From museum education to public engagement
Trends and practices in European museums

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Learning about heritage/Learning through heritage

Audience development

Participation

Public/Publics

Emotions
LEARNING ABOUT HERITAGE
LEARNING THROUGH HERITAGE
A «new» concept of learning

“Learning is a process of active engagement with experience. It is what people do when they want to make sense of the world. It may involve an increase in skills, knowledge, understanding, values, feelings, attitudes and capacity to reflect. Effective learning leads to change, development and the desire to learn more.”

www.campaign-for-learning.org.uk
Lifelong learning

“All learning activities undertaken throughout life with the objective of improving knowledge, skills, competencies in a personal, civic, social or working perspective”
Generic Learning Outcomes 2001

https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/measuring-outcomes/generic-learning-outcomes
Generic Social Outcomes

https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/measuring-outcomes/generic-social-outcomes
Learning in the museum

Learning about heritage

Learning through heritage
8 Key competences

1. Communication in the mother tongue.
2. Communication in the foreign languages.
3. Mathematical competence and basic competences in science and technology.
4. Digital competence.
5. Learning to learn.
6. Interpersonal, intercultural and social competences and civic competence.
7. Entrepreneurship.
8. Cultural expression.
I love cultural heritage

Transversal competences

https://ibc.regione.emilia-romagna.it/progetti/progetti-1/concorso-di-idee-io-amo-i-beni-culturali
DIGITAL COMPETENCES
CULTURAL AWARENESS
SOCIAL AND CIVIC COMPETENCES
SENSE OF INITIATIVE AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP
Well being
Increased self confidence
Longer life expectancy
Creativity
Learning a language in a museum
Creative writing at the V&A

Creative writing project: introduction

The Museum and the Word
Whenever we go round a museum or gallery we talk to our companions and (silently) to ourselves. We reach for words to point out the things we see, to express the thoughts they stir up in us and the way they make us feel.

Most of the time our words are casually chosen, quickly lost. But there are times when we shape them into a more lasting form. We write an entry in a diary, we email a friend or send them a letter about what we have seen.

Related content
V&A gallery text guidelines
Creative writing project reading list
Creative writing project: 5 Finding a form
Creative writing project: 1 Looking
Creative writing project: 3 Imagining
Creative writing project: 7 Beyond the Museum
Creative writing project: 2 Feeling and reflecting
1. Looking
Learning to look carefully and describe what we see is only a beginning. We have to have something to say, ideas we want to express.

2. Feeling and reflecting
Through the power of the imagination we can move far beyond our immediate experience. Objects can spark off a story-telling urge. The people in portraits can tell us what's on their minds.

3. Imagining
Together with finding something to say, we need to think about the best way to express it. Looking for the right words and images takes patience. During this process it often turns out that a piece of writing changes. There are times when it ends up as something quite different to our original concept.
4. **Shaping**
Along the way decisions must be made about which literary form to use.

5. **Finding a form**
No piece of creative writing is finished until it has been given a proper polish. Every sentence, every word needs to be carefully considered to see whether it can be improved on.

6. **Revising and polishing**
Of course, the techniques described in these pages can be applied more widely.
AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT
Audience Development is a strategic, dynamic and interactive process of making the arts widely accessible. It aims at engaging individuals and communities in experiencing, enjoying, participating in and valuing the arts through various means. It can be understood in various ways, depending on its objectives and target groups:

- **widening audiences** (attracting audiences with the same socio-demographic profile as the current audience)
- **deepening relationship with the audiences** (enhancing the experience of the current audiences)
- **diversifying audiences** (attracting people with a different socio-demographic profile, including people with no previous contact with the arts)
STUDY ON AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT
HOW TO PLACE AUDIENCES AT THE CENTRE OF CULTURAL ORGANISATIONS

AT A GLANCE

This summary addresses organisations, institutions, professionals, academics and students active in the cultural field. If you feel you fit in one or more of these categories, or if you are simply interested in the relationship between culture and people, continue reading.

