International Perspectives on Museum Management

Edited by Darko Babić

ICOM Museum Practice

International Perspectives on Museum Management

International Perspectives on Museum Management is the first volume of the ICOM Museum Practice series. Exploring contemporary practices in the field of museum management, the book demonstrates how strategic vision and effective leadership can enable museums to fulfil their varied roles and empower staff to achieve their individual and collective objectives.

Gathering together contributions that shed light on key aspects of running a museum in different parts of the world, the volume examines a wide range of topical issues from a management perspective. Chapters within the volume focus on governance and operations, communication and marketing, accessibility and community engagement, the decline in public funding, sustainability and risk management, and planning a new museum or a renewal. As a whole, the book demonstrates that competent and creative museum management is vital to museums' ability to survive and thrive in the face of decreased investment in culture and shifting expectations on the roles that museums should play within society.

Containing insights from respected museum professionals around the world and focusing on topical issues, *International Perspectives on Museum Management* will be essential reading for museum practitioners working in all types and sizes of museums. The book will also be of great interest to students and academics who have an interest in museum management.

Darko Babić (Associate Professor; PhD in Museum and Heritage Studies) is Chair of the Sub-Department of Museology at the Faculty of Humanities & Social Sciences of the University of Zagreb (Croatia). After earning his MA in Ethnology and Information Sciences, he gained experience working as a project manager on international projects, as an organiser of museum and heritage conferences, as an archivist and as an assistant on national TV. He is active in contributing to the advancement of the museum and heritage profession serving as Board member and Chair of ICOM Croatia, as Board member and Chair of ICOM-ICTOP and as a member of the Supervisory Committee to the European Association for Heritage Interpretation. His research interests include topics related to museums, heritage and their development, management and interpretation. He also has working experience on EU projects and as a freelance consultant in the museum and heritage sectors, including in non-governmental organisations.

ICOM Museum Practice

Drawing on the expertise of an extensive network of museum professionals, the *ICOM Museum Practice* series will provide the reader with an international, multidisciplinary perspective, thus leading to a broader understanding of the museum's global mission.

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Introduction

International Perspectives on Museum Management

Looking Towards Desirable Futures

As they develop and adapt amid rapidly changing contemporary contexts, today's museums are grappling with new concepts, trends and tools. Engaging with everything from digital technologies to accessibility concerns, problems of community engagement to postcolonial museology, 21st-century museums have seen fundamental shifts in the roles that they play within society, how they interact with their audiences and carry out their missions as cultural institutions and social actors.

Management impacts all aspects of operations, but it may be viewed as a means to an end, particularly by enabling institutions to properly carry out what are considered to be the core museum missions – from conservation and research to collecting and educating. Although the term 'management' was initially associated with the business world, the museum sector now clearly recognises the importance of management and its relevance for not-for-profit institutions, particularly in an era of profound economic challenges. Strategic vision and effective leadership should enable museums to fulfil their varied roles, whether technical, logistical and scientific or social and educational, and empower staff to achieve their individual and collective objectives. Competent and creative museum management is vital to museums' ability to survive and thrive in the face of decreased public investment in culture, and shifting expectations around the roles that museums should play within society.

This volume gathers together contributions that shed light on key aspects of operating a museum in different parts of the world from a management perspective. While not all aspects of museum operations could be included and given adequate coverage in a single volume, we have chosen to include topics that we believe are the most relevant and timely for museum professionals today. It is important to note that work on this volume began in 2018, and several important global events have since impacted the museum sector, including a global pandemic. While some of the contributions included here were conceived a few years ago, we believe they can nonetheless provide valuable insight to museum professionals working around the world today.

This book includes chapters focusing on governance and operations, communication and marketing, accessibility and community engagement, decline in public funding and sustainability, and risk management. These all address issues that are

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particularly pertinent in current museum management practice, and that are likely to be the subject of continued debate over the next decade.

In Part I, Carol Scott analyses the importance of strategic positioning in the context of museums' evolving roles in the 21st century. Two case studies then provide examples of successful strategies. The first, from Ulla Schaltz and Anna-Elisabeth Jensen, outlines the implementation of a new ten-year strategic management plan at the Museum Lolland-Falster in Denmark, highlighting achievements and setbacks along the way. The second, from Davison Chiwara and Sithokozile Mabahwana, explores the transformation of museum operations at the National History Museum of Zimbabwe through the institution's friends of the museum programme. Darren Barker and Eric Langham then propose a three-stage process for a new model of museum planning, detailing an interdisciplinary approach that includes creative, curatorial, business, financial and, of course, operational considerations.

As museums continue to look outward, they are becoming more adept at marketing, branding and audience evaluation. Part II reflects on branding as a holistic, brand-driven communication strategy that involves the entire institution, as explored by Matthias Henkel in his article on curating the museum as a brand. Joy Chih-Ning Hsin also explores branding as a co-creation process in her case study of the Daxi W.E. museum in Taiwan.

New and emerging technologies have greatly facilitated the role that museums can play in forging connections with their audiences. For example, museums can today undertake new methods of evaluation through the analysis of visitor responses and interactions on online social media platforms. This topic is explored by Ingrida Kelpšienė, Pedro Luengo and Costis Dallas in their article. Jean-Michel Tobelem and Marie Ballarini analyse best practices in the use of digital technology for promoting audience loyalty and optimising marketing and communications strategies. Jasmin Vogel and Britta Lerch present an innovative audience development programme and provide examples and recommendations for audience engagement.

Accessibility, inclusion, community engagement and co-creation continue to feature prominently in museum discourse and strategy. Comprising three case studies and one article, Part III examines how museums can successfully integrate related policies and actions in their institutions. The first case study from Annamaria Ravagnan and Enzo Grossi highlights Italian inclusion and accessibility initiatives, underlining the need for an interdisciplinary and participatory approach to ensure greater accessibility in museums. The importance of including local communities in the preservation of their heritage, and examples of innovative inclusive programming, are then explored in case studies of the Pachacamac Site Museum in Peru, from Denise Pozzi-Escot and Carmen Rosa Uceda, and of the Houses of Culture of Belize, from Sherilyne Jones. Helen White then discusses community engagement and socially engaged practice in museums in the UK, and provides suggestions for the development of community engagement strategies.

Part IV focuses on the new responsibilities assumed by museum managers in ensuring museums' institutional solvency, and amid a climate of reduced public funding. This decline has forced managers to adopt new financial models as they transition from publicly funded institutions to independent actors within the creative economy. A case study by Anna Mignosa and Christian Mayer Tibeau examines the evolution of museums operating under the Brazilian Social Organisations model, which aims to reduce institutions' dependency on public funds.

Next, an article from Marek Prokůpek explores ethical concerns related to fundraising and highlights common attitudes towards these ethics within the field. Laura Zani then outlines the opportunities and limitations of public-private partnerships, turning to the example of the Musées des arts et d'histoire de la Ville de Genève, in Switzerland.

Guided by the principles of the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement, Part V considers museums' potential roles in cross-sectorial sustainability initiatives: through their collections, as information resources, as communicators, as educators, as facilitators, as activists and advocates, and as users of natural resources. A case study by Beverley Thomas presents the first 'green' museum in South Africa, the Amazwi South African Museum of Literature, which was awarded a five-star rating by the Green Building Council of South Africa. This chapter also offers readers an overview of risk management policies and actions. In her article, Corine Wegener provides guidance for museum managers in the development and implementation of said policies. Finally, a case study from Russia, by Ivan Grinko and Nikita Luchkov, addresses attendance capacity in museums with a new system for calculating the optimal anthropogenic capacity.

Our overriding intention for this volume is to prompt active discussion and debate among museum and cultural heritage professionals on questions of institutional management. The case studies included here provide pragmatic examples with concrete outcomes, and we hope they will provide meaningful pathways for application in the context of museum work. We have sought to combine the voices of seasoned professionals and eminent academics with the experiences and practices of professionals who have more recently entered the field, on an international scale. The articles and case studies thus offer international and intercultural perspectives on what it means to manage a museum today.

Part I

Governance and Operations

1 Museum Leadership

Where to from Here?

Carol A. Scott

Museum Leadership: Pre-Pandemic Research

What is leadership? 'Leadership' is frequently associated with 'management', a term which is defined broadly as 'the control and organisation of something' (Cambridge Dictionary 2023) or, more specifically, as the 'process of planning and organising the resources and activities of a business to achieve specific goals in the most effective and efficient manner possible' (Indeed Editorial Team 2023). Good management is an important component of successful leadership, but there is a qualitative difference between the two concepts. If management is about implementing processes and organising tasks to achieve goals, leadership is distinguished by the ability of an individual or a group to influence, motivate and enable people to collectively work towards achieving those goals. In the years immediately preceding the Covid-19 pandemic, museum leadership became the subject of several major studies.

This interest was precipitated by several factors. The place of museums in society, their social role juxtaposed alongside traditional responsibilities to preserve, research and interpret collections, their evolving relationships with the public and stakeholders, their part in colonial narratives and their future sustainability in the light of decreased public spending have heightened discourse within the sector. External challenges complicate these internal debates. Museums operate in a global world characterised by accelerated change, increasing geo-political conflict and climate crises. Unsurprisingly, the sector has increasingly questioned what skills and qualities are needed to lead museums in these unsettled times.

Between 2017 and 2018, three UK studies focused attention on this question. A study by the Said Business School (2017) at Oxford concluded that museum leadership is operating across three, equally important and interrelated dimensions which they identified as the 'Three Cs': *culture* (core purpose), *commerce* (funding and resources) and *community* (managing multiple stakeholders). The study argued that these three dimensions arise from the need to establish ongoing sustainability given rapid declines in public funding, maintain museums' core purpose while balancing cultural and commercial imperatives, articulate this purpose to funders and other stakeholders and adapt to rapid change (Said Business School 2017, pp. 10, 13).

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Of all these issues, the consequences of financial instability and future sustainability were at the forefront of responses from leaders interviewed for the Oxford study, who emphasised that the need to focus more intently on commerce meant that they had to become increasingly entrepreneurial while effectively advocating for their institution.

> Linked to the funding and sustainability challenge, museum leaders see themselves as responsible for articulating and defending the purpose of their institutions, both externally and internally.
>
> (Said Business School 2017, p. 13)

While the Oxford report focused on museum leaders in the United Kingdom, but the concerns it raised around financial instability and future sustainability were reinforced by another, global survey undertaken in 2018 through the International Council of Museums' Strategic Planning Committee as part of its mid-point review of the then Strategic Plan 2016–22. When the association's National and International Committees and Regional Alliances were surveyed in the first half of 2018, they were asked to identify major issues facing museums today. The majority of respondents cited the decline in public funding as the most pressing issue facing the sector worldwide. However, the responses also noted that the decline in public funding had important implications for the skills needed by future leadership. Greater entrepreneurial skills, openness to new business models and the capacity to engage stakeholders and build ethical partnerships were all cited. So was effective advocacy as this global cohort was of the view that a major factor contributing to the decline in public funding is an imperfect understanding among politicians, treasuries and bureaucrats of the purpose and value of museums. Rectifying this situation is critical to the long-term sustainability of the sector and one in which the advocacy of museum leadership has a major role to play (ICOM SPC 2018, p. 3).

However, there was consensus across the three UK studies that, in addition to possessing a skillset, museum leaders also require personal qualities: the capacity to be agile and adaptable, to tolerate uncertainty and embrace change, credibility and a collaborative leadership style were all mentioned (Consilium Research and Consultancy 2017; Said Business School 2017; King's College London 2018). Many of these qualities were about to be tested as the pandemic struck and uncertainty became the order of the day.

The Pandemic: Museums and their Publics

The onset of the pandemic and the enforced closure of museums for sustained periods of time throughout 2020 and 2021[1] only exacerbated the already difficult financial situation of many museums. During this period, ICOM conducted three surveys exploring the impact of the pandemic on the global museum sector. Overall, the studies found that museum closures severely reduced earned income from visitor admissions and other sources of self-generated income such as catering, shops and venue hire. In the absence of exhibitions, sponsorship was moribund.

Not surprisingly, the surveys revealed that museums' most salient concerns during this period centred on the continuing impact of Covid-related closures on budgets and the uncertainty surrounding visitor-return post-pandemic. However, in spite of budgetary freefall in many areas there was one exception where many museums indicated that they planned increased spending: the digital domain.

Digital technology has gained an increasingly important presence in museums over the two decades prior to the pandemic, but the crisis provided its coming of age. Initially galvanised during the pandemic to maintain connections with existing audiences and stakeholders, digital also proved to be a mechanism for creating new virtual constituencies and connecting with more diverse publics than those who would traditionally visit museums (Benoit-Bryan, Smith and Linett 2022, p. 11). With only a digital presence to rely on, museums found opportunities to innovate and reimagine their offers. In its second Covid survey conducted during lockdown, ICOM found that 76.6 per cent of responding museums had already rethought their digital strategy, 74.8 per cent had increased their digital offer, 43.2 per cent had increased their budget for digital and 28.7 per cent had increased the number of staff dedicated to digital (ICOM n.d. p.18). The response from the public to these initiatives exceeded the expectations of many museums and created unexpected impacts.

While museums' pivot to digital initially focused on maintaining engagement, there were other unintended outcomes. Reporting on the situation in the US, Dilenschneider (2020), found that digital had impacted public perceptions of the social role of museums. Citing a sample of 150,000 US citizens during and after Covid lockdowns, she found an increase in public acceptance when museums recommend actions related to social causes. She attributes this to four factors. Firstly, public trust in museums as sources of information has been sustained since research was first published by Griffiths and King (2008) for the US Institute of Museum and Library Studies (IMLS) in 2008. Secondly, declining confidence in US government and media as sources of reliable information has redistributed trust, with museums emerging as one of the trust-recipients. Most recently, museum delivery during lockdown earned public respect in the US because it demonstrated museums' value and commitment to communities. And, finally, at a time when people were grappling with false information and fake news during the 2020 American presidential election, the museum content delivered during lockdown was noteworthy for being associated with reliable and credible expertise (Dilenschneider 2020).

Two further US studies reveal that public expectations of museums evolved during the Covid crisis, with important implications for leadership. These were undertaken as special projects of Culture Track.[2]

The first report, *Culture and Community in a Time of Crisis* surveyed 124,000 people during Covid to gain insights into what the public valued about cultural organisations and what they were seeking from cultural experiences during and immediately post-Covid. The report (LaPlacaCohen and SloverLinett 2020), began by situating the pandemic within the context of general global upheaval. Climate change, armed conflict, increasing geo-political instability, and the Black Lives Matter movement, the contested 2020 Presidential election and the MeToo campaign, were signalling a time of profound social change. Museums are not divorced from this context. *Culture and Community in a Time of Crisis* found that 96 per cent of survey respondents expressed a desire *for museums to change*, to become more inclusive, more community focused and, particularly, more socially relevant.

> Americans want arts and cultural organisations to become more active participants in their communities and they want to see these communities better reflected in these organisations.
>
> (LaPlacaCohen and SloverLinett 2020, p. 27)

The following year, the second of the Culture Track reports, *Culture and community in a time of transformation* (2021), not only confirmed these findings but identified a wide range of social issues, which 76 per cent of respondents wanted cultural organisations (including museums) to address. These include systemic racial injustice, income inequality, climate change, political division (in the US), food insecurity, the pandemic and the opioid epidemic (LaPlaca Cohen, SloverLinett and Yancey Consulting 2021, p. 31). Moreover, the public has clear expectations of what they want the museum experience to be and how they would like museums to operate post-Covid. Accessibility and inclusivity are high on the agenda; on the audience side, there was emphasis on engaging young adults and on the operational side, there was the expectation that museums would be fair and equitable employers of a diverse staff. Innovation and maintaining 'relevance' emerged as important, with respondents showing a desire for a changing programme of new exhibitions. The American public want museums to engage more with the local community while also providing new perspectives from beyond the local community. And the implications for leadership? 'Lead with empathy, include the excluded and build a digital bridge to the future' (LaPlaca Cohen and SloverLinett 2020, p. 33).

These three sets of studies—focusing on museum leadership, institutional crises brought on by the pandemic and public expectations of museums post-Covid—are also reinforced by another global study of museum leaders which is the subject of the next section.

> According to the respondents [museum leaders], the most significant impacts of Covid-19 on museums were the use of digital technology in programming, the increased commitment to the social role of museums, new approaches to audience engagement, the reassessment of the museum's value and the creation of impact with fewer resources.
>
> (INTERCOM 2022, p. 29)

The Pandemic: Museum Leaders Speak

There has been much written about museum leadership, but when INTERCOM, ICOM's International Committee on Management, launched the first global study of museum leadership, it provided a rare opportunity for the sector to speak for itself. The INTERCOM survey was conducted between November 2020 and May 2021, translated into seven languages[3] and received over 900 responses from museum leaders in every major region of the world. It was further supplemented by in-depth interviews across a global sample.

If we wonder how equipped museum leaders are to deliver on the accelerated change mandate described in the previous sections, the INTERCOM study revealed fault lines. The first finding is the disconnect between the qualities that institutions are seeking in the selection and appointment of museum leaders and the day-to-day requirements of the job. For selection committees, experience working in museums or the cultural sector is of prime importance (25 per cent). Academic expertise and reputation (18 per cent) and the capacity to implement a vision (16 per cent) follow, while the ability to lead people (10 per cent) and a leadership qualification (7 per cent) rank even lower on the scale INTERCOM 2022, p. 47).

Museum leaders paint a somewhat different picture of what is required to do the job on a day-to-day basis. They place a higher value on the personal qualities that enable a leader to 'engage others to achieve the museum's mission and vision' (18 per cent). Ranked equally are openness to change and experience in the museum field (16 per cent). The capacity to manage internal and external stakeholders comes next (12 per cent), followed by adaptability and the ability to manage resources (11 per cent). However, academic expertise (6 per cent) is not ranked as a high priority by leaders themselves (INTERCOM 2022, p. 47).

Curiously, at a time when declines in public funding raise questions about future sustainability, sound financial skills and fundraising abilities did not rank highly: in either selection criteria or the list of capacities that respondents claimed were most important for doing the leadership job. This is inconsistent with the current discourse on new business models and entrepreneurial leadership (INTERCOM 2022, p. 49) and is further perplexing given that the research coincided with pandemic lockdowns, when museum closures were causing concern about income loss.

At a time when the discourse indicates the need for proactive, visionary leadership, the INTERCOM report contains interesting findings about the capacity of museum leaders to influence change. About 69 per cent of respondents expressed high levels of confidence in being able to influence programming and content, as well as policies on digitisation and decolonisation.

Effecting organisational change is, however, more problematic due to varying levels of leadership in the areas of budget, staff restructuring and human resources. About 45 per cent of those surveyed claimed that budgetary changes are not easy to effect and 23 per cent said they find it either very difficult or impossible. Changes to human resources were hard to implement for 39 per cent of respondents and impossible for 23 per cent. Organisational change was hard to make for more than 37 (per cent?) of the respondents and for 24 per cent it was either very difficult or impossible (INTERCOM 2022, p. 41).

Much of this relates to the levels of autonomy that museum leaders are granted within key areas. In terms of budgetary control, 35 per cent of the sample said that approval was required from the board of trustees, 29 per cent require it from both the board and the government and 9 per cent claim that they cannot decide how their annual budget is used at all. Half of the leaders surveyed (50 per cent) had full freedom to appoint new staff, but 38 per cent need approval from the board of trustees or government; 12 per cent claimed to have no independence at all in recruiting new employees (INTERCOM 2022, pp. 51, 55).

Findings demonstrating the low level of importance placed on financial skills and fundraising abilities for leadership selection and performance combined with the lack of autonomy in the area of budgetary control raise questions about the whole notion of the 'entrepreneurial' leader. While the UK studies give prominence to this area, the global picture suggests that levels of financial autonomy vary, other aspects of leadership are considered more important and budgetary checks and balances abound suggesting that the concept of the entrepreneurial leader requires further interrogation. Entrepreneurial activity involves risk and there is insufficient clarity about who assumes risk in this model, particularly within publicly funded organisations. The model of the entrepreneurial leader has emerged as public funding has declined, and it is tempting to wonder whether the notion of the entrepreneurial leader represents an attempt to individualise responsibility for the financial sustainability of the institution, rather than confronting the systemic reasons for declining investment by governments in many countries.

To add to these challenges, the pandemic illustrated how the most successful museums and the best-made strategic plans could be derailed by unexpected external crises. The findings from this study revealed that dealing with the unexpected is neither confined to the pandemic nor an isolated phenomenon. Fully 30 per cent of respondents had dealt with unanticipated external events related to climate change, military conflict or terrorism, making dealing with the unexpected an unequivocal part of the museum leader's job (INTERCOM 2022, p. 37).

