steirische Eisenstrasse).

Challenges encountered

With the scope of museums being different, as well as their organisational structure, collections, and visitors numbers a range of issues, such as gaining a common understanding of each other needs, aims, and collection scopes, needed to be addressed. In addition, traditional regional rivalries were also posing a challenge and needed to be smoother, finding a common ground to overcome such differences. The association aimed to address these challenges, although many structural problems, such as the reliance on voluntary work in many of the museum sites, are still on-going challenges.

Evidence of success

The founding of the association has resulted in a series of benefits for the regional cultural organisations, by increasing engagement both inside the region (local visitors) and with national and international tourists. It has paved the way for a better access to funding, a better knowledge exchange between cultural institutions and a unified marketing product, resulting in a better outreach and appeal of the region cultural tourism routes and structures. One of the key success factors of the association was the gradual change in the relationship with many stakeholders, who acknowledged the difficulties in achieving funding for small museums and the limits of voluntary work. The inclusion of professional partners from the tourism and museum sectors helped to address these limitations and support the achievement of the organisation's aims.

Potential for transfer

A joint museum association can be an important step to preserve cultural heritage, improve museum management and collaboration in a region, creating a more attractive and visible offer for visitors. It also safeguards (to a certain degree) the maintenance and survival of smaller cultural offers. It is therefore an attractive option for many regions. Nevertheless, the process has to be carefully prepared and moderated, so to overcome barriers in organisational cultures and achieve a sustainable and productive collaboration across all members.

Further Information

This best practice is related to the SPOT Horizon2020 project (www.spotprojecth2020.eu).

Enhancing cultural heritage sites through immersive performances - ReInHerit Case Study in Performance Design and Practice

Author(s)

CYENS

Publication date

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Type of best practice

VR/AR & Technologies, inc. Gamification & Immersive performances

Keywords

Cultural Heritage, Immersion, Performance, Interactivity, Interdisciplinary

This practice explores how an immersive performance enhances cultural heritage site experiences and encourages audience participation in them. It integrates interactive sound, live music, Real-Time visuals, and projection mapping, to create a multisensory environment. By breaking down traditional spectatorship norms, it fosters active engagement, blurring the line between observer and participant. The analysis is based on the conceptual framework and observations of audience interaction. All performance instructional materials and documentation are openly accessible, promoting transparency and knowledge sharing.

Organisation in charge of best practice

CYENS CoE

Location

Ethnological Museum of Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus

Dates

January 2022 to October 2022

Description

The immersive performance titled "ReInHerit in Performance: The Hadjigeorgakis

Kornesios Mansion", which took place on 29 October 2022 at the Ethnological Museum, in Nicosia, Cyprus, is a ground-breaking initiative in encouraging audience engagement within cultural heritage sites. This avant-garde experience seamlessly combines artistic mediums, integrating contemporary

music and cutting-edge technologies. Examining the conceptual framework and the dynamic interaction between the audience and the immersive environment of this performance reveals a deliberate effort to enhance visitors' experiences in cultural heritage sites and attract a more diverse audience.

Links

<https://reinherit.eu>

Resources needed

ReInHerit in Performance: The Hadjigeorgakis Kornesios Mansion" utilized 14 wireless speakers to create its soundscape, 14 mobile phones for triggering sounds and sending audio signals to the speakers using bluetooth, 3 3D-printed replicas of a selection of the venues exhibits, a massive outdoors projector and a home projector, two powerful PCs for real-time visuals, and ambient lights.

Challenges encountered

"Despite its success, the immersive performance faced challenges that need addressing for future improvements. Problems in timely and effective communication between the institutions involved in the performance led to delays in acquiring necessary licenses and did not contribute to the smooth development of the performance project. To address this challenge, coordination between project officers of all institutions involved needs to be in full swing from early stages of the project. Another important limitation was the lack of comprehensive qualitative data, primarily due to the small number of audience members answering questionnaires. This hindered a thorough assessment of the performance outcomes and a nuanced understanding of the audience's perceptions, emotions, and overall experience. The absence of such data limits the depth of analysis and interrupts a holistic evaluation of the performance's impact. In addressing this challenge, future iterations of immersive performances should prioritize the implementation of robust qualitative data collection methods, using well-designed questionnaires to provide a deeper understanding of audience engagement, emotional responses, and specific aspects of the performance that may present opportunities for improvement. "