TO REMEMBER:

AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT

IS A STRATEGIC APPROACH

ADDRESSES TRADITIONAL & NEW AUDIENCES

USES DIFFERENT TOOLS & STRATEGIES

REQUIRES PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES

IS A TRIGGER FOR CHANGE

PLACING AUDIENCES AT THE CENTRE

IS NOT A “SPECIAL” PROJECT

IS NOT RESPONSIBILITY OF A SINGLE DEPARTMENT

COMES WITH A PRICE TAG

IS AN INSTITUTIONAL DIMENSION AND REQUIRES:

TAKING RISKS, INVESTING RESOURCES & FACING A CHANGE PROCESS
How to develop the audience

- Mapping the community and establishing a close relation with it
- Non visitor research
- Developing audience driven/participatory activities
- Diversifying the staff
Story House Belvedere - Rotterdam
The book and the exhibition contains 155 group portraits. HERE A SNEAK PREVIEW: nine examples of photos from Rotterdam, the Netherlands (Click picture to enlarge)
REPORT 6
Audience research as an essential part of building a new permanent exhibition

Stories from the field
Appendix 1
Gallo-Roman Museum – Sample questionnaire: adults

INTRODUCTION

Face-to-face

I'm...... from the Gallo-Roman Museum. We are going to give our museum a complete overhaul. So we are conducting a survey to find out what people think about museums and what they expect of a museum. This survey is very important to the museum. It takes about 20 minutes to answer the questions. There are no wrong answers. All we are interested in is your opinion. Are you prepared to help us?

A.
Have you taken part in a study about museums in the last 12 months?
YES _____________________________ 1 [ ] → STOP
NO _____________________________ 2 [ ]

B.
Do you or does someone else in your household work in any of the following sectors?
Advertising/Promotion _____________________________ 1 [ ] → STOP
Marketing _____________________________ 2 [ ] → STOP
Market research _____________________________ 3 [ ] → STOP
Journalism / Public relations _____________________________ 4 [ ] → STOP
Museum _____________________________ 5 [ ] → STOP
None of these _____________________________ 6 [ ]

C.
Apart from this museum, do you ever visit museums or exhibitions about the past here in Belgium or abroad?
YES _____________________________ 1 [ ]
NO _____________________________ 2 [ ]

D. QUESTIONNAIRE

In this interview we would like to find out what your expectations and preferences are when visiting an archaeological museum or a historical exhibition. Bearing in mind, we are talking about a history or archaeology museum. There are no right or wrong answers. What matters is your opinion.

1. In a museum are you looking to:
A. experience something and relax
B. learn something
C. be with family or friends
D. enjoy the peace and quiet and soak up the atmosphere
E. reflect on life
F. admire the exhibits

If you have given more than 3 answers, which 3 would you choose above the others?
(interviewer: write down the letters)
1. _____________________________
2. _____________________________
3. _____________________________

2. Do you prepare in advance for what you are going to see in the museum?
   e.g. at home you read up on the exhibits or on the topics dealt with in the museum
   A. Yes, I how? _____________________________
   B. No

3. When you arrive at the museum:
   A. do you want to find an overview of everything there is to see and experience
   B. do you want to work out a route according to your interests
   C. do you simply want to start your visit and see what comes along

4. In a museum:
   A. are you usually only interested in the highlights and the broad outlines
   B. do you usually want to see everything

5. In a historical museum:
   A. do you want to familiarise with history
6. You are more attracted to a museum:
☐ A. which provides clear and concise information about new research
☐ B. which involves and fascinates you

7. Which do you prefer to do?
☐ A. watch an atmospheric scientific documentary about what our distant ancestors looked like
☐ B. put together a skeleton of a Neanderthal so as to learn about his physique

8. Is it important to you that a historical museum:
☐ A. is objective and shows you what really went on in the past
☐ B. conjures up the atmosphere so that you can interpret history for yourself