The INTERCOM report is significant because it looks beyond the skills, personal qualities and experience which the discourse suggests are needed by today's museum leaders. It explores the contextual factors, ambiguities and contradictions that may challenge even the most competent individual. Given the findings, we may well ask 'where to from here?'

Supporting Museum Leaders

From across the various studies surveyed, it is evident that change is the new norm: leadership must be able to accept and adapt to the demands of a constantly changing environment by exercising mental agility and showing the capacity to tolerate uncertainty and ambiguity. Significantly, the single-authority model of leadership is losing ground to more collaborative, team-based approaches which share authority. As Lonnie Bunch put it in a personal communication with the author, 'The smartest leader is a facilitator of collaborators'.[4]

A review of some of the major leadership training programmes[5] in the English-speaking world further reveals that leadership courses are focusing on a combination of personal qualities and professional skills to do the job; they encourage people to find their own leadership style based on an honest personal appraisal of their strengths, weaknesses and values. The importance of personal compassion is increasingly recognised, both as self-care for leaders who are under considerable, ongoing pressure and as the compassion needed for others as a hallmark of a more collegiate leadership approach. Strategic planning and creating a vision, organisational culture, diversity, inclusion, and change management feature in most programmes. Business modelling and financial entrepreneurism are seldom evident, but this is likely to be a factor of diversity in funding across the types of museums and varying patterns of government funding in different countries.

These subjects are covered across a range of professional development options ranging from intensive residential schools, modular and digital programmes and workshops and fellowships; but as the King's College study on leadership concluded, learning styles vary and there is no question of a 'one-size-fits all' approach.

> Research indicates that leadership development is most effectively delivered through a combination of formal training, learning through others and on-the-job experience, with practical application in the workplace playing the most significant role.
>
> (King's College London 2018, p. 6)

In this spirit of programme diversity, INTERCOM has developed both a virtual mentoring programme and a digital platform to provide ongoing support for museum leaders. The mentoring programme, undertaken between 2022 and 2023, developed regional webinars with museum leaders in Latin America, Africa, Southeast Europe and South Asia. Given the limits to leaders' autonomy revealed in the INTERCOM report, these webinars enabled museum directors within a region to discuss common issues of concern and be paired with a local mentor to work through solutions. Some of these workshops have been loaded onto INTERCOM's Digital Knowledge Platform.[6]

Back to Basics

During the 2022 Leadership session at the ICOM conference in Prague, the two keynote speakers, Lonnie Bunch and Hilary Carty,[7] were asked the following question: 'In a changing world, on what can leaders depend?' Their answer was that the role of museums in society, their purpose and value are 'constants' to which we can return. Reviewing museums' role in the light of a changing world, reassessing the value that museums can create, reconsidering who museums are for and whom they serve is leadership work. Respondents to the INTERCOM study concurred that this is an essential part of the leadership role and one which over which 56 per cent felt they could exert some influence (INTERCOM 2022, p. 47). The process of interrogating purpose, mission, vision and value and using these fundamentals to strategically position a museum generates dividends and speaks to the hallmarks of contemporary leadership: collaboration, inclusion and sustainability. The following case studies illustrate the power of this approach.

The Value of Purpose

Clarifying purpose, mission and vision is a collaborative process which '… creates a collective passion among staff that drives an organisation forward to achieve a shared goal' Collins (2005, n.p.) London's Natural History Museum (NHM) is an institution which has found its purpose in a proactive response to the climate crisis.

> We must act now; we must act on scientific evidence and we must act together… Our vision is of a future where both people and planet thrive. Our mission is to create advocates for the planet.
>
> (NHM 2019, pp. 3–4)

'Values' are what an institution stands for, and the mission and vision of NHM are supported by four core values: respect for *biodiversity*, using scientific *evidence*, recognising global *connectedness* and believing in *creative solutions* to combat environmental disaster.

The dividends from clarity of mission, vision and values are multiple. They create internal cohesion based on a common sense of purpose. Making the case to public funders from a position of knowledge and surety establishes a positive basis for negotiations. Sustainable audience engagement is achieved when there is a values-match between the personal values which publics are seeking to satisfy and the values for which the institution stands.

Importantly, clarity around purpose, vision and values forms a basis from which to identify strategic partners with similar principles and avoid the pitfalls of misalignments which can cause reputational damage. NHM knows that its goal of creating advocates for the planet requires adequate resources and it has developed an enviable array of partners '… who share our vision and want to make a difference' (NHM 2019, p. 22). to help it resource this important work until 2030.[8] NHM has consciously decided to capitalise on the museum's intellectual assets to build a mixed economic model: developing touring exhibitions, negotiating licenses, publishing, applying for research grants and developing commercial opportunities where the aim is to balance '… profit-driven and mission-led activities' (NHM 2019, p. 22).

Uniqueness and Difference

Clarifying mission and value can also deliver dividends in relation to differentiation so that a museum can position itself within a competitive attractions environment.

In the experience of Arthur Cohen, CEO of LaPlaca Cohen and initiator of the Culture and Community in a Time of Crisis Research Project, '… museums that have articulated their unique purpose are not only surviving—they are flourishing' (Cohen 2013). Knowing what a museum does best and capitalising on its unique strengths makes it possible to differentiate its offer from other competitors and to establish a clear brand message. Whatever a museum's size or type of collection, establishing its special selling points is crucial to marketing and promotion.

An example can be found on the south coast of England, in the small town of Chichester. Pallant House Gallery opened in 1982 with a founding collection of modern British art. Although it is a relatively young institution and a regional gallery located outside of the capital, it is a major force in the contemporary British art world because it has positioned itself selectively as the best offer in one particular period: British modernism. Its exhibitions say 'something new about British art from 1900 to now' and celebrate not only well-known artists but those who are '… overlooked and emerging'. Its public programs engage people of all ages and backgrounds '… to discover how art can have a place in their lives' (Pallant House Gallery, n.d.). Selecting, building on and celebrating its period, Pallant House has built its brand by carving out a special niche in the crowded British art scene and in 2023 was shortlisted by the Museum and Heritage Awards for its community engagement programmes.

Delivering Social Impact

Although the recent *Culture and Community in a Time of Crisis* report found that relevance was expected by today's post-Covid audience, John Cotton Dana (1917), the founder of the Newark Museum in the United States, argued over a century ago that a museum's value was measured by its public relevance and usefulness. This idea has gained momentum with an increasing discourse about the social role of museums. Commentators including the late Stephen Weil (1999), Lois Silverman (2010) and Carol Scott (2019) argue that it is the purpose of museums to make a positive difference in the lives of the individuals and communities whom they serve. There are also pragmatic reasons for taking a broader civic role, as the report from King's College London (2018) points out:

> To be effective at a community level, particularly in the context of continuing financial pressures on local authorities, leaders need to justify more robustly public investment in the cultural sector and to advocate the social value of their organisations.
>
> (King's College London 2018, p. 14)

Scott (2002) and Korn (2013) stress that making a positive difference requires an intentional decision, knowledge of audience needs, appropriate strategies and the measures to evaluate whether intended impacts have been achieved.

All of these components are evident in the *House of Memories* programme at the Museum of Liverpool,[9] which involved collaborations with local people living with dementia. In intentionally deciding to work in this area, the Museum of Liverpool leveraged one of its unique strengths: the capacity of objects to stimulate memory and reminiscence. This formed a key component for a customised training programme developed by the museum in partnership with the Department of Health, Skills for Care and the Liverpool Primary Care Trust to train personal and professional carers working with people diagnosed with dementia. Since its inception in 2011, the programme has become a model for similar initiatives, both domestically and internationally. Evaluations at each stage of its development have reported significant positive attitudinal change among caregivers towards people living with dementia and the role that museum objects can play in connecting dementia sufferers with themselves and others (NML 2012, pp. 39, 41).

By 2016, 10,000 family and professional carers had received training, and the excellence of the programme, its practical utility and its creative approach have had a profound impact on the positioning and reputation of the Museum of Liverpool and National Museums Liverpool.

> The positive reputation of House of Memories and the subsequent trust placed in NML has been a key driver in the success of the programme.
>
> (NML and NHS Health Education England 2016, p. 18)

The programme's success resulted in National Museums Liverpool being formally commissioned by Health Education England to work with the National Health Service (NHS) Trusts around the country.

Clarity about mission, vision and values assists museums' sustainability in two ways. It provides a standpoint from which to seek like-minded partners and develop appropriate commercial opportunities and it provides a framework within which a museum can make decisions about where to focus resources for the optimum return. As Korn (2013, p. 37) states:

> As much as museums would like to be all things to all people and achieve discernible results among everyone, achieving value across all public sectors at any one time may not be a realistic result in terms of a museum's limited capacity and resources.

Strategic positioning gives the institution permission to be selective about where it should concentrate its efforts. It provides the rationale to defer, postpone or jettison programmes that neither fulfil the institutional purpose nor align with its intended impacts. Ultimately, it allows a museum to be more targeted in the deployment of resources, and more focused when it comes to identifying the business model needed to fund the strategic directions a museum has chosen.

> Museums have to work within the resources available to them. The sustainable answer may be to do less, but do it better […]. Museums need to be clear about their purpose and ensure that their most important activities are sustained.
>
> (Davies and Wilkinson 2008, p. 7)

Conclusion

Both Dilenschneider (2020) and Cohen see the Covid crisis as a turning point for museums. Cohen describes it as a transformational moment, providing an opportunity for museums to redefine their essential purpose in society—albeit with important implications for leadership.

> For a museum leader, then, this means a constant focus on outside-in assessment, enhancing organizational expertise by infusing it with the concerns, needs, hopes, and dreams of those the museum serves. In the past, the idea of 'collaborative leadership' has focused on collaboration between director and staff, and perhaps with the board. Now and in the future, I believe, 'collaboration' will be defined in a more porous and expansive way that engages many voices in a truly equitable manner and creates new models of cultural exchange and experience where people can find not just beauty and inspiration, but also meaning and relevance.
>
> (Cohen 2020, p. 30)

This transformational moment comes with its fair share of challenges. In parallel with the discourse around collaborative leadership, we expect museum leaders to embody a highly individualised set of qualities and skills which set the bar increasingly high. As the INTERCOM study revealed, the leadership landscape is full of checks and balances, limits and possibilities. We need to take this into account, planning ongoing support and developing reasonable expectations for our leaders. Leadership is a key component in the future sustainability of museums, but the sector has a responsibility to sustain its leaders.

Notes

1 In some countries, lockdowns extended into 2022 and 2023.
2 *Culture Track* is a national online survey of audience behaviours, attitudes, motivations and barriers to cultural participation, which has been conducted by LaPlaca Cohen since 2001. *Culture & Community in a Time of Crisis: A Special Edition of Culture Track* (2020) was a collaboration between LaPlaca Cohen and SloverLinett Audience Research which surveyed 124,000 Americans in 2020 about their expectations of culture during and post-pandemic. A second wave surveyed 78,000 people in 2021 and was published as *Culture & Community in a Time of Transformation*.
3 English, French, Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Arabic and Portuguese.
4 Lonnie Bunch III—Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution Personal Communication, March 2022.
5 The Getty Institute at Claremont, (US) The Clore Leadership Program, (UK) The Museum Leadership Programme (Australia).
6 https://dog-drum-2stw.squarespace.com/.
7 Lonnie Bunch III—Secretary of the Smithsonian Institution, USA and Hilary Carty OBE Director of the Clore Leadership Program, UK.
8 https://www.nhm.ac.uk/about-us/urban-nature-project.html.

9 National Museums Liverpool encompasses the Museum of Liverpool, the World Museum, the International Slavery Museum, the Merseyside Maritime Museum, the Walker Art Gallery, Sudley House and the Lady Lever Art Gallery.

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2 Museum Lolland-Falster, Denmark 2009-2023

Strategic Planning as a Tool for Adaptation

Ulla Schaltz and Anna-Elisabeth Jensen

At the beginning of this millennium, a fusion wave passed through the Danish Museum world following the country's municipal reform of 2007. Two hundred and seventy-one municipalities merged into 98, ideological structures within museums broke down and a new structure, centered around larger and more professional museums emerged (Jensen & Lundgaard 2015; Marker & Rasmussen 2019). Museum Lolland-Falster was created as part of this wave. This chapter reviews the first decade of its existence and examines how the museum might establish a strategic role in the region.

The Danish Museum Landscape and the Danish Museum Act

Since 1958, The Danish Museum Act (2006) has set the framework for how Denmark's state-approved museums must operate. The purpose of the Act is to protect the country's cultural heritage, and the network of Danish state-approved museums carry out the necessary archaeological, architectural and ethnological fieldwork and research on behalf of the ministry. These state-approved museums are spread across the country. The vast majority of state-approved local historical museums offer very local perspectives, narrating local history and prehistory (Kulturministeriet 2018; Statistics Denmark n. d).

A large number of local cultural history museums emerged in the second half of the 19th century. They were conceived and developed by local enthusiasts and entrepreneurs who wanted to preserve local history in changing times, that notably saw agricultural communities replaced by industry. They went about establishing a large number of museums, many as small national museums with broad collections spanning ancient times to the present day. While most of the held objects were largely collected to testify to rural life and work, several of the old museum collections in the province also include, for example, ethnographic objects. Intangible testimonies were also collected in the form of memories, songs, performances and dialects.

The late Danish professor Bjarne Stoklund wrote about the creation of museums in the country, and the requirements for their, development in his book *Tingenes Kulturhistorie* (2003). As he notes, museums were created in the 19th century as an attempt to maintain some of what was on the way to being eradicated by rapid

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cultural development. This applies not least to the country's 'folk museums', which illustrate the work practices and ways of life of previous generations (Stoklund 2003).

However, contemporary museum audiences tend to place new demands on institutions. No longer content to merely view objects in displays, they also wish to engage in more interactive and multisensory ways, using their other senses (Gilmore & Pine 2007). Nevertheless, general interest in individuals' personal history is as profound among the Danish population as ever, as are demands for dissemination of cultural behavior and artifacts. It is strange that only a few existing studies address the material culture and relationships between humans and things that are so close to us in time but which radically differ in substance from modern life. Just as it is necessary to study modern consumer culture, it is equally important to study the processes that have created it, as well as its historical starting point (Kongsgaard & Hulvej Rod 2018). At local cultural history museums in Denmark during the first half of the 20th century, it was customary for volunteer board members to take responsibility and perform practical museum work. They were responsible for collection, registration, preservation, research and dissemination of local cultural heritage. From 1887 onward, Danish cultural history museums could obtain state approval for their work and receive subsidies from the state to preserve and convey the history of the country. This decentralized museum landscape still exists: one that functions in accordance with a common museum law and a network of museums that functions in accordance with the national museum law, and that forms a network of institutions that use common tools to perform museal tasks. Of Denmark's more than 600 museums, 95 are currently state approved.

Merged Museums on Lolland-Falster

Until 2009, three smaller museums, two of which were more than 100 years old, were state-approved museums with a heterogenous workforce, covering the 13 municipalities of Lolland-Falster in the southeastern corner of Denmark. Following the aforementioned municipal reforms of 2007, the 13 municipalities merged into 2 and the Ministry of Culture called for voluntary museum mergers. The three museums outlined below successfully merged into today's state-approved Museum Lolland-Falster, a cultural heritage authority according to the Danish Museums Act; these have professional staff and are responsible for local cultural heritage on Lolland-Falster.

Lolland-Falsters Stiftsmuseum

Lolland-Falsters Stifts Museum in Maribo opened in 1890. In 1879, the local merchant Lauritz Schrøder donated his collection to the municipality of Maribo. The opening of Lolland-Falster's Stiftsmuseum was praised in several newspapers across Denmark. It conducted archaeological investigations under the supervision of the National Museum in the early 1900s and established an open-air museum in 1927. In 1965 the museum hired its first professional director. Stiftsmuseet was given the status of a regional museum for Lolland-Falster in 1973, requiring it to employ a professional museum educator. Stiftsmuseet also employed its first professional archaeologist in 1973. Until 1984, archaeological excavations in connection with large-scale construction work were a state agency responsibility. The revision of the Danish Museums Act in 1984 added archaeological investigations in connection with construction projects to local museum responsibilities. Prior to the merger in 2009, Stiftsmuseet was the cultural heritage authority concerning cultural history and archaeology of the nine municipalities on Lolland.

Falsters Minder

The Falsters Minder Museum in Nykoebing, on the island of Falster, was created in 1913 by citizens from all 27 parish municipalities on the island. The museum hired its first professional director in 1979. In 1986 Falsters Minder employed its first professional museum educator and its first professional archaeologist. The museum's board wanted to see the archaeological work for Falster transferred from Stiftsmuseet in Maribo, which was responsible for the very extensive archaeological work prior to the establishment of the Southern Highway on Falster. Before the merger in 2009, Falsters Minder was the cultural heritage authority concerning cultural history and archaeology of the four municipalities on Falster and ran the local Archive in Nykoebing.

Reventlow Museum

The Reventlow Museum opened in 1940 in the main building of the Pederstrup manor after the Reventlow family put the manor up for sale in the 1930s. In the late 18th century, the statesman C.D.F Reventlow instigated the Danish Agrarian Reforms. The museum's present appearance is the result of the 1940 restoration and reconstruction of the Empire-style manor house C. D. F. Reventlow commissioned in 1813–1822. Today, the main building is one of just a few remaining buildings in Denmark that were built in the Empire style. Before the merger of the municipalities in 2007, the Reventlow Museum was state-approved as a special museum for manor culture in South Zealand and Lolland-Falster, with a focus on C. D. F. Reventlow. However, the museum experienced challenges around complying with the conditions for state approval. These were resolved following the fusion with Museum Lolland-Falster in 2010.

In 2007, the 13 municipalities on Lolland-Falster merged into 2 new and larger municipalities. Seven of the nine municipalities on Lolland formed Lolland Kommune. The remaining two, alongside the four Falster municipalities, together formed Guldborgsund Kommune. The Danish Ministry of Culture demanded that the museums in Nykoebing and Maribo should align their geographical responsibilities with the new municipal boundaries. Consequently, Falsters Minder changed its name to Guldborgsund Museum. Guldborgsund Museum was thus given responsibility for the cultural history and archaeology of Guldborgsund Municipality according to the Danish Museum Act, while the Stiftsmuseet was given responsibility for the Lolland Municipality. Finally, on 1 January 2009, Falsters Minder and Stiftsmuseet merged into the newly established Museum Lolland-Falster, a local museum with responsibility over the cultural heritage of Lolland-Falster, i.e., Lolland and Guldborgsund Municipalities.

What Led to the Merger?

Prior to merging, the existing museums underwent a particularly turbulent period during the first years of the 21st century. Municipal subsidies were far below national averages, storage facilities in Stiftsmuseet did not meet the state-approved museum standard and Falsters Minder suffered a management crisis after the passing of its director. These sorts of problems are difficult enough for any museum but were reinforced by the fact that the small museums simply did not have sufficient staff to cope with critical situations.

At the same time, greater demands were being placed on the state-approved museums' handling of research, strategic collection, appropriate storage of objects, digitization and so on. Finally, it was planned that large antiquarian investigations (i.e., archaeological, architectural and ethnological) were to be carried out in Lolland prior to the construction of a tunnel from Denmark to Germany under the Fehmarnbelt. Strategically, it was therefore necessary for both museums to create more robust organizations that would be able to face the coming challenges. Merging the two museums was a viable solution to create a financially sound, professional and sustainable institution.

Structural Changes

During these years, the Danish Museum world underwent major structural changes. In 2010, there were approximately 150 state-approved museums in Denmark (Kulturministeriet 2011). That number has now fallen (at the time of publication) to 95, divided into three categories: art museums, natural history museums and traditional local history museums. Twenty-seven of the local history museums are responsible for archeological heritage management and excavations in their attributed geographical region. Museum Lolland-Falster is responsible for the archaeological heritage of the Lolland-Falster, Lolland and Guldborgsund municipalities. Danish cultural heritage management is described in Chapter 8 of the Danish Museum Act. 'Safeguarding the cultural and natural heritage in connection with the physical planning and preparation of construction work, agriculture and forestry activities, etc., including archaeological and natural-history investigation tasks in relation thereto' (The Danish Museum Act 2006). The responsible museums must assess whether damage to the cultural heritage will result from construction work or changes in building structures. The statutory work also applies to the latest modern cultural development.