Evidence of success

"The evaluation of ""ReInHerit in Performance: The Hadjigeorgakis Kornesios Mansion"" offers evidence of its success, with unexpected and promising outcomes. The event exceeded attendance expectations (divided in three performance slots), indicating heightened public engagement. The Bank of Cyprus Cultural Foundation (BoCCF), as the host organization, expressed overall satisfaction, emphasizing the achievement of project objectives, particularly in engaging a younger demographic and enhancing the visitor experience. The seamless integration of music and technology played a pivotal role in creating a captivating and immersive space, effectively delivering on the project's goals. Attendees actively followed musicians, showcasing their dynamic engagement with the live music element. The positive feedback and interest from visitors highlighted the value of incorporating interactive elements in the cultural heritage site experience, demonstrating a commitment to innovative technologies for engaging museum visitors. Exploring enhanced collaborations between artists, musicians, and technologists can lead to better results, enriching the field of immersive art practices. The interdisciplinary approach pushes the boundaries of immersive experiences, fostering innovation in the intersection of art and technology. The reported results of

the event indicate its broad appeal, attracting diverse age groups, ethnicities, and people with disabilities. The positive feedback, active audience participation, and challenges encountered collectively contribute to valuable insights for advancing the field of immersive cultural experiences.

Potential for transfer

"The consortium's commitment to open access is evident, as all materials and documentation for the performance are made available via the ReInHerit Digital Hub. This transparent approach aligns with the project's mission to disrupt communication between museums and cultural heritage sites, fostering inclusivity and encouraging the broader adoption of their innovative concept. All necessary resources, including documentation and instructions for replicating the performance are now accessible to the public through the ReInHerit Digital Hub, which includes a dedicated GitHub repository. This repository offers an extensive manual and open access to the interactive sound application's source code, encouraging and streamlining the broader adoption of our innovative approach. By making these materials readily available, we aim to empower institutions, professionals, and communities to explore, adapt, and integrate our immersive performance concept into their own cultural initiatives, contributing to the evolution of engaging and inclusive experiences within diverse cultural settings. "

Further Information

"The evaluation of ""ReInHerit in Performance: The Hadjigeorgakis Kornesios Mansion"" provides valuable insights for future research in the realm of immersive performances in cultural heritage sites. It emphasizes the crucial need to address technical challenges, enhance interactive elements, and delve into the emotional and cognitive impact of such experiences on visitors. The assessment identifies a key takeaway: the necessity to overcome technical hurdles to ensure seamless and effective interactive elements. This involves refining the technology used, potentially improving the performance of proximity sensor app for the sound installation, and resolving issues related to compatibility with changes in lighting and overcrowding. ""ReInHerit in Performance: The Hadjigeorgakis Kornesios Mansion "" acts as a catalyst for reshaping museum experiences. As a case study for immersive performance design advocates for continuous collaboration, innovation, and knowledge transfer within cultural institutions. This means encouraging ongoing partnerships between artists, technologists, and museums to drive positive transformations. The project's mission goes beyond its own success, aiming to inspire a broader cultural shift toward more engaging and meaningful museum experiences. "

Cultural heritage, innovation and sustainable development: the contribution of ReInHerit

Author(s)

Blue Shield

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Type of best practice

Audience and Local Community Engagement

Keywords

cultural heritage, sustainable development

The conference "Cultural heritage, innovation and sustainable development: the contribution of ReInHerit" organized by the Hellenic Committee of the Blue Shield was held in Athens, on 27th November 2023 in a hybrid (phygital) mode to facilitate the participation of international speakers and audiences and thus have a glocal impact, increase the ReInHerit project's visibility and improve its branding.