9. When you visit a historical museum
☐ A. do you want to talk to your family or friends about what you see
☐ B. do you prefer to explore on your own

10. If a subject interests you in a historical museum
☐ A. would you like to receive in-depth information about that subject in the museum
☐ B. would you like a general introduction in the museum, but to study the subject in greater depth at home

11. What would you most like to know about the distant past?
☐ A. very specific things about people’s daily lives
e.g. What did a Neanderthal / a child eat?
☐ B. general, major changes in history
e.g. What were the consequences of the end of the Ice Age?

12. What should a historical museum definitely offer?
☐ A. fun, hands-on assignments
☐ B. informative and fascinating short films

13. What appeals to you most: the distant past of
☐ A. Tongeren, Belgium’s oldest city
☐ B. Limburg

14. In a museum do you mainly look for:
☐ A. facts and figures
e.g. When was Caesar born and who were his mistresses?
☐ B. the why and wherefore of things
e.g. Why did Caesar conquer our region?

15. In an historical or archaeological museum, besides learning something about the past, you are also interested in:
☐ A. finding out about the world of archaeology and excavations
☐ B. finding out how the exhibitions are put together
☐ C. establishing links between past and present
☐ D. none of these things

16. How do you prefer to obtain information during your visit? Please answer “Yes, definitely” or “No, not really”.
☐ A. a guided tour with a tour guide
☐ B. a brochure
☐ C. panels of text
☐ D. drawings and photographs
☐ E. maps
☐ F. audio equipment (audio-guide)
☐ G. sound recordings
☐ H. films
☐ I. models of buildings or cities
☐ J. multimedia and computers
☐ K. other what? ..................

If you gave more than 2 yes answers: You answered yes to ... (interviewer: read out the respondent’s yes answer). Which two are most important to you? (interviewer: write down the latter)
☐ 1. ................
☐ 2. ................
PARTICIPATION
About

The Participatory Museum is a practical guide to working with community members and visitors to make cultural institutions more dynamic, relevant, essential places. It was written by Nina Simon. I’m an exhibit designer, museum consultant, and the author of the Museum 2.0 blog.

The book is available for purchase, perusal, and discussion.

To whet your appetite, here is what Elaine Heumann-Bluhm, leading international museum consultant and author of Civilizing the Museum has said about The Participatory Museum:

Nina Simon’s new book is essential for museum directors interested in experimenting with audience participation on the one hand and curating about...
"The Participatory Museum"
Nina Simon, 2010

• "People use the institution as a meeting place to start a dialogue about the presented content. Instead of being "on" something or "for" someone, participatory institutions are created and managed "with" visitors. “

• "Instead of presenting the same content to all, a participatory institution collects and shares several personalized contents, co-produced with visitors. It invites visitors to meet and enrich the exhibition with objects, scientific and historical evidence.

Participation
Nina Simon, The participatory museum, 2010
Research on Participatory governance of cultural heritage 2015
Placing participatory projects on a continuum
Contributory, collaborative projects
Forssa Museum Forssa, Finland
Contributory, collaborative projects
Riverside Museum, Glasgow, UK
Riverside Advisory Panels

• Community Panel – Comprising frequent visitors to the old Museum of Transport, community organisations and locally elected representatives
• Education Panel – Comprising educational development specialists, teachers and college lecturers, covering pre-school to further education
• Access Panel – Represents people with disabilities and special needs, and covering a range of disabilities including sensory impairments, learning difficulties, and autistic spectrum disorders
• Teen Panel – Comprising local high school students aged 13 to 17
• Junior Panel – Comprising local primary school pupils aged seven to 12
Riverside Advisory Panels
Co-creative and hosted projects
The Open Museum, Glasgow, UK
Implications of participatory approaches for museum learning
The museum doesn’t know all codes
Encouraging visitors to complement stories
Multiple perspectives
“Collective conversations”
Manchester Museum
Creating a new narrative: making space for multiple voices

“The significance of a museum lies not only in its collections, but also in the reflections and insights it is able to trigger around the objects, the knowledge it provides and the multiple visions and interpretations it offers on the heritage in its care”.
Adding people’s views and interpretation

“Acknowledging that the museum is not the repository of the “truth”, but that its contents are arranged by fallible and culturally influenced humans, leads to the suggestion that the messages emanating from museums are themselves stories, narratives to be read and understood by the visitor.”