There has been a push-and-pull effect related to museum mergers over the last 15 years. The concerned museums must be able to live up to the requirements of the Museum Act but, at the same time, remain attractive partners for universities, municipalities, for various different interest groups and to attract volunteers to museums. In addition, municipal reforms have meant significant changes in the museum sector in Denmark. The national decree that there only be one museum with heritage management responsibility per municipality led to nationwide museum mergers, like the Museum Lolland-Falster merger.

How Did We Merge?

The decision to merge Lolland-Falster Stiftsmuseum and Guldborgsund Museum was initiated by leading staff at the two museums. The museums' boards, municipalities and, not least, the Cultural Heritage Agency backed the idea. Once work on the merger started, the municipalities promised to raise the necessary grants for the state approved museum. There was a relatively large and diverse group of employees from both museums who worked on the merger, the formalities of which took less than a year to complete. The merger resulted from the recognition that two very small museums would find it difficult to solve large problems and honor the demands and expectations for new exhibitions, programs and communications. In addition, a large statutory archaeological excavation was necessary prior to the construction of a tunnel between Denmark and Germany. It became the largest Stone Age excavation ever undertaken in Denmark, conducted between 2013 and 2022. The building of the Tunnel Factory was going to destroy an entire fiord landscape beneath massive marine sediments. During the excavation, sites with exceptional preservation conditions for organic materials were found. The newly merged Museum Lolland-Falster was in charge of the excavations in accordance with The Danish Museum Act (Groß & Rothstein 2023).

The priority was to get the newly merged museum administration up and running, and to encourage staff working together on a professional basis (Hedegaard Hein 2012) to be able to collaborate on various tasks, both through scaling up the number of employees from 40 to 110 and downscaling again to a staff of 50. During the merger of the first two museums, the Independent Reventlow Museum failed to meet the daily challenges and the day-to-day operations were left to the Lolland Municipality. In 2010, the Reventlow Museum became part of Museum Lolland-Falster. Since 2011 Museum Lolland-Falster has operated from the local Tourist Information Bureau for Guldborgsund Municipality in Nykøbing Falster, and since 2017 has shared a building in Maribo with the Tourist Information Bureau for Lolland Municipality.

In 2012, the preparation for the enormous excavation project in connection with the tunnel between Denmark and Germany began. For three years (from 2012 to 2015), the museum had a field station near the construction site with up to 60 archaeologists working on the excavations for shorter or longer periods. In 2015 the developer Femern A/S temporarily suspended the archaeological fieldwork for political reasons. Museum Lolland-Falster was forced to downsize dramatically for three years, and only resumed its activities in 2018 when the fieldwork recommenced. The primary fieldwork was completed in 2022. Reporting, scientific analyses, international research and publication and dissemination of results related to this fieldwork will continue for the next decade (Groß & Rothstein 2023).

Museum Lolland-Falster, 15 Years On

Was the merger a good idea? This is a reasonable question to ask since merging two museums significantly alters conditions for managers, employees, volunteers and the surrounding environment. In 2011, The Danish Ministry of Culture published an investigation into Danish museums (Kulturministeriet 2011), and recommended the preparation of a mission and vision statement for the entire museum system: a systematic definition of national strategies that set out frameworks, goals and standards for qualitative and professional development of the system; it also laid out guidelines for the continuing professionalization of museum management, including one stipulating that museums follow the Ministry of Culture's recommendations for good management of self-governing cultural institutions.

Museum Lolland-Falster operates according to those recommendations on a local level. When the museum's first goals around becoming a professional and sustainable institution were reached, Museum Lolland-Falster changed its vision to become 'a museum for all', in line with international trends of perceiving museums as venues and drivers for transformation (Museums Association 2015). In its first five years of existence, Museum Lolland-Falster developed new strategies for all the relevant responsibilities in the Museum Act; these were subsequently published on the museum's official website.[1]

Strategic International Collaboration and Upgrading of Staff

International cooperation qualifies the cultural-historical core tasks for museums located in a border region (Jensen 2005; Keil 2013). Museum Lolland-Falster's geographical scope is Denmark's and Scandinavia's southernmost region, with Lolland-Falster situated in the middle of the Western Baltic Sea. The location naturally invites international cooperation. The cooperation with museums and research institutions across the Baltic Sea in Schleswig-Holstein and Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania is necessary to understand the importance of our own area through conflict, periods of decline and prosperity, stretching from the Ice Age to the present day.

Museum Lolland-Falster engages in international collaborations to qualitatively improve the museum's ability to carry out its core missions/activities and for the long-term development of its methods (Guldborgsund Kommune 2018). International cooperation is a tool that lifts the museum's long-term perspectives and strategies. On the one hand, we can receive external and international inspiration and establish contacts and networks that can enrich our museum's management. On the other hand, we are aware of the possibilities of exploring and communicating similarities and contradictions woven throughout the common cultural heritage across the Baltic Sea. Thus, Museum Lolland-Falster not only promotes itself but the whole area of Lolland-Falster and the Baltic Sea region (Bötel & Bøggild 2017).

In its 15-year lifetime, the museum has been increasingly aware of the opportunities and resources that lie in an international commitment; it has therefore invested from the outset in several long-term international collaborations. From 2009, Museum Lolland-Falster has entered into new collaborations and partnerships at local, regional, national and international levels (The Danish Ministry of Culture 2017).

The professional staff at the museum is composed of several project managers, archaeologists, ethnologists, historians and project leaders. Investment in enhancing professionalism among museum staff must inevitably comprise deeper development of upper management skills. Accordingly, in 2018, the Deputy Head, Anna-Elisabeth Jensen, was certified as a fundraising manager. Moreover, Museum Lolland-Falster needed to be able to act in a more market-oriented manner as public subsidies were being reduced and the administration needed to effectively manage up- and down-scaling within the museum as required. In particular, the middle managers needed to optimize teamwork, motivate employees and, in doing so, enhance their own leadership skills. With the director at its helm and its prime geographical location at the center of the Baltic Sea, the museum should now be equipped to better respond to significant international changes. In effect, the Museum Lolland-Falster's executive management skills were notably boosted in spring 2018 through the director's participation in the Getty Leadership Institute's international museum management program in Los Angeles, California.

The Museum Lolland Falster's middle managers have additionally been engaging in international cooperations and collaborations with other professionals in the museum's global network. This has notably taken place through sharing experiences around collections management with colleagues from Germany and Sweden, participation in Musund museum collaborations across Oresund, as well as Nordmus Danish-German museum collaborations across the Western Baltic (Nordmus 2023) and the Network of Museums in the Baltic. Among other things, this has led to discussions with colleagues around the Baltic Sea on navigating global changes.

Museum Lolland-Falster's employees have also participated in Interreg cultural bridge projects across the Baltic since 2003. The museum has, in its first 15 years, become an experienced lead partner in the Interreg region Denmark-Germany, building Nordmus as a sustainable museum organization across the Femern Belt. Museum Lolland-Falster has also participated in a South Baltic Manors project in the South Baltic Interreg Region. The goal for the 12 partners was to present the landscape, nature and culture of the region as a unified destination, both to attract tourism and provide leisure opportunities for local communities during the cold season. For Museum Lolland-Falster, the purpose of joining the South Baltic Manors Project was to develop a sustainable plan for operating the Pederstrup Manor in the future. However, the biggest challenge faced by the subsidized Interreg international partnership is undoubtedly long-term project development. Working hours and resources are sometimes invested in projects that are never realized due to lack of funds, so risk-averse resources are necessary (South Baltic Manors n. d).

During the Covid-19 pandemic, Museum Lolland-Falster (like most museums globally) experienced an inability to take physical meetings with its different international partners but also made increasing efforts to use different digital communications tools and participate in online meetings. In a sense, the pandemic resulted in a more effective workflow and highlighted the importance of international perspectives in a global crisis situation: one in which exchanging knowledge and experiences with international partners is worth its weight in gold.

In early 2021, The Association of Danish Museums (ODM) was able to assess that Danish Museums lost more than a third of their visitors in 20202 due to the Covid-19 pandemic compared to 2019 (ODM 2021). The few museums that garnered higher turnover during the crisis pointed to the opening of new displays to visit, i.e., new museums and/or new exhibitions and a good summer season in 2020 as the main factors for growth. The most distressed museums were clearly the large museums that focused on experience economy with large scale events, catering and restaurants, etc., at the expense of traditional core tasks, heritage protection and heritage dissemination, etc. Conversely, those that performed best during the pandemic were smaller museums that typically attracted fewer visitors and had a more broad-based economy with collaborations with local schools, NGOs and local municipal administrations.

The Covid-19 pandemic represented an opportunity to rethink Danish museums' business models, their practices as cultural institutions and their relationships with the state and municipalities. Denmark's state subsidy should accordingly be seen as an investment in cultural heritage, an investment that secures society's collective memory and supports society's resilience and cohesion. Subsequently, the Danish Minister of Culture has initiated a revision of the Danish Museums Act in order to provide a fairer and more transparent distribution of public funds to museums based on an ongoing analysis of their performances.

Conclusion

In the first 15 years of the merger that resulted in the Museum Lolland-Falster, the museum has, above all, focused on becoming recognized as a credible partner on the local, regional, national and international scenes. Museum Lolland-Falster's reputation as a trustworthy international partner is now well-established, and the time has come for the institution to use this role strategically within its focus areas. In an increasingly globalized world, international cooperation is a necessity for cultural institutions located in border regions, which must have a vision of becoming inclusive museums for all (Schaltz & Jensen 2013). The museum director and board thus plan for the continued development and upgrading of the museum, allowing it to evolve from a traditional institution into a robust and flexible project-oriented organization. In the future, the museum shall increasingly emphasize its role as a strong player in the strategic and cultural development of Lolland-Falster, in cooperation with local municipalities and through the involvement of new audiences and stakeholders (Museum Lolland-Falster 2023).

Note

1 The first set of strategies can be found at: https://museumlollandfalster.dk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/2015_kvalitetsvurdering.pdf. The most recent set of strategies can be found at: https://museumlollandfalster.dk/en/forside/om-museet/

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3 Transforming Museum Operations through the Participation of Friends of the Natural History Museum in Zimbabwe

Davison Chiwara and Sithokozile Mabahwana

Introduction

The Friends of the Natural History Museum programme in Zimbabwe was launched on 16 May 2012. It is an association of volunteers and supporters who are either individuals or corporations with an interest in heritage; they help in any way they can to conserve this heritage for posterity. The Friends offer their diverse expertise to the museum on a voluntary basis and help the museum through material, financial and moral support. They pay annual subscriptions to the museum, and the Friends encompass six types of membership: scholar, individual, family, society, corporate and honorary. One becomes a member upon payment of a membership fee. The Friends play a critical role in sustaining the operations of the museum at a time when some museums across the globe are scaling down operations and others are closing due to financial challenges. They are engaged in entrepreneurial activities with an embedded social purpose, and this work has transformed the operations of the museum, notably by permitting it to stay afloat in a difficult economic environment.

Challenges Affecting Museums

Museums that are funded by governments have witnessed the scaling down of budgets allocated to them in recent years and a drop in support from the corporate world (Anderson 2004; Network of European Museum Organisations (NEMO) 2011; Mork 2004). Boschee and McClurg (2003, p. 3) further highlight the challenges affecting the operations of museums:

> The rules of the game for nonprofits have changed dramatically during the past 20 years. Operating costs have soared, resources available from traditional sources have flattened, the number of nonprofits competing for grants and subsidies has more than tripled ….

Due to financial challenges in the wake of the 2008–2009 global economic recession, some museums such as the Newseum have shut down as they lack the necessary resources to operate (Associated Press 2019). Other museums that have

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shut down include the Marciano Art Foundation and the Main Museum, both in Los Angeles; Pasadena Museum of Californian Art; Sishang, Shanghe, Yang Gaung, the Upriver Gallery and the Dongyu museums, all in China; La Maison Rouge in France; and the New Church in Cape Town, South Africa. Their closure is mainly attributed to inadequate funding (Adam 2020). In England, museums and art galleries also experienced budget cuts, amounting to nearly £400 million over a period of eight years, forcing hundreds to close down (Busby 2019). In an effort to reduce operating costs some museums have scaled down their operations by reducing operating hours and cutting staff. A case in point is regional museums outside London, UK, which have reduced their operating hours and cut staff as a result of austerity measures adopted by local authorities (Kalia 2019). However, in some cases the austerity measures imposed on the culture sector have led certain museums to engage in unorthodox activities, such as selling their collections. The Wereldmuseum in the Netherlands for the past years has contemplated selling its African and American collections due to economic hardships (Ramanujam 2011). Meanwhile, in the United States, the Rose Art Museum closed due to poor funding from its parent organisation, Brandeis University, and its collections were put on sale (Kennedy and Vogel 2009; Rizzo 2010).

The Covid-19 pandemic has compounded the financial challenges faced by museums, leading to even more closures. In the United States, a number of small museums have not been able to cope with the pandemic and have closed down, among them the World of Speed Motorsports Museum in Wilsonville, Ore; the Tahoe Maritime Museum in California, and the KGB Museum in Manhattan. A survey conducted in October 2020 by the American Alliance of Museums, charting the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the financial situation of museums in the United States, indicated that over half of the 850 museum directors who responded to the survey said their institutions had six months or less of their financial operating reserve remaining. The survey also showed that museums that reopened were operating at only about a third of their capacity, and just over half have laid off staff since March 2020 with nearly 70 per cent of frontline employees affected (Bahr 2020). Conversely, the 2021 International Council of Museums (ICOM) global survey on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on museums reported a dire financial situation for museums, especially those relying on their own revenues. The survey showed that the percentage of museums that reported a loss of income of more than half of their annual revenues rose to 44 per cent during the period of the Covid 19 pandemic, compared to 31.9 per cent in Autumn 2020. Furthermore, the survey indicated that smaller museums have been mostly affected by the negative effects of the Covid-19 pandemic, and the possibility of permanent closure was much more likely than for medium to large museums (ICOM 2021).

Zimbabwe's national museums are also affected by these financial challenges. The country's economy underperformed between 1997 and 2009, due largely to corruption and a volatile political situation that saw the closure of many companies, as well as record inflation that crippled the operations of many institutions including museums. From 2009 to 2011 the economy improved due to the legalisation of the use of foreign currency in the country, particularly the US dollar.

This change was introduced by the inclusive new coalition government that comprised rival political parties. However, this positive change did little to improve the fortunes of national museums in Zimbabwe, and they continued to struggle to remain operational (British Council 2016).

Rampant corruption in the Zimbabwean government post-2011 to the present day has worsened the economic situation and thus affected the operations of museums, whose budgets have been significantly cut by the government. Moreover, support for most national museums from the corporate world has been poor, since most of the companies have shut down and those that have remained operational are unable to support museums since they are operating below capacity. The problem has been worsened by a decrease in attendance in most national museums due to a perceived lack of attractive offerings, thereby depriving museums of much-needed income to support their operations. This decline in funding has resulted in shortages of materials and staff with relevant skills needed in various operations of the museums. This has negatively affected museum activities such as research, documentation, conservation, exhibitions and outreach programmes. Some of these activities are being carried out on an ad-hoc basis, while others have been temporarily discontinued. Capital projects for some museums such as the National Aviation Museum and the National Museum of Mining have not been completed since they were launched in the late 1980s and 1990s, respectively. Due to the challenges mentioned above, most national museums are struggling to fulfil their social missions.

The Roles of Museum Members

In light of these challenges, museum membership programmes, such as the 'Friends' of the Natural History Museum in Zimbabwe, can offer much-needed support for museum operations. A member is any individual who gives annually to an organisation and receives specified benefits. Members are not simply sources of earned income; they can be important donors and form a solid foundational base for future major gifts (Watkins 2011). Members can serve as a group from which major and planned gifts can be cultivated and through their numbers may lend political clout (Flanagan 2000).

The two most significant reasons for creating a Friends programme at a museum are to bring in unrestricted revenue for the institution and to mobilise a core group of supporters that attend and promote the museum's programmes, events and exhibitions (Rega 2011). A range of membership levels is typically offered with increasing benefits or recognition accruing to higher levels of participation. Lower-level benefits might include free admission to the museum and tickets to shows organised by the museum, while higher-level benefits might comprise private tours with head curators and breakfasts with the director (Paswan and Troy 2004). Museums therefore see membership benefits as a way to introduce people to the organisation, and as an attractive incentive for donating on a regular basis.

We conducted a study to appraise the programmes run by Friends of the Natural History Museum and to assess the material, human and financial resource contributions by museum members to the operation of the Natural History Museum. Interviews were used to gather data from four staff members of the Natural History Museum. This was complemented by a survey of the museum's website, and Facebook pages of both the museum and Friends of the Museum. The following summarises the findings of our research.

Programmes Run by Friends of the Natural History Museum of Zimbabwe

The Friends of the Museum organises and runs income- and non-income-generating programmes, which are both entertaining and educational for the public. These programmes consist of the following events and activities:

- **Movies:** The Friends initiated a movies programme at the museum. They offer a range of film screenings for children and families, as well as screening documentaries on fauna and flora. The museum charges entrance fees for visitors to view the movies or offers free admission and requests donations from participants. The screened films are both museum mission and non-mission oriented.
- **Night in the Museum:** Evening children's programmes are organised by the Friends of the Museum in the form of plays on specific themes to entertain and educate children.
- **The Conservation Club:** This programme, which targets schoolchildren from 10 to 13 years old, was designed to promote a sense of appreciation and stewardship for the country's cultural and natural heritage, such as animal species and cultural heritage sites. Members of the Conservation Club meet every Friday during the school term and currently pay $2.50 per session.[1]
- The Friends of the Natural History Museum also conduct fundraising programmes in the form of Treasure Hunts, Golf days and Fun days. These programmes raise money to support the museum's operations. In August 2015, the Friends raised $3,800 through a Golf Day towards the construction of the Khami Site Museum, which is administered by the Natural History Museum. The Friends also organised the Easter Egg/Bug Hunt programme, and the funds that were collected from that programme were used to purchase furniture for the museum.

The Friends of the Museum are therefore playing an important role in increasing the Natural History Museum's financial resources. Since the inception of the Friends in 2012, they have contributed $8,000 over a period of five years. Their financial contributions have also helped the museum to set up a dedicated website and purchase a projector to screen films.

Material and Human Resources from the Friends of the Natural History Museum of Zimbabwe

The Natural History Museum benefits from material support donated or sourced by the Friends. Members have assisted in sourcing donations to revamp the galleries, replace carpets and lighting, paint the walls of the museum building and install comfortable seating areas for visitors. They also aided in the renovation and installation of the Hall of Man Gallery with the support of Acol Chemicals, Wildlife and Environment Zimbabwe (WEZ), the University of the Witwatersrand, and a private donor. The Friends also carry out voluntary work and provide expertise at the museum: for instance, they helped reframe flags showcased in the galleries. The Friends, working in collaboration with other partners, have additionally sourced building material donations towards the rehabilitation of the Khami Site Museum at the Khami World Heritage Site, which is also administered by the museum. They have also contributed to the installation of animal sounds such as roaring lions, tweeting birds and trumpeting elephants in the Livingstone Sango-Moyo Gallery, which immerses visitors in a virtual wildlife setting. Other work carried out by the Friends is presented below:

- **Conducting themed discussions** with the communities around Bulawayo on environmental issues and the conservation of wildlife, such as Managing Land for Vulture Conservation. The talks are insightful and educational on the topics of wildlife conservation and the environment in general.
- **Playing a critical role in marketing the museum.** The Friends have a Facebook page called the Friends of the Natural History Museum Bulawayo and are also present on the museum's website. They use both the Facebook page and the website to market museum events and activities. These platforms are very active and are constantly updated to feature programmes taking place at the museum. The Friends also market their programmes at the museum using posters and leaflets, which they prepare for visitors.
- **Supporting various other museum projects**, including the installation of the Hippopotamus gallery, mounting of the gallery of live snakes and the revamping of the Herpetology displays, printing of the Museum Guide Book, and installation of Information Panels at World's View Matobo, a national monument and a World Heritage Site administered by the museum.

Social Entrepreneurs

The programmes initiated by the Friends reflect the work of entrepreneurs with a social mission, who help the museums fulfil their mandate of serving the public (Dees 2001). Strong social ties enhance the probability of opportunity exploitation (Aldrich and Zimmer 1986, cited by Clausen 2006). The Friends have developed such strong relationships with individuals, corporations and private donors that contribute to the functioning of the museum. These ties have become the basis for pooling human, financial and material resources in support of the museum's operations.