Organisation in charge of best practice

Hellenic Committee of the Blue Shield, Greece

Location

Athens, Greece and Online

Dates

Conference 27/11/2023, Survey 27/12/2023-30/01/2024

Description

The conference "Cultural heritage, innovation and sustainable development: the contribution of ReInHerit" organized by the Hellenic Committee of the Blue Shield was held in Athens, on 27th November 2023 in a hybrid (phygital) mode to facilitate the participation of international speakers and audiences and thus have a glocal impact, increase the ReInHerit project's visibility and improve its branding. The conference aimed at assessing the contribution of the ReInHerit project to sustainable development and compile policy recommendations made by the experts participating in it. Following the conference, a survey was conducted to understand how familiar the audience of our conference was with the outputs and the tools offered by the ReInHerit project and to create the conditions for a larger number of people to benefit from them. At the same time, the goal was to draw conclusions on what policies should be implemented to address the challenges CH

professionals are facing at an EU level. This survey made use of quantitative and qualitative data based on both open-ended and closed-ended, multiple choice questions. It was anonymous, was used to assess and evaluate the ReInHerit project's added value. The conference included four sessions. Session A. ReInHerit and social sustainability This session was dedicated to the contribution of the Reihnerit project's tools to the social dimensions of sustainable development. The overall aim was to showcase its model of social sustainability, focusing on its contribution to human development, based on cultural participation and accessibility to cultural heritage, respect of cultural diversity and viability of cultural institutions. Session B. ReInHerit and economic sustainability The second session was dedicated to the contribution of Reinherit's tools to economic sustainability of cultural organizations and local communities. Apart from the connection of Reinherit to the promotion of smart tourism and the contribution of cultural tourism and creativity to regional economies, other issues dealt in the project such as intellectual property rights and innovation were addressed. SESSION C. Reinherit and environmental sustainability This session focused on the Reinherit model contribution to environmental sustainability which encompasses the conservation of the broader cultural environment. SESSION D. Reinherit, peace and security and sustainability This session focused on the connection between the Reinherit project and the topics of peace, security and sustainability.

Some brief conclusions that can be drawn are the following:

In relation to the social sustainability dimension and the cultural heritage – innovation nexus, the focus on the ReInHerit methodology showed that what is of great importance is to facilitate participation, accessibility and social inclusion. Regarding the economic sustainability dimension and the cultural heritage – innovation nexus, it was shown that digital environments are key if we are to achieve community engagement and interaction, whereas digital learning platforms are crucial for the upskilling and reskilling of professionals. This was highlighted also in the survey conducted, with the vast majority of participants responding that they need to receive training and be provided with practical guidance. In terms of new technologies and digital social innovation, it was made clear that access and openness should be promoted, and investment is needed. Another issue that was underlined related to the environmental sustainability dimension and the cultural heritage – innovation nexus. A holistic approach is what is necessary in the implementation of the EU Green Deal and driving action in line with the SDGs. Finally, regarding Reinherit, peace, security and sustainability, there are three basic challenges that need to be addressed. Firstly, to ensure that a human centered approach is at the heart of the application of digital solutions and the development of new technologies. Secondly, to facilitate participation and thirdly to involve all stakeholders. All the measures and the policies to be implemented should take into account the role of cultural heritage in societies, integrate good practices already in place by international organisations, and last but not least have an integrated approach to culture, cultural values and cultural rights in the sustainable development goals.

Links

<https://www.hellenicblueshield.com/en/cultural-heritage-innovation-and-sustainabledevelopment-the-contribution-of-re%ce%b9n%ce%b7erit-2/>

Resources needed

Financial resources allocated by the ReInHerit budget of the Blue Shield. Human resources relying on the staff involved in the project as well as expertise both of the staff and the Scientific Committee involved in the organisation of the conference.

Challenges encountered

The challenges encountered relate mainly to the post-conference survey participation. Low participation and restricted geographical dispersion could mean that the results of the survey are not representative of all the countries participating in the project. The challenge was to motivate partners to disseminate the survey.

Evidence of success

First and foremost, our Committee achieved to engage policy makers and cultural heritage professionals so as to inform, influence, impact and embed robust evidence-based policymaking in the ReInHerit project results; that is the ReInHerit toolkit and the Digital Hub. To this end, our Committee engaged a variety of stakeholders including Universities and research institutes, Ministries of Culture and Sports, Education, Foreign Affairs, and civil society organisations such as Blue Shield International. The topics were proposed in close collaboration with the coordinator and the members of the consortium cover the thematic axes of the ReInHerit project, and they can have an impact both in terms of dissemination of the scientific results of the project and to gain valuable feedback from participants and various audiences in view of a broader strategy to inform public opinion. Our committee provides expertise, capacity and knowledge in the domain of cultural heritage and is an agent of representativity, mutual understanding and consensus. Therefore, we contributed to achieving the ReInHerit project's policy objectives in line with Blue Shield international goals and statutes.