G. Hein
Hosted projects
«Anything goes», National Museum Warsaw, Poland
PUBLIC/PUBLICS
Gardner’s Multiple Intelligences

- **Verbal-Linguistic**: Learning through spoken and written words: reading, listening, speaking and writing.
- **Mathematical-Logical**: Learning through reasoning and problem-solving: numbers.
- **Musical**: Learning through songs, patterns, rhythms, instruments, and musical expression.
- **Visual-Spatial**: Learning visually and organizing ideas spatially: think in images and pictures and “see” things in one’s mind.
- **Bodily/Kinesthetic**: Learning through interaction with one’s environment: concrete experiences.
- **Intrapersonal**: Learning through feelings, values, and attitudes: understand other people.
- **Interpersonal**: Learning through interactions with others: working collaboratively and cooperatively.
- **Naturalist**: Learning through classification, categories, and hierarchies: ability to pick up on subtle differences.
- **Existential**: Learning by seeing the “big picture”: connects real world understandings and application to new learning.
The experiential learning theory by David Kolb
Kolb’s learning theory

- Effective learning is seen when a person progresses through a cycle of four stages: of (1) having a concrete experience followed by (2) observation of and reflection on that experience which leads to (3) the formation of abstract concepts (analysis) and generalizations (conclusions) which are then (4) used to test hypothesis in future situations, resulting in new experiences.

- It is possible to enter the cycle at any stage and follow it through its logical sequence.

- However, effective learning only occurs when a learner can execute all four stages of the model. Therefore, no one stage of the cycle is effective as a learning procedure on its own.
Kolb’s learning theory

- Kolb's learning theory (1974) sets out four distinct learning styles, which are based on a four-stage learning cycle.

- Kolb explains that different people naturally prefer a certain single different learning style.

- Various factors influence a person's preferred style. For example, social environment, educational experiences, or the basic cognitive structure of the individual.

- Whatever influences the choice of style, the learning style preference itself is actually the product of two pairs of variables, or two separate 'choices' that we make, which Kolb presented as lines of an axis, each with 'conflicting' modes at either end:
A typical presentation of Kolb's two continuums is that the east-west axis is called the Processing Continuum (how we approach a task), and the north-south axis is called the Perception Continuum (our emotional response, or how we think or feel about it).

Kolb believed that we cannot perform both variables on a single axis at the same time (e.g., think and feel). Our learning style is a product of these two choice decisions.
Kolb’s learning styles

- Concrete Experience
  - Feeling
  - CE/AE

- Abstract Conceptualisation
  - Thinking
  - AC/AE

- Processing
  - How we think about things

- Continuum
  - How we think about things

- Perception Continuum
  - How we think about things

- Reflective Observation
  - Watching
  - CE/RO

- Accommodating
  - (feel and do)
  - CE/AE

- Diverging
  - (feel and watch)
  - CE/RO

- Converging
  - (think and do)
  - AC/AE

- Assimilating
  - (think and watch)
  - AC/RO

© concept and design by Chapman, 2005-06, based on Kolb’s Learning Styles, 1984

Not for sale or publication. More free online learning resources at www.businessballs.com. Sole use is welcome.
Kolb’s learning style questionnaire

DIVERGERS

• These people are able to look at things from different perspectives. They are sensitive. They prefer to watch rather than do, tending to gather information and use imagination to solve problems. They are best at viewing concrete situations from several different viewpoints.