Social entrepreneurship combines the social mission of an organisation with innovation and a mission to create and sustain social value (Dees 2001). The Friends' innovation is seen in its fundraising and educational programmes for the museum. As described above, programmes such as Golf Day, Night in the

Museum, Easter Egg/Bug Hunt, Fun Day, and movie screenings have helped raise much-needed revenue. Despite the broad economic challenges detailed earlier, the Friends have pursued innovative opportunities to source funds in order to renovate and create new exhibition galleries for the enjoyment of the museum's visitors.

The Friends are acting in the face of the limited resources currently at hand and have been persistent in providing material resources and expertise. They are finding solutions to overcome challenges affecting the museum's operations. This has been evident in the work they did on the renovations of the site museum for Khami World Heritage Site as well as the installation of signage and visitor amenities at this site and World's View Monument in the Matobo World Heritage Site, which are both administered by the museum. Social entrepreneurs use scarce resources efficiently, and add to their limited resources by collaborating with others. They explore all options, from donations to commercial methods used in the business sector. They are not bound by sector norms or traditions, and they develop resource strategies that are aimed at supporting their social missions (Dees 2001). This is reflected by the work that is being done by the Friends of the Museum, which involves collaborating with others in supporting the museum's projects, seeking donations and embarking on fundraising initiatives in support of the museum's mission.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The Friends of the Natural History Museum of Zimbabwe have shown a sense of innovation and resourcefulness in the way they conceive and structure their programmes and services at the museum. They are generating much-needed income through stimulating programmes and providing human and material resources in support of the functioning of the museum. They are, moreover, not held back by limited resources in their drive to ensure that the Natural History Museum fulfils its social mission, using entrepreneurial techniques such as online marketing and fundraising programmes to support the institution.

Despite the success achieved by the Friends of the Natural History Museum, subscription to its membership remains low. There is a need for increased promotion of the work of the Friends to expand its membership base and attract potential new members. This might include publicity campaigns in communities that are not represented or are under-represented in the subscription profile of the Friends. General members of the communities served by the museum should also be targeted to ensure they join the Friends and participate in activities that help the museum in various capacities. The museum should additionally improve its membership incentives to attract more members and retain current ones. These might include free entrance on special occasions for Friends and their immediate families to the museum as well as Khami World Heritage Site and World's View National Monument in the Matobo World Heritage Site, discounts on books, souvenirs and other merchandise sold by the museum as well as other services such as library and internet access. We believe such incentives will motivate current Friends to help the museum while also attracting new members. This will ultimately aid in growing the Friends' membership and continue to transform museum operations.

Note

1 All monetary figures in this chapter are expressed in US dollars.

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4 The Alchemy of Museum Planning

Darren Barker and Eric Langham

This publication appears at what seems to be an unprecedented and challenging moment for museums, but, we think, also an extremely exciting one, with tremendous scope for museums to experiment and to create a deeper impact in society. By any measure – social, cultural, economic or political – museums today are expected to be more and do more for a wider range of audiences than ever before. In meeting those expectations, they have to contend with a rapidly changing world: new technologies; demographic shifts through migration, gentrification and urbanisation; global cultural upheaval; economic uncertainty; pandemics; and ever more gloomy forecasts of climate catastrophe. How can museums acknowledge and respond to all these constantly shifting factors?

Museums are widely celebrated as a redemptive force in society. They have been hailed as catalysts for economic growth (Tuck 2015), complementary medicines to be prescribed by health services (Napier *et al*. 2014), community hubs that bind people together, alleviating loneliness and marginalisation (Sandell and Nightingale 2012), and as agents of political activism, offering space for debate in an era of environmental crisis, discrimination and economic injustice (Brown *et al*. 2009).

Equally, however, museums are sometimes described as being themselves in need of redemption (Dibley 2005; Graham 2012). Within the last 30 years, we have seen a growing movement to decolonise museums and memorial landscapes (Knudsen and Andersen 2019), as well as efforts to democratise collections and broaden participation along race, class and gender lines (Kreps 2011; Onciul 2015). Where once, in their guise as the guardians of knowledge and culture, museums may have claimed to be politically neutral, today, few scholars or professionals are willing to accept this stance. It is no longer the case that the conservation of material culture for posterity automatically justifies public spending on museums; by many accounts, it is no longer the case that museum visitors are content to cede responsibility for narrating the past to experts and elites (Schofield 2014). At the same time, as the need to drive participation intersects with the 'experience economy' (Pine and Gilmore 1998), gallery design is rarely signed off without at least some discussion as to its 'Instagrammability'.

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Because museums increasingly face such complex and diverse demands, it is inevitable that museum planning is a complex process. It is at once a materially grounded and constrained practical task, and a philosophical endeavour, demanding serious reflection on the work museums do in society. Museum planning calls for an acute awareness (not to say a mastery) of technical detail: market access, environmental conditions, financial liability and so on. And yet, it is far from being an exact science. Rather, as a profoundly human process, museum planning requires space to breathe; it relies on instinct, on moments of inspiration and, in our experience, it benefits from a certain openness to risk. Above all, perhaps, in a field that tends to cherish permanence, it calls for nimbleness, flexibility and the ability to respond to change.

In this chapter, touching on several iconic case studies, we offer a two-part introduction to the task facing planners as they approach the development of a new museum or the significant redevelopment of an existing institution. Part one details a planning process, targeted in particular to the production of an overall museum masterplan. In part two, we share three key principles that underpin our own approach to museum planning. Developing an understanding of museums as **relational**, and inescapably **future-oriented**, institutions, we go on to question what it means for museums to be **sustainable**, and outline how sustainability might be achieved. In each case, examining these different qualities yields insights into the skills required to plan a successful museum and poses questions that museum planners may find helpful to consider as they go about their work.

Part One: The Planning Process

The museum planning process as we conceive it is, in abstract terms, quite straightforward. It comprises three phases: first, a **situation analysis**, concluding with the production of a brief; second, an **options appraisal** designed to refine the brief and build consensus around a preferred strategy for development; and third, the production of a **masterplan**: a single, shared, roadmap to the future. As a whole, the process is geared towards first defining the essential need(s) the museum will seek to address and, subsequently, towards understanding how each facet of the museum's design and operation contributes to serving those needs. The process is *recursive*, with the output of each phase applied as input in the succeeding phase. It must be *reflexive*, demanding that all those engaged in the process are prepared to question the assumptions they each bring to it. And it should be *collaborative*, ensuring that key stakeholders are brought along with the process, with individuals' relevant skills and knowledge utilised to the fullest. Finally, each of these three phases should contain two linked moments: *analysis* (breaking things down into their simplest parts to identify problems) and *synthesis* (building those parts back up again into something new). With these more general comments in mind, we will now address in greater detail each of the three phases of the planning process in turn.

Phase One: Situation Analysis

The most critical task in any museum development or redevelopment is to pinpoint and, if necessary, prioritise the needs it is intended to meet. Simple as it may seem, this is also very often the task that proves most difficult to complete satisfactorily. To overcome this hurdle, our approach as museum planners is to begin each new project by conducting a situation analysis. This phase of the planning process incorporates several activities, as follows:

1 The planning team should enter into honest discussions with key project stakeholders regarding their respective aims for the museum and their understanding of the museum's particular purpose, its strengths and its weaknesses. This process may involve working with both internal and external stakeholders (e.g., trustees and prospective funders would be consulted, as would members of relevant local communities). It will likely require a range of different approaches; from one-to-one conversations, to controlled focus groups and workshops, or more free-form community open days. The aim at this stage should not be to force consensus among the various groups and individuals consulted. Instead, this process is about bringing differences out into the open as the basis for respectful and empathetic dialogue.
2 Planners should conduct a thorough review of the museum's assets; both tangible (including the museum's collections, buildings and grounds) and intangible (including its brand and the stories it can tell). In completing this review, the team should scrutinise both the opportunities those assets afford the museum (e.g., as resources for storytelling, programming or marketing), as well as what constraints they may impose (e.g., in terms of the care and conservation they require). If the project concerns the redevelopment of an existing museum, planners should also work to understand the nature of the current visitor experience and to map the range of activities and programming the museum currently offers to its various audiences.
3 The team should seek to understand the museum's *positioning*, considering, firstly, how its work relates and responds to specific social needs, and secondly, how it relates to other relevant organisations and services (for example, other museums, media outlets, educational charities, community groups, care providers, theme parks, etc.), and how it might therefore complement, compete with or unnecessarily replicate others' work.
4 Finally, the team should identify a range of comparator organisations (other visitor attractions that share key characteristics with the museum in question, whether in terms of subject matter, function or location). The team should then work to assemble baseline data regarding those organisations' visitor numbers, audience demographics, entrance and event pricing, their offer to local schools and so on.

Having worked through these steps to gather data, the next task is analysis. Findings from the above should be read critically and in light of one another.

This will help to contextualise and prompt reflection on the core question of the museum's purpose. During this process, it may become clear that certain key stakeholders hold differing ideas of what needs the museum should be designed to serve: can these be combined and reconciled, or is further dialogue required to reach a decision? Equally, the situation analysis may make it clear that the new museum proposes to fulfil a need that is already being met elsewhere. Can the project be adapted? Will it be financially viable if it seeks to enter into competition with an existing service provider?

In the situation analysis, it is precisely these kinds of fundamental questions that must be teased out and given rigorous consideration. The process should then conclude with the production of a brief, which, as well as summarising relevant research findings, will clearly define and document the following:

1 The grand vision behind the museum: What will it do? Who will it be for? How will it serve those people? And why?
2 A series of agreed critical success factors that define the terms by which the museum's performance will be judged. Examples might include: the achievement of financial sustainability; the creation of local economic impact; building relationships with specific audiences; the conservation of historic materials; or providing a flexible infrastructure for future development and growth.

Phase Two: Options Appraisal

While the situation analysis will end, ideally, with agreement on the vision that underpins the development or redevelopment, it is nevertheless likely that there will be more than one way of actualising that vision. It is now the planner's task to ensure that these options are thoroughly explored. In the options appraisal, therefore, planners need to work creatively and critically to develop models of the different kinds of experience and functionality the museum might offer. While these options may have been raised in the course of the situation analysis, this is the moment at which to carry out indicative costings (building upon and supplementing the baseline data already assembled and factoring in, as an example, different possible financial, social, environmental or political scenarios), to begin to draft the principles (or perhaps a number of competing sets of principles) for a curatorial plan, or to commission or review existing research into likely audiences' behaviours, needs and motivations.

The aim here – in a process that blends creative, imaginative thinking with rigorous modelling and pragmatic research into relevant precedents – is to create a number of options for how the museum might look, feel and operate when it opens and then, by comparing and contrasting those options, to understand each more comprehensively and more critically. In drawing the options appraisal to its conclusion, planners should refer to the previously defined critical success factors, which, appropriately weighted, can be used as the basis for a clear numerical 'scoring' system. By rationalising and presenting options in this way, it quickly becomes feasible to gain consensus from key stakeholders as to the best way forward. From this point on, the planning process can accelerate, with all team members confident of which ideas are being taken forward, which are to be left behind, and why.

Phase Three: The Masterplan

The final phase in our planning process is the creation of a masterplan. Members of the planning team will work together, across different disciplines, to create a brief that combines architectural, curatorial, interpretive, audience programming and business planning strategies – with each aspect of this work taking into account agreements reached in the earlier phases of planning. As the project evolves, it will likely incorporate new team members or contractors, all of whom will bring their own assumptions and ideas to the project. In this context, a key responsibility of the planning team is to ensure that all developments and decisions that are fed into the plan still correspond to the museum's original core vision and allow it to meet the success criteria set out in the brief.

Again, the masterplanning phase needs to feature a series of linked moments of analysis (breaking ideas down and testing them in light of the museum's purpose) and synthesis (pulling together a new unitary model of those ideas that survive analysis). The ultimate expression of that synthesis comes in the production of the final masterplan, which is a single, shared document that details the following:

- The vision behind the museum
- Its mission
- The high-level spatial organisation of the museum (and any planned building or other works)
- Conservation standards
- Curatorial plan, including key stories and interpretation principles
- Audience and engagement strategy
- Marketing plan, including key messages
- Detailed business plan and commercial strategies
- Organisational design, human resources and governance structures
- Operational strategies
- A high-level timeline and budget for delivery.

Drawing together details of every aspect of the new or redeveloped museum-to-be into a coherent whole, this masterplan will not only guide the project team and any external contractors going forward; it may also serve as a helpful communications tool elsewhere. A slimmed-down version of the masterplan may be produced to share with potential funders, to build public excitement about the project or to gain buy-in from senior stakeholders.

Part Two: Planning Principles

In the first part of this chapter, we summarised the practical steps one must navigate to produce a masterplan suited to guiding a major museum development or redevelopment. The masterplan will enable those who use it to understand and measure their own activities in light of the overall vision for the museum. It grants a degree of flexibility to those charged with delivering the project while simultaneously making clear the critical success factors that each aspect of the development must respect. As we have seen, both the vision and the success factors that guide the development or re-development of a museum should be arrived at through a process of careful analysis and synthesis.

We now turn to a discussion of the three critical ideas that underpin our own approach to planning. These 'planning principles' are intended to cast light, not on the mechanical process of museum planning, but on some of the philosophical, sociological and ethical challenges it poses. They can help to inform and enrich each of the three phases detailed in part one, offer ways of viewing the museum as an institution and inspire questions to ask of it.

First Principle: The Museum Is a Relational Entity

As museum theorist Sharon Macdonald and her colleagues suggest, 'No museum is an island' (2018, p. 138). Museums cannot be understood in isolation from the world around them. Rather, they become meaningful and functional spaces, and attain the legitimacy and capacity to act, only in connection with their surroundings. So, we use the term 'relational' to emphasise the multiple ways in which museums are continually and reciprocally produced and reproduced in and through their relations with social life and the environment.

The relations in which museums are embedded exist at a multitude of scales (both temporal and spatial – see Graham *et al*. 2000; Harvey 2015) and across a number of different domains with almost infinite permutations. These relations could be long-term and sometimes very physical (for example, the relations between objects and the heat, light and moisture they are protected against in storage), or they could be at the same time both short-term and long-range (for example, a temporary exhibition that marks an event distant in both time and space).

For the museum planner, it is important to try to achieve as comprehensive a grasp as possible of all the conditions (cultural, epistemological, political, infrastructural and so on) in which a given museum operates. However, one unavoidably significant set of relations is that which exists between museums and the economy. Whether in terms of working towards an institution's own financial sustainability (Lindqvist 2012) or growing the direct and indirect economic, social and environmental impacts of museums as part of a wider ecosystem (Frey 1998; Plaza and Haarich 2009), examining these economic aspects helps to emphasise both the importance and the complexity of adopting a holistic approach to planning.

In this brief exploration of just a few aspects of museums' relationality, one hugely important area is what might be termed the prevailing 'common sense' of any given society. As museum theorists have long observed (e.g., Bennett 1995, 1998; Pearce 1995), museum practice is shaped in numerous ways by often completely unquestioned structures of thought and categorisation that guide how we perceive, understand and hence represent the world. In museum displays, for example, objects are often grouped by nation, by historical period, or according to their scientific or decorative value – with each method of grouping opening up some paths of understanding while closing off others.

This common sense is, in many respects, enormously helpful. As a kind of shared language of meaning, it is the basis for all kinds of social interaction. Yet, it can also serve to constrain our imaginations, including by embedding some basic assumptions about what a museum is and what it does. For example, in Western Europe and North America, it has for decades been commonplace to think of museums as *destinations*: spaces apart from everyday life to be visited rather than inhabited. Likewise, at least in the United Kingdom, one often encounters an understanding of 'heritage' as a resource or a set of objects quite divorced from the present (see Lowenthal 1985).

Yet there is no good reason why this need be the case. In our work on the redevelopment of Qasr Al Hosn, a mixed-use Cultural Quarter including the oldest building in the city of Abu Dhabi, we set out to reimagine and rebuild the links between the site and the everyday life of the city. Working with a host of architects and city planners, and guided by a desire to redress the way in which Qasr Al Hosn is now dwarfed by the city it once proudly loomed over, our plan for the site placed it at the heart of a new 'superplan' to physically and conceptually link disparate parts of the city and create a walkable environment from which cars could be removed over time. Today, access to the landscape and Cultural Foundation is free for all, and both locals and visitors are free to incorporate it into their daily routes and routines. This approach harmonises with an Emirati notion and experience of heritage, which is often highly dynamic and embedded in everyday activities (Exell and Rico 2013; Barker and Langham 2014). It has also borne fruit by attracting new businesses to the area, stimulating more development, investment and tourism in what remains a very important part of the city.

Second Principle: Museums Create the Future

Building on the idea of relationality, a second principle that always informs our planning is the recognition that museums are future-oriented institutions. That is, while they may concern themselves significantly with the care, remembrance and display of material remnants of the past, every facet of a museum's activity has to do with the shaping of particular futures. This recognition of a museum's intimate relationship to the future is hardly new (see Hall 1999; Labadi and Long 2010; Zetterstrom-Sharp 2015), but it could scarcely be more important to our work. Understanding this truth helps to prevent the museum from being conceptualised as a passive storehouse (a place where the past accumulates as if by its own volition) and instead demands that we think about museums as active leaders and pioneers in society, with all the responsibility that implies to weigh the manifold costs and benefits of their actions. With this perspective in mind, every decision takes on an added and weighty significance: deciding what kind of museum to build and where to build it, if and how to renew an outdated institution, choosing what stories to tell, or not to tell, and how to tell them.

We experienced for ourselves, very keenly, this responsibility museums have to the future on a recent project when we were invited to advise on the development of the new United Kingdom Holocaust Memorial. As Alice Greenwald (2010) observes in her poignant discussion of the process of planning the National September 11 Memorial Museum in New York, memorials to atrocity pose particular challenges for those charged with delivering them. Greenwald's role demanded that she confront and strive to balance a number of duties that were not necessarily complementary: to document, commemorate, educate, debate and preserve; and respect local, national and international perspectives on what had been a global event.

In London, the task was no less complicated, but it was a determination to understand and develop the memorial's relationship *to the future* as much as its relationship to the past that ultimately guided the project team. As well as remembering and mourning those killed in the Holocaust by erecting a fitting monument to their lives, a collective decision was made to build a supporting centre that would challenge elements of Britain's own history, such as the nation's refusal to accept more refugees, or questions over whether more could have been done to disrupt the Final Solution. The memorial would thus become a place that consciously and pointedly encouraged reflection on Britain's responsibilities in the world today – exploring how hatred, prejudice and apathy led to the Holocaust; how those factors have given rise to subsequent genocides; and hence why and how they must be guarded against now.

Thinking about museums in terms of their impact on shaping the future does not mean neglecting to honour the past – far from it. It does, however, mean reflecting upon and committing to a vision of how the world might be changed for the better. Alongside a duty to respect, remember and celebrate the past, the museum planner also has a responsibility to imagine and to lead.

Third Principle: Sustainability – Planning for Evolution, not Survival

Many museum professionals have the concept of sustainability hardwired into their brains. Bearing in mind the issues discussed above surrounding relationality and futurity, however, we want to conclude this discussion of principles by scrutinising the term and exploring how it might influence the decisions museum planners make and the ways in which they work.

Sustainability can mean different things in different contexts. For much of the second half of the 20th century, many museums made it the larger part of their work simply to preserve and protect the items held in their collections. Their actions were oriented on the whole to *sustaining* traces of the past in the future. In the 21st century many museums have come under increasing pressure to also become financially *self-sustaining*. While talk of money changers in the temple among museum professionals dates back at least to the 1980s (Harney 1994), it is an inescapable fact that today, more than ever, museums are coming under pressure to reinvent themselves as places of commerce – whether through the creation of specialist retail offers (Larkin 2016), or through the cultivation of ticketed programming addressed to previously untapped audiences (see Kotler and Kotler 2000; Barron and Leask 2017; Frey 2019). Similarly, where public funding for museums is retained, institutions are increasingly called upon to justify their spending by evidencing the broader economic outcomes of the work they do in terms of underpinning urban regeneration (Plaza 2006; Butler 2012; Hewison 2014); fuelling job creation (Tuck 2015); or, less directly (within a framework of 'social inclusion'), supporting marginalised groups in society to build confidence, develop skills and ultimately become economically productive (Matarasso 1998; Young 2003; Tlili 2008; Bishop 2012).