Potential for transfer

The policy recommendations and the survey results can help draw conclusions on what policies should be implemented to address the challenges CH professionals are facing at an EU level and increase visibility of the project.

Further Information

<https://www.hellenicblueshield.com/en/home/>

<https://www.youtube.com/@blueshieldgreecebs-greekna3364/videos>

My story, our Europe empathy game for schools and video series on migrant influencers

Author(s)

University of Applied Science - Arcada

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Type of best practice

Audience and Local Community Engagement

Keywords

community, youth, co-creation, gamification, education, empathy, advocacy, visual media, digitalisation

Participation is a key part of The Helinä Rautavaara Ethnographic Museum. Community engagement and involvement is nurtured through free admission, enabling all community members to enjoy the collections, exhibitions and events organized. Various co-creation and co-curation activities also support the goal of participation. Young people are activated through various activities such as school visits. A concrete recent example of youth engagement is the development of an empathy game, a video series and a campaign featuring young asylum seekers. The aim of the empathy game was to increase young people's understanding of migration and to develop the empathy they felt for other people.

Organisation in charge of best practice

Helinä Rautavaara Ethnographic Museum, Espoo, Finland

Location

Espoo, Finland

Dates

2020-2021

Description

The Helinä Rautavaara Ethnographic Museum, founded in 1998 is based on the collections of explorer, journalist and collector Helinä Rautavaara (1928-1998). It houses Finland's largest collection of West African objects, tens of thousands of photographs, hundreds of hours of recordings and dozens of hours of film and is the only ethnographic museum in Finland. The mission of the museum is to bring together different people and working in a variety of ways to increase understanding and dialogue between cultures.

Participation, pluralism, reciprocity and topicality are key values.

In 2021-2022 the museum created an empathy game as part of the broader European project “I am European; migrant Stories and Facts for the 21st Century”, which aimed to increase young people’s understanding of migration and to develop the empathy they felt for other people. The concept also included a series of videos and a campaign in which young influencers of migrant background talk about influencing, dreams and wishes, identity issues, studies, working, residency permits, racism and what it is like living in Finland.

The theme of the empathy enhancing game is the process of applying for a residency permit in Finland. Young asylum seekers were interviewed to collect their experiences, feelings and thoughts on being a refugee, being relocated and going through the process of getting a residence permit. They were also involved in other development stages of the game and were part of the team that ran the game in schools. For students and teachers the game gave them new perspectives on being a refugee. Young people of refugee status felt that the game was an important way to increase dialogue and understanding. The Helinä Rautavaara Ethnographic Museum was the first museum in Finland to take advantage of gaming methods. A first attempt at this was the development of an escape game dealing with climate change, also developed for young people.

Participation is a key part of the museum’s activities. A guiding belief is that by involving communities the museum increases wellbeing, reduces marginalization and helps to nurture peace within society. This is also why the museum does not charge an admission fee because it believes everyone has the right to enjoy cultural activities. Community involvement and co-creation activities with the ethnically diverse groups that reside in the greater Helsinki area is actively maintained through co-curation, getting people involved in planning and doing, facilitating various activities, and sharing the resources of the museum. Active involvement with the originating communities is key, as the museum believes they are the true holders of the Collection. Another form of community engagement that the museum is involved in is its internship programme. The museum offers internships to people of migrant background, who often have a hard time finding employment in Finland.

Links

<https://www.helinamuseo.fi/en/study-and-learn/projects/i-am-european>

Resources needed

30 000 euros

Challenges encountered

The project My story, our Europe was launched during the Corona Pandemic which restricted and delayed its use in schools. The original target was to reach 600 students, but the actual numbers were around 300.

Evidence of success

The videos and publications on the influencers of migrant background reached 2,911 viewers on social media. In addition, 453 people engaged (commented, liked or re-shared) the posts. In the greater Helsinki area, more than 300 secondary-school students played the game and gave it very

good feedback. The museum has received several awards; Honorary Mention, Global Education Award (Global Education Network Europe) 2020/2021; Finalist, Museum of the Year Award, 2019-2020; Honorary Mention, Annual Award in Museum Pedagogy 2017.