• Kolb called this style 'diverging' because these people perform better in situations that require ideas-generation, for example, brainstorming. People with a diverging learning style have broad cultural interests and like to gather information.

• They are interested in people, tend to be imaginative and emotional, and tend to be strong in the arts. People with the diverging style prefer to work in groups, to listen with an open mind and to receive personal feedback.
Diverger: imagination, feelings, creativity
Assimilators

• The Assimilating learning preference involves a concise, logical approach. Ideas and concepts are more important than people. These people require good clear explanation rather than a practical opportunity. They excel at understanding wide-ranging information and organizing it in a clear, logical format.

• People with an assimilating learning style are less focused on people and more interested in ideas and abstract concepts. People with this style are more attracted to logically sound theories than approaches based on practical value.

• This learning style is important for effectiveness in information and science careers. In formal learning situations, people with this style prefer readings, lectures, exploring analytical models, and having time to think things through.
Assimilator: theory, logic, facts
• People with a converging learning style can solve problems and will use their learning to find solutions to practical issues. They prefer technical tasks, and are less concerned with people and interpersonal aspects.

• People with a converging learning style are best at finding practical uses for ideas and theories. They can solve problems and make decisions by finding solutions to questions and problems.

• People with a converging learning style are more attracted to technical tasks and problems than social or interpersonal issues. A converging learning style enables specialist and technology abilities. People with a converging style like to experiment with new ideas, to simulate, and to work with practical applications.
Converger: theory and practice, problem solving
• The Accommodating learning style is 'hands-on,' and relies on intuition rather than logic. These people use other people's analysis, and prefer to take a practical, experiential approach. They are attracted to new challenges and experiences, and to carrying out plans.

• They commonly act on 'gut' instinct rather than logical analysis. People with an accommodating learning style will tend to rely on others for information than carry out their own analysis. This learning style is prevalent within the general population.
Accomodator: experience, involvement, hands on
Educational implications

Educators should ensure that activities are designed and carried out in ways that offer each learner the chance to engage in the manner that suits them best.
LEARNING AS VISITOR EXPERIENCE

- in research team
- as participant

- observation
- interaction
- role playing

- identification

- participation

- knowledge & insight
- facts
- concepts
- abstract insight

- inquiry & design
- observing
- manipulating
- reasoning
- creating

- reflection

- engagement

- cognitive
- social
- emotional
- aesthetics
- sensory/motor

- meta-knowledge
- ethics
- history
- methodology
- techniques

Copyright: NEMO Science Learning Center, November 2014
EMOTIONS
A change in paradigm

“Now that the focus is shifting from the museum to the visitor, the emotional aspects becomes central in an increasingly broad and varied scenario of possible cultural experiences”

Giuliano Gaia
Can the museum trigger emotions in all its functions?
Museum of the History of Sarajevo
War Childhood Museum
Museum of Broken Relationships
Arousing emotions through the displays
Arousing emotions through educational activities
Storytelling
Resistance Museum Junior Amsterdam
Museums... closing the empathy deficit

• Research reveals a 48-percent decline in empathy over the past four decades, with a particularly sharp decrease in emotional empathy—so-called empathic concern


• http://empatheticmuseum.weebly.com
Empathy: a definition

The action of understanding, being aware of, being sensitive to, and vicariously experiencing the feelings, thoughts, and experience of another of either the past or present without having the feelings, thoughts, and experience fully communicated in an objectively explicit manner.
RESOURCES
• Use of **REAL objects** or replicas, but always inspired by the collections (Het Valkhof, Dutch Resistance, Tropenmuseum…)

• **Experiential learning, constructivist theories, learning by doing.** (Drents Archive: Not explaining how an archive functions, but assuming that learning from personal experience has more enduring learning outcomes)

• **Differentiation** of learning objectives and visitors’ experiences (NEMO’s taxonomy)

• Inquiry based and discovery learning and an experiential approach. **Connection to formal education** (history, art, technology), sometimes in line with the curriculum, most of the time in addition and complementary to it (Museon, all)

• **Creativity, interactivity** (both through people – Tropenmuseum Junior, Jewish Museum Junior - and digital means, **combination of computer based and physical interaction**, hands on…Drents Archive, Wonderkamers)
Keywords

• EXPERIENCE (Sound and Vision, Offshore Experience, Geofort...)