It is important to note some of the contradictions that may arise between different versions of sustainability. For example, Nick Merriman (Merriman 2008, c.f. Fredheim *et al.* 2018) has argued that, in their efforts to preserve ever more traces of the past, museums are creating a wholly unsustainable ecosystem for the next generation to inherit. Collections are, quite simply, too big to store and too costly to care for. Rather than creating a valued inheritance for those in our wake, they may wind up becoming an unmanageable burden. Another contradiction concerns many museums' perceived need to offer, as far as possible, something for everybody (shopping, education, entertainment, sensation and so on). This dubious quest creates the risk that museums overstretch themselves and then fail to maintain acceptable standards across their vast portfolio of activities. A diluted, forgettable museum experience risks alienating both existing and potential audiences.

Sustainability and how to define it throws up yet another contradiction with regard to the challenge posed by calls to repatriate objects removed (often illegally) from former colonies by imperialist collectors (Fforde *et al.* 2004). How Europe's 'universal' museums respond to that challenge is again a question of balancing two opposing notions of sustainability. On the one hand, the desire to preserve the long-term integrity of collections may lead to institutions refusing applications for repatriation; on the other hand, relinquishing stolen objects may be the only way of maintaining an institution's moral and ethical integrity and avoiding lasting reputational damage.

Finally, there are contradictions relating to the stories museums tell and the reasons they may have for telling them. Considering the 'activist' role of the museum mentioned earlier, if we imagine an institution dedicated to campaigning on a single issue (the UK-based Museum of Homelessness (2018), for example), logic dictates that such a museum must aim ultimately to eliminate the need for its own existence. Or, that it is prepared to plan for an eventual radical change of purpose, shifting from campaigning against present injustice to remembering past injury. The definition of sustainability, in this case, would be the mission to drive and then respond to change rather than merely maintaining stasis.

For the museum planner trying to build sustainability into their practice, there are numerous tools and ideas that may be helpful. The notion of the triple bottom line (TBL, protecting people, planet and profit) has gained great traction in the business community since the mid-1990s (Elkington 1999).

Kate Raworth's (2017) 'doughnut economics' elaborates and extends the notion of environmental and social sustainability embedded in TBL and updates it for present times. For Glenn Sutter and Douglas Worts (2005), museums can promote and centre sustainability in their work by rethinking the way they plan for and measure social impacts: both working with communities to define desirable outcomes that respond to their own everyday lives (cf. Graham 2017), and conducting evaluation less egotistically (with a view to demonstrating audience satisfaction) and more ecologically (understanding how museum initiatives have and might further support visitors to reflect upon and act responsibly with regard to society and the environment). With specific regard to processes of museum planning, meanwhile, Alberti *et al.* (2017) suggest making special provision to ensure that amid the upheaval or major redevelopments, collecting institutions retain and develop their capacity to carry out research, and remain abreast of developments in contemporary society that they may wish – or need – to respond to.

Considering the multiple and often competing demands the contemporary sustainability agenda can make on museums brings us to our final example. In recent years, we have helped to plan and develop the Bin Jelmood House in Doha, Qatar: the first museum in the Arab world to focus its attention on slavery. In the context of the region, the idea to develop this museum was a brave and radical one; many remain in denial about the slave trade and slavery in Qatar, with the practice banned there only relatively recently, in the mid-20th century. Furthermore, contemporary issues had to be addressed concerning Gulf countries that are still faced with accusations of modern-day slavery.

For us, the long-term sustainability of the organisation – ensuring it became an established part of Qatar's cultural and historical landscape – was vitally important. The museum's future could not be risked by alienating potential audiences amid a storm of controversy. As a result, we formulated an approach that favoured a long-term capacity to promote dialogue over short-term impact. As well as working with a range of international scholars to obtain globally recognised academic validation for the content and story the museum shared, we also created exhibitions that demonstrated a degree of restraint. The museum does not say *everything*; rather, it starts an unfolding conversation, and that conversation has continued since the museum opened. In essence, Bin Jelmood House seeks to ensure its own sustainability with the goal of achieving more equitable social outcomes in the Gulf, ultimately leading to more sustainable, long-term political futures.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have shared our understanding of museum planning as both a systematic process of analysis and synthesis, and as a philosophical and creative challenge. We have proposed a three-phase process for undertaking museum planning, moving from a situation analysis, through an options appraisal, to the creation of a masterplan. Finally, we have set out three complementary principles that can help us approach thinking about a museum's purpose and place in society.

In closing, we want to reflect on what a museum planner's role is, and what qualities will help them flourish. Our belief is that the museum planner's role is at once that of the author of a blueprint, an inventor and a coordinator of dialogue. As a person or a team of individuals, planners must have the ability to take a long, broad view on economic, social, political, cultural and environmental conditions, and they must also (within reason) be able to understand how these domains intersect and impact one another. They should be sensitive to the constraints society imposes, the opportunities it affords and the needs it has waiting to be fulfilled.

Planners have a complex emotional and psychological role in delivering major projects. While, on the one hand, an important part of their job is to inspire confidence and create consensus when contemplating taking new approaches, on the other hand, they need to know when and how to introduce doubt into others' minds in order, ultimately, to arrive at a more robustly tested certainty. The planner, then, acts both to soothe and to disrupt and must be capable of empathising with others in order to know which approach is required at any given moment.

Lastly, planners should value and be guided by research – but not be bound by precedent. Just as we have suggested that museums have a responsibility to the future, to recognise and weigh their stake in it, so too must planners be able to account for the impact their work will have on society. As they face the future, planners should, therefore, be willing and able to provoke, but also, and most importantly, create the strong consensus that is always needed to move confidently into the future.

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Part II

Communication and Marketing

5 Curating the Museum as a Brand

Matthias Henkel

When it comes to museums, there is often talk of curating, but only in terms of exhibits and exhibitions. However, since we live in a hyper-communicative and multi-medial world, it is also important to curate communication. That means we have to be careful about what and how we communicate: focusing on the perspective, interests and *language* of our potential recipients, in line with our own goals.

This also means that the new way of communicating about the museum must be located at the intersection between traditional forms of communication, traditional educational work and a new understanding of audience development. That leads us to strategic communication. In accordance with Louis Sullivan's statement, form follows function (Cloninger 2009) communication for a museum must follow the content.

From the perspective of museum management, communication and marketing, we can understand museums as a kind of social media, in the sense that:

- Museums deal with social, historical and arts phenomena
- Museums communicate with different target groups
- Museums are storytellers
- Museums create experiences
- Museums are stakeholders in cultural added value

For centuries, the main task of museums was to put objects into an explanatory context. The core activities of the museum were defined as collecting, preserving, researching, presenting and communicating. The museum established itself as a place of originals; as a place where auratic objects were exhibited. Today, museums should be understood as cultural institutions that are predestined to act as repositories of value-oriented information, not only for the storage of objects. In view of today's common visitor orientation, the provision of information for different target groups is also one of the core tasks. Through elaborately designed exhibition spaces, curators developed what we now call scenography. However, our traditional perception of the world has been shaken over the last decades. We are living in an era that Jürgen Habermas once called the 'new complexity' (Habermas 1985).

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On the one hand, museums can be perceived as extracurricular places of education and spaces of experiences; on the other they can be understood as an institutional component of the cultural tourism infrastructure (Dickinson 2018). Beyond their cultural or artistic relevance, museums therefore also have an economic dimension. This reasoning makes it clear that museums participate in a wider competition taking place in the cultural sector: one aimed at gaining the attention of target groups and audiences.

Covid-19 as an Accelerator for Communicative Visibility

Visibility and perceptibility are important when the discussion centers on whether an institution is considered systemically relevant. However, the Covid-19 pandemic temporarily disabled museums' most important organ of communication: the exhibition space. Due to the temporary closure of museums, they disappeared from public perception. During this time, many museums attempted to attract attention with increased social media activity (Agostino *et al*. 2020).

Against this background and notwithstanding all of the pandemic's negative effects, the Covid-19 crisis also served as an accelerator for more visibility, for developing new, creative communication strategies, and for digitization in the museum sector (Henkel 2021). It would have been even better, however, if it had not just been about pure communication. The aspect of communicating one's own brand in addition to the content was often neglected.

No Brand without Content

At first glance, this chapter's heading sounds like marketing. However, I am concerned with a deeper understanding of branding (Ferreiro-Rosende *et al.* 2021). Branding is primarily based on an institution's core competence: it has to do with the values and beliefs that an institution represents to the public: 'Brand orientation is more powerful, since it provides a holistic and balanced perspective on an organization' (Gromark and Melin 2013, abstract). It is about capturing the attention of potential visitors. In order to get the attention of specific audiences in a competitive environment, it is necessary to follow a strategic, brand-oriented communication approach: the goal is to resonate with the audience.

However, to successfully develop an appropriate strategy, a truly holistic approach is required. This is a process that ideally needs to be developed with all members of a museum's personnel, to ensure that the values can be authentically represented to the public by the entire team. In this way, a tangible and credible brand promise is developed: both for the audience and for the team. Ideally a brand promise consists of one or two sentences (Explore Museum Branding in 3 Comprehensive Steps n.d.). It both corresponds to an experience that a museum visitor can expect and conveys core values (Finkle 2019). It is about *what* the museum does for *whom* – and, most importantly, it is about the *why* (Sinek 2009). It is first and foremost about intrinsic motivation: a deep belief in the value of one's own tasks. Based on this shared inspiration, team members are able to create holistic experiences for visitors.

A brand promise should be simple, memorable and inspiring, e.g. Berlin-based Museum Futurium's: 'Futurium - a house of futures' (Futurium n.d.). This brand promise makes clear that there will be more than one future. Another example: The brand promise 'for nature' from the Museum für Naturkunde (Museum of Natural History) in Berlin makes it clear that the museum is also committed to environmental preservation (Museum für Naturkunde n.d.).

No Brand without a Logo

A logo is one of the central elements of brand identity, but it will never appear in isolation. A complete visual identity also includes fonts, colors, pictures, frames and, last but not least, the way of thinking and communicating about the museum: corporate design (CD). The development of a brand can easily be compared to the growth of an individual personality (Richardson 2019).

A brand story is something like the biography of a given museum. It informs the target audience about the museum's history, its core values, its goals and its overall vision. This leads us to the question of the purpose of the museum: topic that has in recent years been intensively discussed among the global ICOM community, finally leading to a revised museum definition in 2022 (ICOM 2022). At the moment, the ICOM Code of Ethics is being revised. In general, differentiations must be drawn between a museum's definition, mission and vision:

> A mission statement is a sentence or short paragraph that defines the existence of … [an institution]. Mission statements get at the heart of why a company exists, rather than how it exists. In other words, a mission statement isn't a business plan.
>
> (Ward 2020a, n page)

For Ward, moreover, the mission states where the museum stands in the present:

> A vision statement is sometimes thought of as a picture of your … [institution] in the future, but it's much more than that. When creating a vision statement, you're articulating your hopes and dreams […]. Your vision statement is your inspiration, and it will serve as the framework for all your strategic planning.
>
> (Ward 2020b, n page)

Finally, the vision states where the museum is going, if the development of the institutional identity can be successfully shaped, a corporate identity (CI) will evolve over time. This means that staff members identify with the brand.

'It's Easier to Love a Brand When the Brand Loves You Back'

The above quote from Seth Godin (2012) underlines that brand-based communication is a special way to develop a dialogue strategy between the museum and its audiences. The first key element is 'love' – in other words, the *emotional approach*. The second aspect illustrates that communication is a process based on *reciprocity*, since the museum is not only a disseminator of messages but also a receiver, able to perceive the messages and moods of the visitors in order to become a place of dialogue: what Oldenburg (1989) called a 'third place'. In the present day, we no longer understand visibility in purely visual terms; it is instead understood as a state of multi-sensory perception. The point is thus to develop the brand in a way that appeals to as many of the senses as possible. In addition to the visual identity, for example, it is also important to develop a 'corporate sound' that has a high degree of recognizability. In this way, even waiting on the phone can become an acoustic pleasure, if the 'hold music' is also perfectly curated.

Holistic Quality: The Thread of Communication Should Never Break

Following the *four-sided model* elaborated by Friedemann Schulz von Thun, communication takes place on four different and interconnected levels: (a) factual information, (b) appeal, (c) self-revelation and (d) relationship (Schulz von Thun n.d.). I would argue that only communication that encompasses all these levels will ultimately be successful.

Communication is an ongoing process, which is why the threads of communication between museums and their visitors should never break. To achieve this, it is necessary to establish communication without 'media breaks'; this means seamlessly connecting different types of media with one another (i.e. print, online, offline). In this respect, successful communication is based on a comprehensive and holistic understanding of quality. This also includes successively developing the brand with attention, care and consistent action.

The purpose of a museum is not to make financial profit, but to create added value for society. Nevertheless, certain principles derived from the market economy also apply here: notably meeting the needs of potential visitors (visitor needs). At the same time, it is a matter of society enabling museums to develop appropriate cultural offerings (museum tasks) (Figure 5.1). The advancing digitalization and the rapid development of AI now perceptible in the public consciousness will profoundly change our entire lives. It is important that the museum sector also proactively addresses these developments. In any case, both operational actions and the possibilities for using the new technology will also fundamentally change everyday museum life. This affects all of the museum's traditional fields of activity – not only ways of exhibiting and dealing with objects but also communication strategies. The term 'digital strategy' is often used in this context. However, I believe that this is too narrow a focus, notably because it does not take into account the idea of developing a holistic, and truly *hybrid*, strategy (Kiolbassa and Kranz. n.d.).

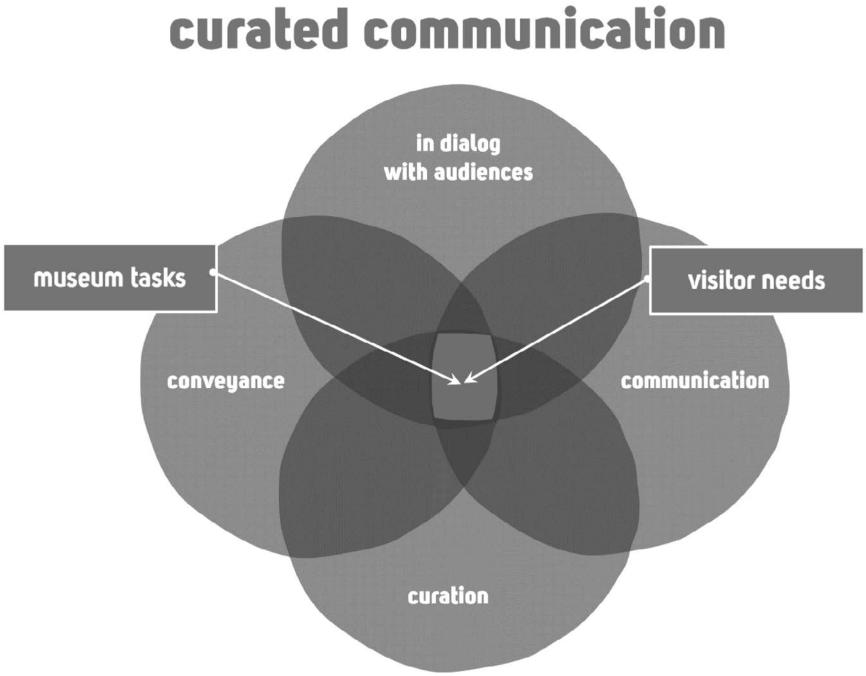

Figure 5.1 The visual impression of the concept of curated communication. © Matthias Henkel.

The Visitor Becomes a User – the Visit Becomes a Journey – and the Journey Becomes an Experience

In the past, a museum visit was often seen as an act of education. Today we understand museum visits as a kind of journey in which visitors can make their own decisions: the visit to the museum begins on the sofa in the living room. In other words: the museum visit becomes a real (hybrid) journey.

In the future, audience development and visitor relation management will take place on four different and simultaneous levels. We can identify these different levels and touchpoints between the museum and its potential visitors in the following way (also visualized in Figure 5.2 below):

1 ON SITE—visitors at the analogue museum
2 OFFSITE—visitors outside the analogue museum—for example, in a public urban space or traveling to the museum.
3 ONSITE—potential visitors surfing the museum website
4 ONLINE—potential visitors surfing the web or using social media

These four different levels, which naturally overlap, should be connected to one another. A clear distinction should be made between the different visitors in order

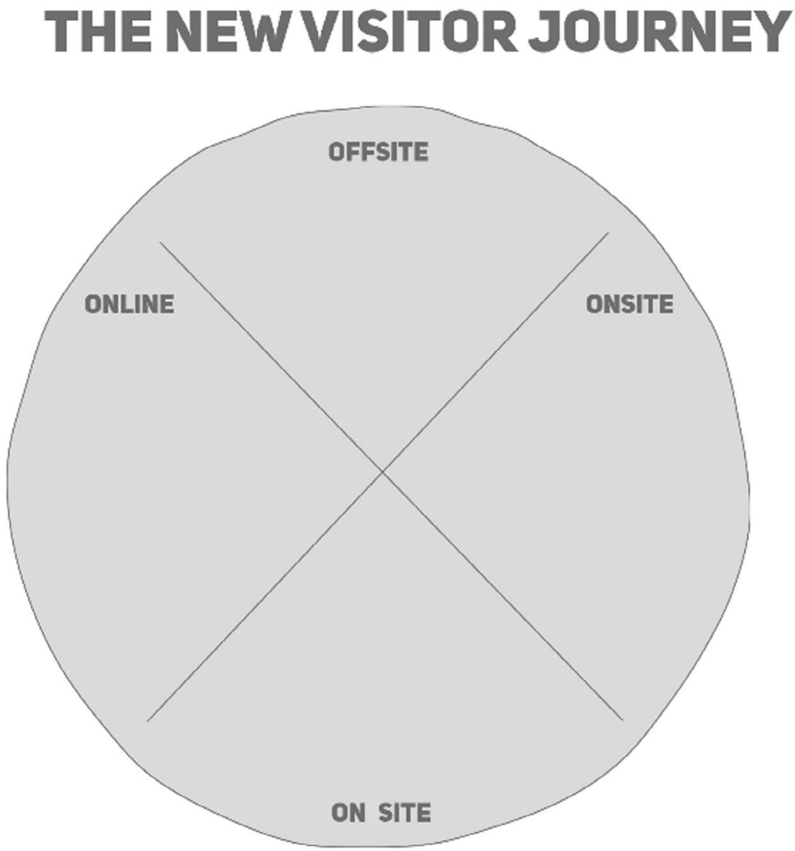

Figure 5.2 A visual impression of the concept of the new visitor journey. © Matthias Henkel.

to be able to develop customized offers. To achieve this, we need to divide the audience into the following groups (also see Figure 5.3):

- VISITORS – people who have a direct presence at the museum, whether in person or online. They enjoy an analogue visit and may take advantage of digital offerings built into the museum.
- USERS – people who are either outside the museum and use the museum's digital offerings, or people who are in the museum and also use the museum's digital offerings.
- SURFERS – people who are outside, who are looking for content related to the museum in the museum's digital offering.
- FOLLOWERS – people located offsite and online who connect to the museum via social media platforms.
- CONTRIBUTORS – people who actively engage in intellectual or operational exchanges with the museum – whether onsite, or offsite, online or offline.

Figure 5.3 The visual impression of the concept of the new visitor journey. © Matthias Henkel.

With the aid of this double differentiation (connectivity and function), it is possible to precisely describe the individual touchpoints of visitors/users on their way to the museum, during their visit to the museum – and of course on their way back home. This offers us the opportunity to create individual visitor journeys – with the overall aim of building a lasting relationship with the visitor/user (visitor loyalty).

'The Museum Is a Place of Permanent Conference'

The above quote, from artist Joseph Beuys, not only underscores the museum's communicative competence but also illustrates the dialogic character of the museum of the future:

- The museum enables visitors to engage in a dialogue with the objects and their contexts.

- In addition, it opens up the possibility of self-reflection, self-knowledge and opinion-forming for visitors.
- Moreover, because a museum visit is often seen as a social event, the museum encourages dialogue between visitors and the museum.

As a result, a visit to a museum can be understood as a thoroughly communicative process. The point is that we empower visitors to enter into such a dialogue. This means that we impart relevant knowledge or offer opportunities for relevant experiences to be gained.

Relevance, Reliability, Meaning and Sensemaking

We live in very dynamic times. Many values and norms are being questioned; there is a polarization of social relationships: for example, in some societies, the importance of religious conviction is growing, while in others secularized views are gaining ground. As a result, the search for meaning and the creation of meaning are global phenomena, which generate different approaches to solutions depending on the given social environment.