Potential for transfer

The empathy game can be used in other countries after translation. Content would need to be adjusted to local conditions through involvement of young asylum seekers and testing with them. According to European surveys, young people have become sensitive to the heated debate on migration and long for positive, personal narratives and facts. In light of these facts, not only is transfer of this Best Practice possible, but also highly relevant and topical in the current societal and political climate in Europe.

Further Information <https://www.helinamuseo.fi/en/> Ilona Niinikangas, Museum Director, ilona.ninikangas@helinamuseo.fi Foto credits: Karri Anttila/Lvngroom

topotheque Graz - a platform of local, historical relevant material in private hands accessible online

Author(s)

Graz Museum

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Type of best practice

Innovation (including 3D, AI, Big data, Metaverse, etc)

Keywords

citizen science, collection, participation

The Topotheque (a project by ICARUS - International Centre for Archival Research) is a platform which makes local, historical relevant material and knowledge, that is kept in private hands, accessible online, in cooperation with the local population. The Topotheque is an online archive, operated in local entities. Images, audio, video as well as documents and the information about these objects can be found in topotheques. These Treasures mainly hidden in private hands can be unveiled and be made accessible digitally for anybody independent of space and time. The Graz Museum opened up a topotheque for Graz in 2019: <https://graz.topothek.at/>

Organisation in charge of best practice

ICARUS – International Centre for Archival Research

Location

Graz, Austria (and other European Countries)

Dates

topotheque Graz: 2019 - ongoing

Description

The topotheque is an regional historical source of reference, focusing on not only preserving historical material kept in private hands but making it visible to the public. Topotheques already exist in a number of different European countries. This allows for a comparison of regional historical conditions on a European level, making the diversity and common grounds of every-day life tangible. As a virtual collection, the Topotheque is easily expandable and doesn't have to comply with editorial deadlines or page limits.

The main aim of the Topotheque is to make the historical heritage of Europe digitally available via the Internet – in accordance with up-to-date indexing one can find image or file content sorted by key words, date and perspective on the map.

It is all about local history and collaborative remembering and knowledge in a modern way of presenting and preserving it for future generations.

The diverse history of a community calls for a modern presentation: The unifying functionality of a database can accomplish the aggregation of dispersed material, documents and knowledge and step in where the sheer amount of images may overstrain the capacities of museums and local chronicles. The Topotheque may be expanded constantly, with search, link and location functionalities, .

Only regional forces can preserve local history comprehensively and in detail. For this reason, the topotheque managers ought to be anchored in their municipality. With their knowledge of and familiarity with local circumstances, topotheque managers can locate and identify relevant historical sources and in turn ensure high-quality indexing and localization of topotheque entries.

With the functionality of indexation and localization, historical material dispersed in private property can be virtually unified by a topotheque especially. For instance, searching the term “Main street 18” invokes all entries, in which this specific building is documented. Searching for terms such as “stroller” oder “fieldwork” shows all images or texts that include said search terms likewise. Search results of great value can resolve from genealogical research, since many ancestors are traceable by name. The original source material and all rights of use, which go beyond the presentation through a topotheque, remain with the respective right holders!

Links

<https://www.topothek.at/en/>

Resources needed

A topotheque contract, topotheque managers and technical infrastructure (e.g. scanner), a local community (volunteer workers, citizen scientists...)

Challenges encountered

In the first years it is important to build up a network and community of helpers for the topotheque. If not it can be challenging because the topotheque managers can be overwhelmed by the number of material that is offered by the people.

Evidence of success

The topotheque community is growing rapidly: As of November 2020, more than 220 individual topotheques are online in Austria alone. In September 2021, the value of 1,000,000 uploaded documents was reached. As of December 2022, over 400

Topotheques in almost 20 countries (such as Germany, Estonia, Finland, Italy, Croatia, Romania, Sweden, Switzerland, Serbia, Spain, the Czech Republic, Hungary, etc., as well as by institutions and private individuals) can be found on the homepage.

Potential for transfer

There is a high potential for transfer because a topotheque is an easy to handle tool.

Further Information

For museums and other cultural heritage institutions the topotheque can be really helpful for trying out participatory approaches, creating or expanding a community and working with people outside the museum. People's knowledge, experiences and memories are at the center of this format of collecting.



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