• GAME based educational learning (Wonderkamers, Drents Archive, Geofort...)

• Technology a tool and not an end in itself

• Immersive, theatrical, multisensory (Tropenmuseum Junior, Offshore Experience, Wonderkamers), but well researched

• Participatory/collaborative approach with the end users: children, young people

• Testing, prototyping, involvement at planning stage (Naturalis, Drents Archief), advisory groups (Dutch Resistance Museum Junior), R&D NEMO

• Connecting past, present and future (Museon, Offshore, Continium...), working with industries
Most Recent NEMO Webinar

- Museums, Markets and Eudaimonia, facilitated by Marie Bringuigio, Professor, University of Malta on 25 February 2019. Co-organised with MICC and NEMECH.

Past Webinars

- Maker-in-Residence: How museum professionals can collaborate with local creative partners, facilitated by Jenny Siung, Head of Education at the Chester Beatty Library, Ireland, on 30 October 2018. Co-organised with MICC and NEMECH.
- From Mine to Mind-Map: A dialogue-based approach to museum planning at Spaç Prison, facilitated by Jonathan Eaton and Miran Bližič on 25 June 2018, co-organised with MICC and NEMECH.
- Museums for All? Going beyond ramps and toilets to embrace access and inclusion for Deaf and disabled people delivered by Michèle Taylor on 16 May 2018, co-organised with MICC and NEMECH.
- The N.L. Factor - A journey in the educational world of Dutch museums delivered by Margherita Sani on 29 January 2018, co-organised with MICC and NEMECH.
- The Art of Relevance delivered on 16 September 2017 by Nina Simon as part of “Museums Meet Museums - European Seminar”, organised in cooperation with NEMO’s member the National Network of Romanian Museums.
- Museums Health and Well Being delivered on 16 June 2017 by Mark O’Neill, co-organised with MICC and NEMECH.
- The great revolution of European museums delivered on 5 April 2017 by Massimo Negri, co-organised with MICC and NEMECH.
- Museums as intercultural spaces: exploring new paradigms delivered on 30 November 2016 by Dr. Simona Bodo, organised in cooperation with MICC and NEMECH.
- La place des émotions dans les musées: le point de vue du scénographe delivered on 28 September 2016 by Arch. Lorenzo Greppi and organised in cooperation with MICC and NEMECH.
- New digital tools and techniques for Cultural Heritage and Museums was delivered on 1 June 2016 by Prof. Alberto Del Bimbo, Dr. Andrea Ferracani and Dr. Daniele Fezzatini (MICC and NEMECH) and organised in cooperation with MICC and NEMECH.
- The Creative Museum broadcast from Bolonia, Italy on 8 October 2015 from 10.00-13.00 presenting the first
http://online.ibc.regione.emilia-romagna.it/I/libri/pdf/LifelongLearninginMuseums.pdf
Adults
Families
pp. 59-62

Lifelong Learning in Museums
A European Handbook
Edited by Kirsten Gibble, Margherita Seri, June Thompson
Young People
pp. 62-69
Older People
pp. 69-73

Lifelong Learning in Museums
A European Handbook
Edited by Kirsten Gibble, Margherita Sanz, June Thompson
LEM – The Learning Museum Project reports
Resources

• http://online.ibc.regione.emilia-romagna.it/I/libri/pdf/LEM2nd-report-heritage-and-the-ageing-population.pdf


• http://online.ibc.regione.emilia-romagna.it/I/libri/pdf/LEM_report_n8.pdf