Sensemaking is a personal construction process in which each individual constantly creates their own social reality based on their own experiences. This knowledge production is a complex process which comprises cognitive and emotional-intuitive aspects. The museum of the future should become a place that enables this process of creating meaning. Following Karl Edward Weick, sensemaking is a multi-layered process. For Weick, sensemaking is:

- grounded in identity construction
- retrospective
- enactive of sensible environments
- social
- ongoing
- focused on and by extracted cues
- driven by plausibility rather than accuracy (Weick 1995, p. 17)

To summarize, sensemaking is a permanent process of writing, reading and re-writing – one could describe it as an internalized machinery of storytelling – always striving to produce meaning based on individual activities and experiences. For the museum, the process of sensemaking represents a huge opportunity but also a great deal of responsibility. Especially in the age of fake news and so-called 'alternative facts', reliable information is a very important asset.

As an institution, the museum has earned a good reputation with respect to informational credibility, as it is usually based on scientific analysis and historical sources. For this reason, museums have historically been very well regarded by the public. In the future, the museum can also view itself as a cultural service provider of reliable information: one that encourages members of the public to form their own opinions on historical, social or artistic issues on the basis of reliable sources.

Content is relevant to us if it engages us emotionally. Applied to the context of museums, I would describe this as building a *bridge of relevance*. Nina Simon (2017) has written a book on this topic, entitled *The Art of Relevance*. Relevance arises when we deal with facts, some of which we know and some of which are new to us. It is about whether the museum can convey aspects, contexts or – more generally – content that is in some way important to the current lives of its visitors and users. Through such an approach, the museum also gains a stronger social reputation while sustainably strengthening its own brand.

Cultural Overlap and Curated Communication

In traditional classification systems, distinctions are often drawn between press and public relations, advertising and marketing, digital communication, strategic communication and branding, as well as visitor relations management; there is also a fine distinction to be made between internal and external communication.

We live not only in an increasingly global world but also in a world that is becoming more and more diversified. After all, museums are places where strangeness and friendship, similarity and otherness can be experienced in a peaceful way; they are unique places where people can meet in real time and space and share (often intergenerational) experiences.

In the future, museums can use their expertise in intercultural communication to facilitate dialogue between different communities. In this regard, the Indian philosopher Ram Adhar Mall defined the concept of *cultural overlap*. This seems to me an extraordinarily useful approach for the museum to 'function as a forum for social dialogue' (Mall 2013, p. 11). Viewed in this light, it's not just about curating exhibitions; it's also about *curating the communication* that accompanies them.

Museum and the City: Tourism, Sponsoring, Lobbying, Influencing

The museum is an institution that is intricately connected with cultural and social welfare; it is part of the infrastructure of a town, city or country. This means that the museum should place a high value on its own social embeddedness:

- As a vital component of cultural tourism infrastructure, museums have the opportunity to offer customized programming to create travel occasions for tourists. In order to enable strong cooperation with the tourism industry, strategic agreements and long-term planning are crucial.
- Sponsoring, lobbying and cooperation with influencers are activities that require long-term and strategic communication work in order to achieve success. It is certainly helpful if the museum has already established itself as a strong regional brand.

- The interface between strategic communication and curating relevant topics is particularly interesting to underline: sooner or later, it always pays to focus it always pays for museums to focus their programming work on topics that are regionally important.

Data Is the New Oil

In previous eras, museums might have been described as object-centered institutions. Then came a phase that saw museums place greater focus on the needs of visitors. Finally, there was a phase in which the focus expanded to also include non-visitors. The points addressed above make it clear that the field of communication has expanded significantly over the last decade. In order for museums to work on branding and communication in a sustainable fashion, it is necessary to understand building communication strategies as a real cross-sectional task: one that extends across all departments.

Over the past decade, the topic of visitor research has become more important (Recupero *et al.* 2019). Activities related to visitor research are often carried out by the press relations or media departments within a museum. In a time of dwindling financial resources, it makes sense to focus programming and content development even more on the interests of potential audiences. Against this background, it makes sense to invest a share of the budget in visitor research.

A New Understanding of Sustainability

We are currently living in a disruptive age; just a few months ago, a global pandemic showed us how vulnerable our way of life is; political and cultural conflicts are escalating; natural resources are dwindling; the climate is changing due to still increasing emissions; the world order that has been in place for decades, as it developed after the end of the Second World War, is being called into question. All the skills and knowledge that mankind has conceived, learned and invented so far have brought us to the point we are at today: the abyss. We do not have a single problem, but we are witnesses to a stacking crisis.

It is my belief that museums should be involved in developing a new and deeper understanding of sustainability. Until recently, sustainability has typically been understood as a combination of three components: the social, the economic and the ecological, which overlap to create three intersections: fair, worth living of life and reasonable (Henkel 2023, p. 241).

This existing model is not incorrect (Figure 5.4), but it is, in my view, an inadequate model to deal with the challenges we face in as indicated above. The problem is that we humans do not necessarily pursue a goal when it is useful. We need a special level of motivation and of emotional involvement to perform an action. Nina Simon argues that relevance cannot be defined from the outside but is determined by the people themselves. It is about including their experiences and allowing them to play an active role in shaping and participating. It emphasizes that relevance is not static, but changes over time and in changing contexts. It requires

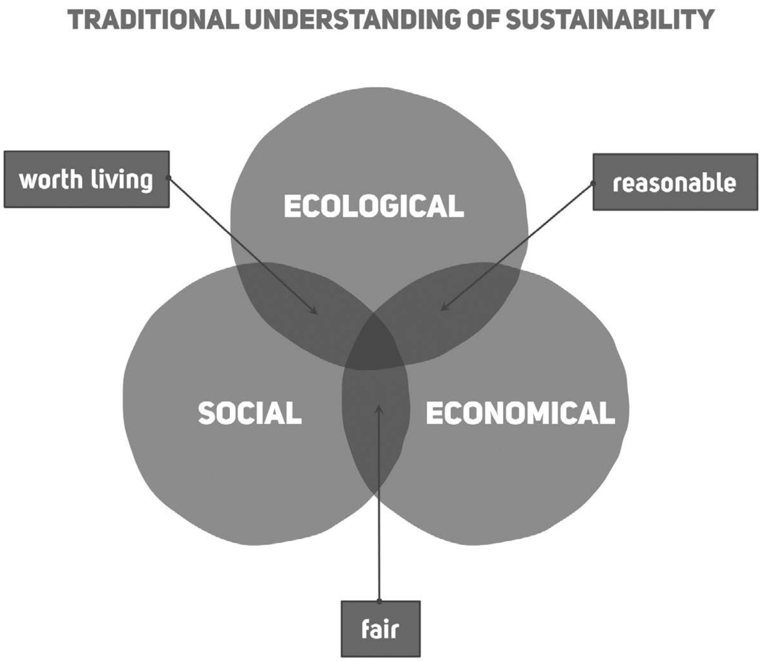

Figure 5.4 The traditional concept of sustainability. © Matthias Henkel.

continuous reflection and adaptation to ensure that facts continue to be seen as meaningful (Simon 2017, min 1:45 ff.). How could – based on these arguments – the framework for a new understanding of sustainability be designed? How might emotional involvement arise to generate motivation to act? How can we use the tools of the museum to transform the useful into the meaningful?

Only when we embed this existing system in a cultural (artistic-historical) framework (Figure 5.5) can a genuinely sustainable and valuable foundation emerge.

The language of art is particularly capable of touching us emotionally. This emotional approach with the means of art could be exactly the way to spark a value-based and action-guided motivation. For this reason, I do not advocate a four-pillar model, but rather a three-pillar model that is supplemented by a cultural-artistic foundation that works with the means of art and culture. It is precisely through this new interface that museums can make their own socially productive contributions. They might apply their intercultural, historical and contemporary skills in new contexts, and thus vividly signal their local, regional and supra-regional relevance within cultural-political environments by actively demonstrating their willingness and ability to engage in discourse. Museums should also be aware of their social responsibility: one that is based on facts, that demonstrates transparency and an emotional, sensorial approach, one that is authentic, both offline and online (hybrid). Following this roadmap, museums will become places of trustworthiness and sensemaking – to the great benefit of diverse societies.

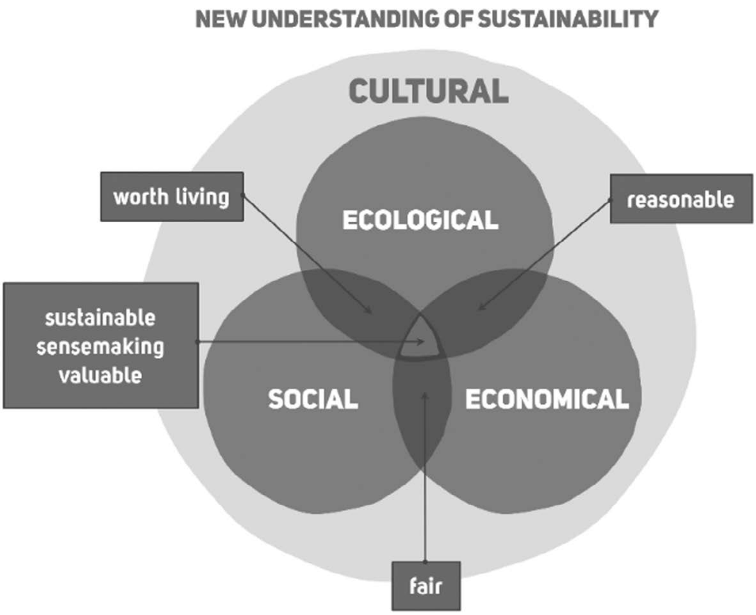

Figure 5.5 A new understanding of sustainability. © Matthias Henkel.

Conclusion: The Museum as a 'Social Sculpture'

In order for museums to successfully communicate with their audiences while navigating the tensions between leisure, knowledge and society, a strategically oriented, culturally shaped, emotional and brand-based institutional communication strategy is required. Brand-based communication is key, and it is essential to enable purposeful communication inside and outside the museum.

In the end, the museum is both: the place of original exhibits – and the 'place of the permanent conference' (Beuys 1980). This is a challenge – but also an enormous opportunity. We have to communicate the museum as a brand, to design the acquisition of knowledge as a holistic emotional experience. However, we should not imagine museums only as friendly places: They also deal with serious, sometimes even depressing content (e.g. crimes against humanity, robbery or colonialism). In this respect, it is also important to communicate the museum as a place of factual information about ethical issues.

Ultimately, we can also understand museums as places that, in the real, digital, medial and also mental sense, only come into being through the fact that each of us – with our abilities and our imperfections, actively contribute to the shaping of society. In the sense of Beuys, we thus create a 'social sculpture'; a museum institution that is:

- accessible to all
- committed to the development of society

- oriented to the needs of visitors (Rand 1996)
- dedicated to its own institutional requirements
- responsive – technologically and in a social way
- relevant – not political but topical
- bridging the past, present and future

In the end, it is essential that all of the museum's processes are carried out with the utmost attention, and with a truly distinct understanding of quality in the holistic sense. This makes communication – both internal and external – an absolute key skill that museums need to develop. The final message of the museum emerges only through the mental or sensory cognitive process triggered in the visitor or user by the experience of the visit – or let's call it cognitive journey.

Epilog

In earlier generations, empirical knowledge had a very high significance precisely when the institution of the museum was invented. In our time, which is characterized by rapid change, the importance of empirical knowledge will decline and the importance of orientation knowledge will increase significantly.

Working on the museum's identity – curating the brand – is sustainable when it is based on the holistic self-understanding of capabilities and boundaries as well as the institutional mission and vision. On this basis, it is possible to develop (internal) communication that creates the foundation for authentic (external) strategic communication. This raises expectations that can actually be met by visiting the museum or using its digital offerings.

There is currently a debate about whether the use of artificial intelligence threatens jobs and fields of activity. The use of such tools will – whether we like it or not – be understood in retrospect as a new cultural technique; we have no choice but to learn skills in dealing with it – culturally based and value-oriented. At the moment, AI is used more to generate answers to questions. Nevertheless, it remains to be hoped that humanity will continue to recognize the great appeal of 'the museum as a place of permanent conference' (Beuys 1980) and democratic discourses as the 21st century progresses.

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6 Museum Branding by Social Engagement

A Co-Creation of Daxi Wood Art Ecomuseum, Taiwan

Joy Chih-Ning Hsin

Museum Branding in a Changing World

Museum branding provides a shared understanding of a museum's value internally, while presenting a consistent image of the museum and its organisational identity externally. Amid increasing complexity and uncertainty in the 21st century, museums need to reinvent their approach to branding. Anderson's (2012) perspective of reinventing the museum represents a systemic shift in attitude, purpose, alignment, and execution for museums that relates to the paradigm shift of museum management and reinventing the museum in terms of institutional values, governance, management strategies, and communications. As Janes and Sandell (2007) state, increasing complexity has by necessity forced creativity in museum organisations, their leadership and new development directions. An important challenge for museum marketers is to build brands around ideas that are less tangible than customer service and efficiency. Such ideas could include community, shared ownership and collective identity and could be based on the use of marketing techniques to build brands that produce emotional identification and take credit for the public value that museums create (Janes and Sandell 2007, p.4).

This chapter presents a case study of the Daxi Wood Art Ecomuseum (DWAEM) in Taiwan to demonstrate its innovative approach to branding, particularly highlighting its initiatives since 2013. Daxi was historically well-known for its wood carvings and as a distribution centre for tea, camphor, and lumber in the 19th century. The Daxi District, situated in southeastern Taoyuan City, the sixth municipality of northern Taiwan, still has many core businesses that have spun off from the original woodworking industry, including master woodworkers' shops, factories, artists' studios, and furniture stores. DWAEM opened in 2015 with two historic buildings and four corner houses and defined its interpretation of ecomuseums within the local context. The museum is supported by the municipal government and uses a participatory model for the development and growth of the museum. The value of the museum is not manifested by the government but is instead co-created in consensus with the local community. The entire community falls within the museum's scope, and local residents are involved in the process of branding through social engagement. This chapter demonstrates the reinvented approach of this collaborative form of branding on the local community.

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The Identity of Daxi: From Community Building to a Living Museum

Situated along the Dahan River, Daxi was a transportation hub for commercial activities in the 19th century. Important goods such as tea, camphor and timber could be shipped through Dahan River, making Daxi an important canal city in northern Taiwan (Zhuang 2015, p. 7). The wealthy gentry took residence in the area, and master craftsmen built their family mansions of wood, laying down the foundation for the wooden products industry. Shops and studios established a middle class. Various immigrants became residents, increasing the community's diversity. The Saintly Emperor Guan's birthday celebration festival and pilgrimage on Lunar 24 June, in particular, has been registered as an intangible cultural heritage asset by the Ministry of Culture. The area's tangible and intangible assets have shaped the distinctive cultural landscape of Daxi and made it a tourism destination. Over time, its distinctive characteristics shaped the planning of streets: for instance, Heping Old Street, known for selling wood products, and Zhongshan Road, the residential street of the gentry where important historical monuments are located.

In 1994, the central government in Taiwan launched community-building as part of its cultural policy by establishing close social ties with community residents. Daxi began its community-building work at the same time, and over the past 25 years many concerned and idealistic community-building groups have been formed. These groups have the autonomy to devote their time and resources to local history and culture studies and advocate for the preservation of Old Street townhouses and heritage. Lan-yen Huang, who was the section chief of the governing body and initiated the creation of DWAEM, observed that the turning point was when community groups called for the preservation of Japanese-style dormitories in 2012. The local authority applied for funding to establish a residential workstation on the site, as a base to meet with Daxi residents and to discuss and develop the idea of viewing Daxi as a living museum (Huang 2015, pp. 167-168).

Based on the foundation of 20 years of community building, the local government aspires to develop an unconventional museum which would be supported, on the one hand, by the public authority and operate with active engagement by local residents on the other. The museum's name, Daxi Wood Art Ecomuseum, Taoyuan, was initially abbreviated as 'Daxi W.E. Museum' before the acronym 'DWAEM' came into usage, which represented 'WE: OUR museum' and furthered the museum vision with the slogan 'All of Daxi is a museum'. It could be summed up as a museum created by the public, with town residents serving as de facto museum directors, and the spirit of the museum not being limited to a single building (Huang 2015, p. 170; Huang 2016, pp.90-91) (see Figure 6.1).

The museum corresponds to the definition of an ecomuseum 'an instrument conceived, fashioned and operated jointly by a public authority and a local population' (Rivière 1985, p. 182) as conceived in France in 1971. Davis (1999) stated that ecomuseums are more properly defined by what they *do* rather than by what they *are*. DWAEM governs with local shared values, taking pride in collaborative

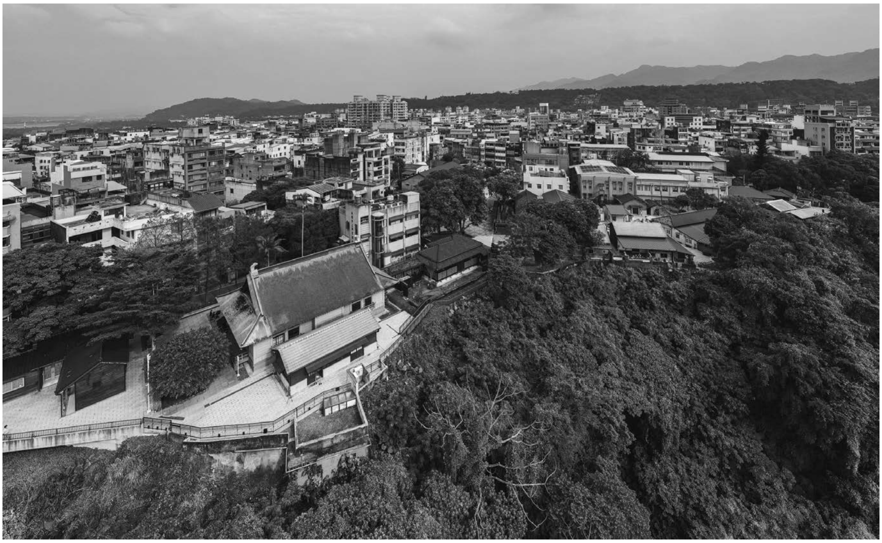

Figure 6.1 ‘All of Daxi is a museum’. Photo courtesy: Taoyuan City, Daxi Wood Art Ecomuseum.

action, and acts as an important platform through which the community can contribute to preserving its heritage and enable new approaches to make meaning out of conserving its local distinctiveness. Therefore, the museum operates with fewer than 20 official personnel and has more than 100 volunteers and 91,887 residents on staff (Huang 2015, p. 170; Huang 2016, p. 90).

Social Engagement to Branding: Corner Houses as Co-Creators

According to Zhuang (2015, p.13), the objectives of the DWAEM are to promote wooden art, preserve local working-class culture, restore the glory of craftsmen, and give impetus to the revival of the area. The museum was established by the city’s Cultural Affairs Bureau, but continues to grow in collaboration with local residents, with the aspiration of transforming all of Daxi into a museum without walls. As Huang (2015) notes, initially abbreviated ‘WE’ from the museum’s name is both a brand and a strategy to establish Daxi’s cultural identity. Yi-Lan City in northeastern Taiwan, aimed to establish a similar brand to Daxi but through a different approach, the Lanyang Museum, opened in 2010, was built and developed as a core museum responsible for facilitating cooperation and interaction among the region’s organisations, groups and individuals to establish the brand ‘Yi-Lan is a museum’ (Hsin and Lin 2015, p. 159). Taoyuan City, instead, renovated heritage buildings one by one in the Daxi area instead of constructing a new facility. The Japanese-style dormitory of Daxi Primary School, built in the 1920s, became DWAEM’s first building; it was named ‘No.1 Hall’ and opened to the public in 2015. (see Figure 6.2) Daxi Police Bureau Dormitory Complex, Samurai Virtue

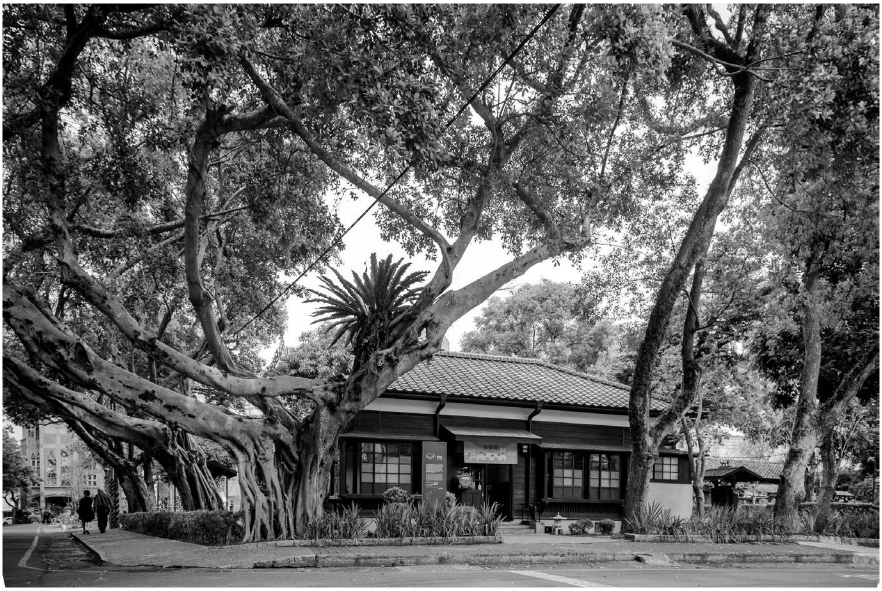

Figure 6.2 No.1 Hall, DWAEM's first building opened to the public in 2015. Photo courtesy: Taoyuan City Daxi Wood Art Ecomuseum.

Hall, and other heritage buildings were renovated between 2015 and 2019 as the museum's public operations' spaces for exhibition, education, workshop studios, and so on. As of 2020, there were a total of six public museums, and this number has increased to 11 in 2023.

In addition to its public heritage spaces, the museum also facilitates what it calls 'corner houses' as co-creators in branding the DWAEM through social engagement. The museum's Planning Committee invited shop owners, acting as directors and interpreters, to share their understanding, personal memories and stories of Daxi with local youth and tourists. Four corner houses opened in 2013, the first year of the museum's operation, and all of these were shops making and selling wooden implements along the main Old Street. Five more corner houses opened the following year, including a farm, a blacksmith's shop, and a creative product shop (Huang 2015, p. 171). When the DWAEM officially opened in 2015, there were 15 corner houses in the network; this number increased to 21 in 2018, reflecting greater diversity and expanding locations (DWAEM 2019b), before reaching over 30 in 2023.[1] The museum provides funding and resources to facilitate these corner house partners, providing them with external experts for their professional growth in terms of museum studies, historical research, and product marketing through training, seminars, and evaluation. Meanwhile, the museum organises annual activities with marketing partners such as Museums on the Corner, Daxi Festival, and Daxi Field School and publishes a bimonthly journal, *A Volume of Daxi*, to disseminate local knowledge.

The work of corner houses represents the key elements of social engagement which Zhang, Jiang, and Carroll (2011) analyse, including participation and interaction in collective activities, social exchange, and individual autonomy. Chu Kuan Hsu, director of the Taiwan Association of Urban and Rural Development (TAUD) and one of the long-term external experts who has facilitated corner houses, shared his insights, observing that the approach of co-creation, and encouraged corner house owners/operators who were unfamiliar with the concept of a museum, or an ecomuseum, to become active agents or ambassadors for the brand identity.[2] Hsu also notes that corner houses operators had seen transformations in their self-identities, from shop owners or small business marketers to museum directors and social actors. The sense of belonging and earned value through active engagement, well-being, and connectedness facilitated by the corner houses prove how the co-production approach enables collaboration and cooperation between the public and private sectors and facilitates networking and ongoing community involvement driven by shared values and mutual equity (Scott 2010, 2013, 2015). The corner houses act, on a functional level, like 'economuseums'[3] to promote the preservation of traditional knowledge and the products of local craftspeople and cultural heritage. However, the identities of the corner houses themselves represent not only the shops and their own stories but also the local knowledge of Daxi as a whole. Accordingly, the government-operated cultural heritage spaces and privately run corner houses are all part of the DWAEM, a Daxi-based ecomuseum. Both public spaces and corner houses continue to increase in number, expanding from old central streets in Daxi to the periphery. Branding and social engagement networks thus emanate from the centre and ripple outwards.

Branding the Daxi Wood Art Ecomuseum

Meyne (2015) completed an internal branding strategy for the Rijksmuseum (Netherlands) during renovations ahead of its reopening in 2013. The process and phases of the branding strategy (see Figure 6.3) included the search for a brand identity, incorporating the brand's values in the organisation, communicating with audiences, internal and external stakeholders, visualising the brand, naming staff as brand ambassadors, anchoring the brand's essence and values in the business processes of the museum and developing a coherent brand identity for external marketing (Meyne, 2015, pp. 48-54). This branding strategy for the Rijksmuseum could, to a certain extent, be generalised to apply to other museums. The Daxi Wood Art Ecomuseum took similar steps in its own branding process. Particularly, the DWAEM considers the corner houses to be brand ambassadors, exemplifying a co-learning methodology and collaborative actions that anchor the brand, constantly enhancing the identity of Daxi as a living museum.

DWAEM Director Hui Chien Chen has stated that the core purpose of the museum was to act as a mechanism for local residents to represent themselves and to tell their own stories (Chen 2019, pp. 1-2). More public spaces have been renovated

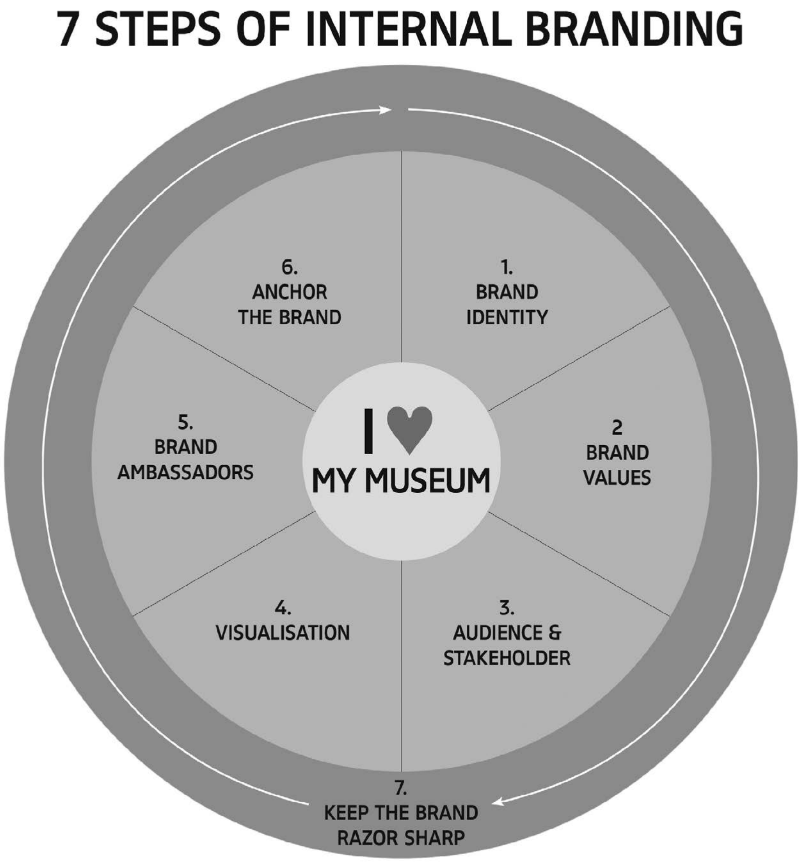

Figure 6.3 The process of internal branding in Rijksmuseum (Meyne, 2015, p. 48). Image courtesy: Chinese Association of Museums.

for museum use, and more corner houses have joined the network in locations outside of the old street. Implementing co-learning as its primary methodology, since 2015 the museum has organised serial coaching programmes for the corner houses that include museum studies workshops, expert consulting, study trips, and seminars (DWAEM 2019a, pp. 55-56). The corner houses receive accreditation when they complete the programme and take collective actions to preserve local knowledge, organise exhibitions, and join annual festivals. Directors of the corner houses revealed that the greatest challenge for them was finding the time to get involved, to communicate with one another, to understand and to work together. Each corner house is unique and autonomous, and together they form a diverse network (DWAEM 2019b, pp. 69-70).

The Chung Yuan Christian University developed DWAEM's visual identity. The museum logo shows hills and a river, representing the forest and Dahan River,

Figure 6.4 Museum logo and CIS signs which won the iF Design Award 2018. Photo courtesy: Taoyuan City Daxi Wood Art Ecomuseum.

which were the source of the carpentry, livelihood, and history of the region. Furthermore, the design team has created four visual images and colour plans to present the 'Forest' of nature, the 'Water' of life, the 'Street' of culture, and the 'Museum' of production (DWAEM 2019b, p. 21).[4] The museum logo won the Discipline Communication award at the 2018 iF DESIGN AWARDS (see Figure 6.4).

The DWAEM arguably demonstrates many of the ideas and values advocated by ICOM, such as museums interacting with their communities, museums and cultural landscapes, and museums fostering strong connections with new publics and new approaches. Along the lines of Anderson's (2012, pp. 3-4) paradigm shift of museum management, the DWAEM reinvents the museum in several ways. Grounding itself in the brand identity 'All of Daxi is a museum', the DWAEM co-creates ownerships and institutional values with community participants, and the corner houses in particular form collective accountability. The corner house owners act as directors, interpreters, and educators, and the museum governs its operations through shared leadership, collective decision-making and collaboration. Taking up a co-learning organisation as a management strategy, the museum co-creates with the corner houses and facilitates the exchange of knowledge through mentorships, training courses, workshops, seminars, and even conferences. In doing so, the museum acts as an intermediary: a platform, a catalyst and a generator of branding, as well as developing the vision of Daxi as a fascinating place to live and visit. (see Figure 6.5).

Figure 6.5 Corner houses charter ceremony in 2021. Photo courtesy: Taoyuan City Daxi Wood Art Ecomuseum.

Conclusions

DWAEM is unique in two ways. First, the museum brand is a reinvented interpretation of an ecomuseum which reflects the 21st century and local contexts in Daxi, Taiwan. This ecomuseum is authorised and supported by the local government, yet it is not restricted as a subordinate institution. It is more than a single building and brand; the entirety of Daxi has effectively become a museum without walls. The museum has renovated existing cultural heritage resources rather than constructing new buildings. It has also been developing its collection through in-situ preservation efforts and retains objects in their original locations and contexts, i.e. in local people's lives. The DWAEM brands its own local ecomuseum discourse through dynamic community preservation, interpretation, and management of heritage for sustainable development.

Secondly, the museum's branding is established through social engagement with 'corner houses', which function as co-creators. The co-creation approach enables corner house participants to change their identities within Daxi and their role in the co-learning process and collaborative actions. The DWAEM brand thus creates emotional ties, connecting local residents and corner house directors. Meanwhile, the professional community-building personnel, official staff of the DWAEM, and external experts play crucial roles in facilitating and accompanying their growth within the social engagement process. The understanding and consensus of what the DWAEM is starts with the corner houses. The corner house project

Figure 6.6 Saintly Emperor Guan's birthday celebration festival and pilgrimage on Lunar 24 June registered as an intangible asset. Photo courtesy: Taoyuan City Daxi Wood Art Ecomuseum.

has continuously increased in number and expanded outside of the old street. It will be more challenging when it reaches other districts in the city. The co-creation approach is also undertaken by Shetou[5] culture, which allows religious groups to participate in the Saintly Emperor Guan's Birthday Celebration and pilgrimage on Lunar 24 June (see Figure 6.6). There are more than 30 local Shetous in Daxi, each with unique rituals and complicated relationships, which make the museum branding project more challenging.

In the case of the DWAEM, the ongoing process of branding is not about the perspective of the museum itself but instead focuses on the relationships between the museum and local social networks; it furthermore depends on interconnection, interdependences, and interaction with residents and local communities. The museum takes an innovative approach to branding and acts as a living organism by growing with the local community, with the museum and the community enriching one another over time. The successful matrix of museum management in a changing world, by definition, requires creativity, time, and more importantly *reinvention*.

Acknowledgements

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Notes

1 The number of corner houses and co-learning partners is progressively increasing each year. See the official website of Daxi Wood Art Ecomuseum at https://wem.tycg.gov.tw/home.jsp?id=7&parentpath=0,1.
2 An interview was conducted by the author on 30 November 2018.
3 A model was developed by ÉCONOMUSÉE®, a non-profit organisation founded in 1992 in Quebec, Canada to promote the preservation of traditional knowledge and local entrepreneurship by utilising cultural tourism (Predyk and Vaugeois 2019).
4 Also see the website of the museum at https://wem.tycg.gov.tw/.
5 Shetou is a unique folk culture and has been composed of different local industries and communities in Daxi for Saintly Emperor Guan's birthday celebration festival and pilgrimage on Lunar 24 June. In recent years, the museum works with different communities of Shetou to investigate, preserve, and study the tangible and intangible cultural resources.

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7 Mining Social Media for Museum Quality Evaluation

Ingrida Kelpšienė, Pedro Luengo, and Costis Dallas

Introduction

Service quality, perceived value, and visitor satisfaction have been steadily gaining the attention of cultural institutions, including museums, since the last quarter of the 20th century (Kavanagh 1994; Mclean 1994; Rentschler and Gilmore 2002; cf. Weil 1999). In tandem, the recent explosion of digital communication in all spheres of social and cultural life has afforded museums new possibilities to manage and share collections, to communicate with visitors (Drotner and Schrøder 2013; Díaz-Andreu 2017; Lewi *et al*. 2019) and, as we argue here, to gain insights on community and visitor perspectives on museum value, using data analytics and qualitative research. This chapter introduces a mixed-methods approach, based on an analysis of visitor comments on social networking sites, to account for the perceived quality of museum offerings and thus improve museum visitor experience management. The proposed approach combines a software-supported topic modelling analysis of TripAdvisor comments with a qualitative data analysis of Facebook comments. Unlike prior studies in the field of museum service quality assessment, this approach does not require conducting a visitor study, requiring considerable effort and prior expertise, but uses evidence which is publicly available on social networking sites. The methods used for analysis do not require specialised computer skills, and may be served by readily available software, and applied without the need for advanced methodological expertise. This approach provides, we hope, a useful tool for museum professionals to gain a sense of perceived service quality in their institution, allowing for the comparison and sharing of good practices and encouraging improvements in museum quality and value.

A Model for Evaluating Service Quality in Museums

Since the end of the 20th century, the service sector has demonstrated increased interest in models of service quality assessment. The key idea behind service quality assessment is to evaluate the perceived quality of product's services', treating perceived quality as a factor of customer satisfaction – and even of future customer behaviour. In line with this idea, formal models were introduced to provide a systematic way to assess service quality in specific domains and service organisations

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(Parasuraman *et al.* 1988; Rust and Oliver 1994). Of these, SERVQUAL, perhaps the most influential generic service quality model, proposes measuring perceived service quality on the basis of five dimensions: (a) tangibles, (b) reliability, (c) responsiveness, (d) assurance and (e) empathy (Parasuraman *et al.* 1988). Initially designed for the service industry, SERVQUAL has been criticised, notably, for the fact that its proposed dimensions are unsuitable for all application domains; for the lack of clarity as to what actually is being assessed by each dimension and, finally, for placing too little emphasis on the actual product or service offered at the expense of functional aspects of service delivery (Carman 1990; Brady and Cronin 2001; Sánchez-Hernández *et al.* 2009).

An additional critique of SERVQUAL concerns the fact that it is a gap metric, i.e., it compares customer quality assessment of some services with expected quality for each assessment item to establish satisfaction. To counter this critique, an additional dimension, i.e., delight, has been proposed in the context of service quality assessment (Asif 2015). The relevance of surprise and delight in service quality is also recognised by Kano's attractiveness model of service excellence, which recognises that to be excellent, a service needs not only to be functional but also attractive (Kano 1984; Gouthier *et al*. 2012). This critique is equally relevant in the context of museum quality evaluation, given that the assumption that visitors come to museums with predefined expectations is not always warranted, and that unexpected discovery, the element of surprise, resonance and wonder may be important contributing factors to the value of museum experience (see, for example, Greenblatt 1991).

Despite its limitations, SERVQUAL was later adapted for use in specific domains, starting from the original five dimensions and specific assessment items but then inductively deriving additional ones applicable in the domain in question. This was typically achieved through, a sophisticated statistical method such as factor analysis, following a procedure recommended by the authors of SERVQUAL themselves (Parasuraman *et al.* 1988). Among those derivative models, particularly relevant for our purpose are four models related to the domains of hospitality, holiday-making and heritage tourism: LODGEQUAL (Getty and Thompson 1994), HOTELQUAL (Falces Delgado *et al.* 1999), HOLSAT (Tribe and Snaith 1998) and HISTOQUAL (Frochot and Hughes 2000). The first, aimed at the hospitality industry, proposes assessing the perceived service quality of hotels on the basis of three dimensions of assessment, derived from the original SERVQUAL dimensions: (a) tangibility, (b) reliability and (c) contact (which combines items from SERVQUAL's responsiveness, assurance, and empathy). The second, HOTELQUAL, also aimed at the hospitality industry, goes beyond SERVQUAL to identify three concrete areas of service quality evaluation: (a) evaluation of service personnel, (b) evaluation of the facilities and (c) service organisation. The third, HOLSAT, identifies six areas for the assessment of organised holiday experiences: (a) physical resort and facilities; (b) ambiance; (c) restaurants, bars, shops and nightlife; (d) transfers; (e) heritage and culture and (f) accommodation. Finally, HISTOQUAL, aimed at service quality assessment of heritage attractions such as historic houses, differentiates between five dimensions, of which (a) responsiveness, (b) tangibles and (c) empathy are equivalent to those used in SERVQUAL, while (d) communication was one of the early dimensions later dropped from the final SERVQUAL model, and (e) consumables is a new dimension specific to HISTOQUAL.

Recent studies of service quality evaluation in the museums and heritage field are written for the most part from the perspective of services marketing. They typically draw from one of the models presented above, rely on conducting questionnaire surveys, and involve sophisticated numerical analysis methods such as factor analysis and structural equation modelling. They include, notably:

a a questionnaire survey analysis of visitors to the Royal Mile, Edinburgh, distinguishing between designer- (museum professional), researcher-, and customer-based conceptualisations of museum service quality and, using an amended version of HOLSAT (Cunnell and Prentice 2000),
b a repertory grid analysis of visitor questionnaires to assess service quality in London museums (Caldwell 2002);
c a focus-group study of service convenience in American art museums (Geissler *et al.* 2006);
d an analysis of visitor questionnaires distributed at a Malaysian museum, using the SERVPERF model of service quality (Mey and Mohamed 2010);
e a structural equation modelling and factor analysis of SERVQUAL questionnaire survey responses on the quality of five South African museums (Radder and Han 2013);
f a questionnaire survey analysis of visitors' expectations and perceptions at the Krapina Neanderthal Museum, Croatia, using a modified version of HISTOQUAL (Markovic *et al.* 2013);
g a structural equation modelling analysis of the relationship between service quality, visitor satisfaction and emotions on the behavioural intentions of visitors to Macau museums, based on a questionnaire survey, and proposing a bespoke multidimensional, hierarchical model (Wu and Li 2015) and, finally,
h the elaboration of a quality seal for Spanish museums which, however, does not align with any of the established service quality models (Norma UNE 302002:2018 Museos).

For the purposes of our study, we combined salient aspects of the HOTELQUAL model with those of other models and our own insights from relevant studies, in order to define a model that addresses dimensions of museum quality evaluation that cannot be accounted for fully by any of the previously defined models when applied separately. As we conceive museum quality from the point of view of museum provision and professionalism (Kavanagh 1994) rather than through the lens of service marketing, we chose to construct our model using assessment dimensions that are directly intelligible to the community of museum professionals and researchers for whom our study is intended, and that could be identified in evidence readily available online to museum professionals. Instead of the inductive approach taken by earlier studies, in which dimensions of service quality are derived by means of sophisticated statistical analysis of a single dataset, we followed a retroductive process (Bhaskar 1979), re-expressing our initial observations as theoretical dimensions compatible with prior conceptualisations of museum value and service provision from the literature of museum studies. We adopted all three dimensions of HOTELQUAL (assessment of personnel, facilities, and service organisation) since they represent straightforward factors contributing to customer experience in the hospitality industry, which are also directly applicable to generic aspects of museum service and professionalism. This aligns with earlier research confirming that hospitality is an important dimension of heritage visitor experience (Periañez-Cristobal *et al*. 2019). We found it necessary, however, to expand the model with two additional dimensions that were not present in earlier service quality models we examined, in order to account for tangible and intangible aspects of the core museum visitor experience: exhibitions and programmes, which are central to our understanding of the value offered by museums to their visitors. We therefore ended up elaborating a museum quality assessment model consisting of five dimensions: (a) *display*, (b) *subject matter,* (c) *facilities,* (d) *services* and (e) *staff* (Table 7.1).

Unlike other service quality models, the MUSEQUAL model does not depend on a predetermined list of items (attributes) related to each of the five quality dimensions. As each museum and each museum visit is different, we expect that quality assessment by visitors will yield a diverse range of statements. Using the dimension definitions in our model, it is possible to classify all attributes represented by specific visitor statements into one of the five dimensions of *Display, Subject matter, Facilities, Services* and *Staff.* As MUSEQUAL is defined on the basis of a conceptual fit into these five dimensions, rather than inductively on the basis of a dataset derived from a single museum, it may be applicable as it stands to a broad range of museums without the need for constant modifications, and can thus provide a stable instrument for quality evaluation across time in a single museum, or for comparative assessment across institutions. Museum professionals should be able to use the findings from visitor assessment along each of these five dimensions to produce useful policy and practice interventions in specific professional practice domains, listed in the intervention fields part of the model.

Researching Assessment of Museum Quality on Social Network Sites

Social network sites are virtual user communities on networked digital platforms (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TripAdvisor, etc.) which enable the creation of personal profiles and foster interpersonal communication and content sharing. The use of social network sites as a digital tool for museum communication is a widely discussed subject. Studies focusing on community perspectives on social network sites are split along two main lines: firstly, studies researching existing possibilities for user engagement, and secondly, studies evaluating the effectiveness of a museum's performance on social media (Trolle Gronemann *et al.* 2015). While research on audience engagement seeks to explain the most common social network site strategies for museum communication (MacArthur 2007; Russo *et al*. 2010; Pett 2012; Kelly 2013;

Table 7.1 MUSEQUAL dimensions, dimension definitions, source and field of museum management interventions

Dimension	*Dimension definition*	*Source*	*Intervention fields*
Display	Assessing tangible aspects of exhibitions (including lighting and other physical dimensions of exhibition galleries), as well as digital exhibits, educational programmes and materials produced by the museum	New	Museography, physical exhibition design, digital exhibit design, programme materials, gallery accessibility design, user experience design
Subject matter	Assessing intangible aspects of exhibitions and programmes, identified in the subject matter of exhibitions, narratives, labels and panels, audiovisual content, guide tour scripts and representing museum messages, storylines, meanings and discourses	New	Exhibition planning, interpretation and representation, curatorial research, programme content
Facilities	Assessing museum facilities outside the gallery space, including visitor access areas, elevators, stairs, foyer, museum bookstore, shops, restaurants and cafes, visitor seating areas, restrooms and more generally the museum building	HOTELQUAL	Facilities provision and management, plant management, security, accessibility in the museum building
Service provision	Assessing the provision and delivery of visitor services such as front desk information, exhibition guiding and orientation, educational programme delivery and gallery photography	HOTELQUAL,	Visitor-side Museum procedures, front desk operation, guides, visitor information and communication, Customer Relationship Management (CRM)
Staff	Assessing the professionalism, friendliness, and ability of visitor-facing museum staff to provide useful and effective service responding to visitor needs	HOTELQUAL	Staff training and evaluation, Human Resource Management (HRM)

Padilla-Meléndez and Águila-Obra 2013; Suzić *et al.* 2016) especially in light of three fundamental functional communicative contexts identified as marketing, inclusivity and collaborative frames (Kidd 2013), studies focusing on effectiveness seek to evaluate the potential of social network sites in reaching audiences and obtaining feedback from visitors in order to better manage museums' relationships with them (Fletcher and Lee 2012; Chung *et al.* 2014; Spiliopoulou *et al.* 2014; Lazzeretti *et al*. 2015).

Collectively, these studies provide a well-grounded, evidence-based overview of how museums and users interact with each other on social network sites. However, they do not fully take into account museum visitors' perspectives on the overall museum value, as perceived and expressed through social media in the form of personal opinions or shared experiences. The creation of an 'interconnected opinion space' (Charitonos *et al*. 2012, p.803), where online discourse can help us recover important aspects of visitor experience contributing to the meaning-making process, is associated with the use of social and mobile technologies in museum encounters, and indicates the potential of technology-enhanced learning. The use of social network sites enables museum visitors to re-curate museum exhibitions and to engage with museums in meaningful ways (Weilenmann *et al*. 2013). However, the ways in which museum visitors choose to communicate their experiences vary and depend on the affordances and character of each platform, which play an important role in extending the dialogue beyond the physical space of the museum. The main challenge for museums remains to be able to respond to emerging visitor behaviours induced by digital technologies (Weilenmann *et al.* 2013).

Previous studies have turned to content analysis of websites and blogs to gauge the value of visitor experiences such as travel to tourist destinations (Choi *et al,* 2007). Among social network sites, TripAdvisor has also become a common source of evidence for analysing hospitality service quality (Flôres Limberger *et al.* 2014). More recently, visitor comments on TripAdvisor have been used to analyse complaints on museum service failure based on a model expanding SERVQUAL to encompass as many as 12 dimensions: (a) convenience, (b) contemplation, (c) assurance, (d) responsiveness, (e) reliability, (f) tangibles, (g) empathy, (h) communication, (i) services cape, (j) consumables, (k) purposiveness and (l) first-hand experience (Su and Teng 2018); moreover, and more closely aligned with our approach, it allows for the analysis of service quality in heritage hotels on the basis of an adaptation of the HOTELQUAL model (Periañez-Cristobal *et al*. 2019).

Like these studies, our approach to museum quality assessment is based on statements made spontaneously by visitors on social network sites, rather than on questionnaires or interviews designed specifically for service quality evaluation. While our model is driven by considerations of relevance to museum value and experience as illustrated in museological literature, comments freely submitted by actual visitors as they communicate with peers provide, in our view, more reliable evidence of how visitors truly perceive museum service quality. It does not restrict potential responses to a pre-defined number of items associated with a standard model, and it allows for the collection of much larger datasets for the purpose of confirming findings and providing for fuller interpretation of results: in other words, satisfying what is known in qualitative methodology as the principle of saturation.

Two of the most popular social network sites globally, Facebook and TripAdvisor, were chosen in this study to evaluate museum quality on the basis of user reviews. Both platforms allow visitors to express their opinions and to reflect on personal experiences by providing reviews and recommendations.

TripAdvisor, as an online community focused on travel, is explicitly dedicated to sharing reviews and impressions of hotels, restaurants, and tourist destinations, including cultural attractions. Facebook is a more versatile social network platform fostering different kinds of interactions, but it also allows users to write reviews, an important Facebook business page feature directly relevant to our approach.

Quality Evaluation of Three European Museums

Three museums from three different European countries, Greece, Lithuania and Spain, were chosen as subjects for this study. When selecting museums to evaluate, the following criteria were considered: geographical coverage, the significance of the museum in its respective country, thematic diversity of its collections, and the number of reviews available for the museum on both TripAdvisor and Facebook. The final selection included the Benaki Museum (gr. Μουσείο Μπενάκη),[1] the largest independent museum foundation in Greece, with a main Museum of Greek Culture spanning Greek material culture and art from the Bronze Age to the 20th century, and several satellite sites including a Museum of Islamic Art, the vibrant Pireos 138 temporary exhibition and cultural events building, and the Ghika Gallery housing the collection of a notable Greek 20th-century visual artist; the Museum of Occupation and Freedom Fights (lt. Okupacijų ir laisvės kovų muziejus, henceforth Museum of Occupation, or MOFF),[2] which, while formally professing a wider scope, focuses for the most part on crimes during the Soviet occupation and the history of anti-Soviet resistance in Lithuania and, the National Art Museum of Catalonia (cat. Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya, henceforth the Art Museum of Catalonia, or NAMC),[3] one of the best-recognised and most-visited art museums in Spain. These museums are different in scope, size of collections and purpose in their respective national context. This diversity of selected museums contributes, in our view, to a more inclusive framework of museum quality evaluation on social network sites. We should note, however, that the comments we collected and analysed from these three museums' TripAdvisor and Facebook pages date to 2018; therefore, we did not witness, nor can we anticipate potential changes in the criteria by which visitors assess these museums, nor any future evaluations or possible patterns of visits that may be connected to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The three museums differed with respect to the number of reviews they receive on TripAdvisor and Facebook (Figure 7.1). The biggest difference between platforms was observed in the case of the Museum of Occupation, which garnered a significantly higher number of reviews on TripAdvisor and a very low number on Facebook (we do not, however, have access to information on whether any of the three museums studied have been removing critical visitor comments from their Facebook pages). The Benaki Museum shows a similar pattern, but the difference between social media platforms is not as marked as it is in the case of the Museum of Occupation. Finally, the Art Museum of Catalonia represents the most balanced museum presence among the two social networking sites examined, in that the number of reviews for the museum on TripAdvisor and Facebook are comparable.

Figure 7.1 Comparison between the number of reviews of three European museums on TripAdvisor and Facebook (November 2018).

While all three museums varied in the number of reviews they received, overall ratings attributed by users were very similar in all cases (Figure 7.2). All three museums had the same rating of 4.5 on TripAdvisor. Also, two museums (Museum of Occupation and the Art Museum of Catalonia) had the same rating (4.6) on Facebook as well, while the Benaki Museum had a slightly higher Facebook rating (4.8).

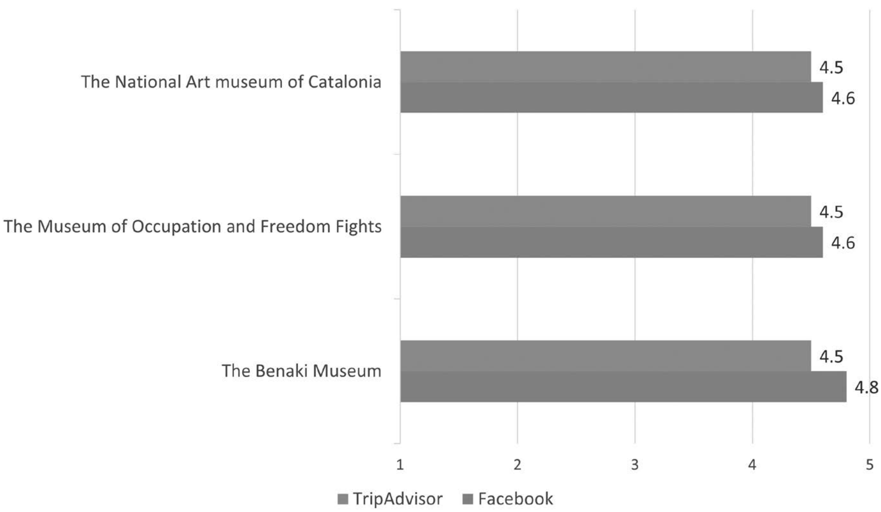

Figure 7.2 Comparison of ratings for three European museums on TripAdvisor and Facebook (November 2018).

Topic Modelling of TripAdvisor User Reviews

A total of 1,837 comments in English and Spanish published on the TripAdvisor pages of three selected museums were gathered for topic modelling, using specialised software. Topic modelling is a computational text-mining procedure allowing the identification of substantively meaningful categories in a text corpus, called topics, on the basis of the statistical distribution and co-presence of words within the corpus, with very little need for researcher intervention (Mohr and Bogdanov 2013). To identify topics in the TripAdvisor corpus for the three museums included in our analysis, we used a data extractor and codification software tool, SiSOB-Hist, designed to identify categories related to heritage from a text corpus and previously used successfully to analyse Spanish heritage hotel reviews on TripAdvisor (Periañez-Cristobal *et al.* 2019). This tool was fed with comments, and a resulting list of keywords was organised under the five MUSEQUAL dimensions (Display, Subject matter, Facilities, Services and Staff). The analysis included only those comments in which a topic related to one of the MUSEQUAL dimensions could be identified; remaining comments were omitted from the analysis.

An overview of the topics identified in the merged TripAdvisor corpus for the three museums shows that ART was the most frequently used keyword in reviews, while SOVIET and PICASSO followed suit: clearly, these are notions specific to the different *Subject matter* of museums in our study. The analysis also revealed frequent references to common keywords related to *Facilities*, such as RESTAURANT, TERRACE, ESCALATOR and STAIRCASE, as well as *Services*-related keywords such as GUIDE and TOUR, but also qualifiers such as COMFORTABLE and EFFICIENT (Figure 7.3). Although the emphasis on facilities and on comfort

Figure 7.3 Word cloud of keywords in English analysed on TripAdvisor for three European museums (November 2016–November 2018).

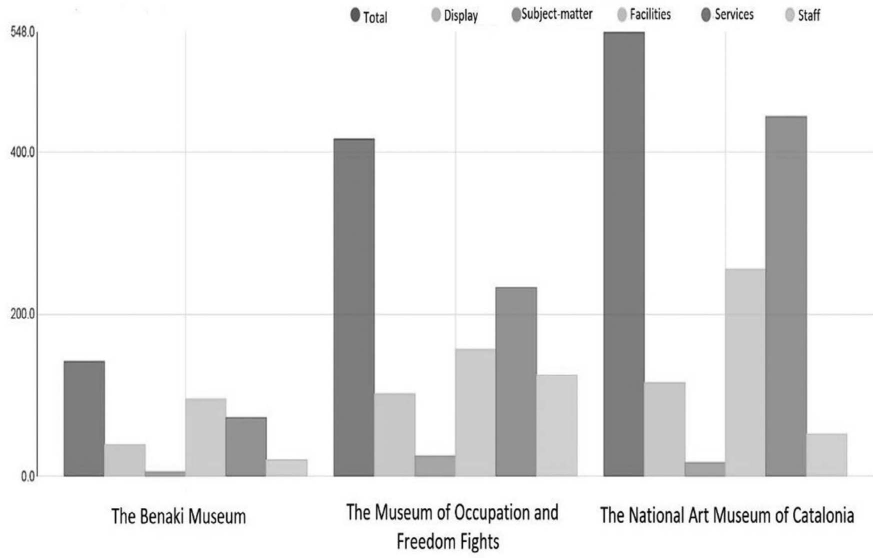

Figure 7.4 Total numbers of comments and count of comments related to MUSEQUAL dimensions (*Display, Subject matter, Facilities, Services* and *Staff*) in three European museums (November 2018).

might be obvious in the context of our understanding of museums as social places, this result may surprise those who only consider the quality of exhibitions and programmes as the determining factors for perceived museum quality.

This general overview can be further analysed. The three museums (Figure 7.4) showed very similar distributions of MUSEQUAL dimensions mentioned in TripAdvisor reviews in the English language, with *Services* as the most frequently cited museum quality dimension, followed by *Facilities*. *Display* was in third place and *Staff* followed afterwards, while comments related to *Subject matter* were the least frequent. From this it can be surmised that, on TripAdvisor, museum quality is most often assessed on the basis of generic dimensions related to the museum as a site of hospitality, rather than on the basis of dimensions related more specifically to the collection, or to the cultural and educational mission of the museum. Looking at TripAdvisor reviews separately for each of the three museums, *Services* remained the most frequent quality dimension for all three museums, followed by *Facilities*. However, the next most frequent dimension differed for each of the three case studies. The next most frequent dimension was *Display* for the Benaki Museum and the Art Museum of Catalonia, while for the Museum of Occupation it was *Staff*. It was also noteworthy that the Museum of Occupation exhibited a somewhat higher number of comments related to *Subject matter* (through keywords such as SOVIET, USSR, WAR and INDEPENDENCE), followed by the Art Museum of Catalonia (with keywords such as PICASSO, MIRÓ and DALÍ).

While these results seemed to imply that museum *Subject matter,* and even *Display,* were relatively less important dimensions for museum quality assessment by visitors in general, this conclusion may be misleading. TripAdvisor is a platform focused on horizontal aspects of service across the hospitality industry, given that it is used mostly for community-based reviews and ratings of restaurants and hotels, and this may justify why users would privilege *Facilities, Services* and *Staff* in their reviews of museums as well. In addition, connectivity and datafication are important aspects of social media logic, and social network sites' conversations often function as echo chambers in which users engage in group affirmation (Van Dijck and Poell 2013). Accordingly, tourists – the primary user base of TripAdvisor – may therefore be more likely to comment on an aspect of quality already mentioned in prior comments, rather than introduce topics or viewpoints related to the subject matter of a museum exhibition.

The ethnolinguistic background of commenters may also be a relevant factor in the lack of prominent reviews related to museum *Subject matter* in the English language corpus we analysed; indeed, a large percentage of such comments were from foreign tourists, whose criteria are naturally more focused on quality dimensions related to hospitality, in comparison to local visitors who may be expected to share a higher degree of knowledge and engagement with the historical and cultural dimensions of a local museum collection. To further explore this hypothesis, we conducted an additional, separate analysis of TripAdvisor reviews of the Art Museum of Catalonia in the Spanish language (Figure 7.5). Notably,

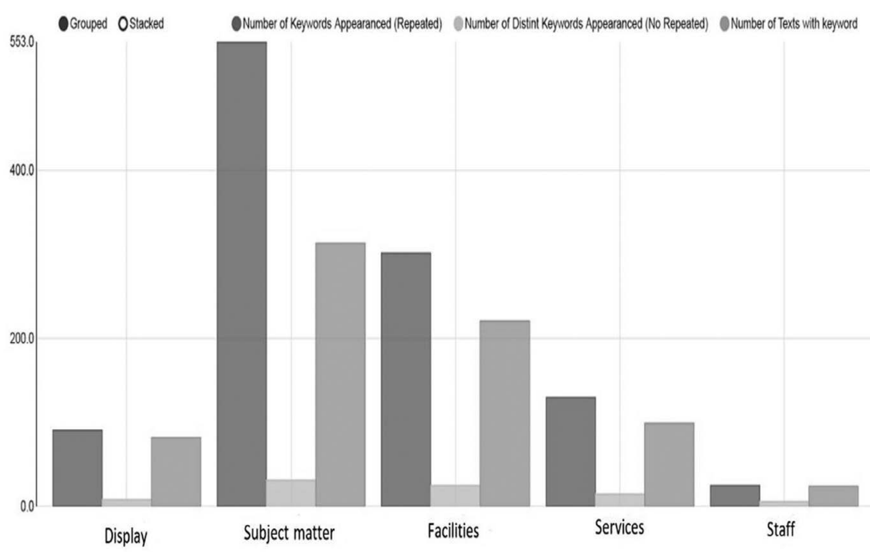

Figure 7.5 Comparison of frequency of MUSEQUAL dimensions from comments and related keywords in Spanish on the Art Museum of Catalonia (November 2018).

the distribution of the Art Museum of Catalonia reviews in Spanish and related keywords across MUSEQUAL dimensions changed significantly in comparison to the reviews in English. The *Subject matter* of the museum emerged as the dimension most frequently mentioned in Spanish reviews, followed by *Facilities, Services, Display* and *Staff.*

This method of analysis presented in this section additionally allows for the examination of seasonal changes, since the composition of local visitors as compared to tourists varies in different seasons; consequently, the relative importance of specific dimensions of museum quality assessment may also change. However, here we restricted ourselves to a general discussion of the results, both in order to illustrate the method used and to establish a foundation from which it is possible to delve into more specific details in further analyses, where necessary.

Museum Visitor Reviews on Facebook Pages

Reviews and recommendations (henceforth reviews) are Facebook features that have been available since 2011. A few years ago, the earlier Facebook review system, based on star ratings from 1 to 5, was replaced by a more sophisticated recommendations section, which sorts users' positive and negative opinions based on all users' interactions on Facebook (Bojkov 2018). This overall page rating still remains in place and takes into account both reviews and recommendations posted by users. The decision to make recommendations more prominent on Facebook was driven by users' increasing needs to turn to other people's opinions and suggestions to find places of interest.

It has been calculated that one out of three Facebook users has used the platform to find reviews and recommendations, thus making Facebook extremely important for any organisation's reputation (Bojkov 2018). We collected publicly available users' reviews on the Facebook pages of all three museums in our study and performed qualitative data analysis in order to better understand how museums' visitors perceive an institution's value and quality. The analysis included only those reviews in which visitor opinions were presented through text, excluding those that only provided a rating. In some cases, opinions were expressed in a short sentence, a few words or even just a single word or an emoticon, while in other cases visitor opinions consisted of several sentences unfolding into a fully-fledged argument. The reviews were collected in English, as well as in Greek, Lithuanian, Spanish, Italian, German and Russian. All reviews were translated into English by applying automated Google translation, which was subsequently verified and corrected by the authors of this chapter. The reviews were collected by simply copying them from the Facebook page and pasting them into plain text to clear Facebook screen formatting, before re-formatting them into rich text format (.rtf) documents for qualitative data analysis.

Different timeframes were applied for collecting reviews, as the selected museums greatly varied in the frequency of reviews received over time. The Museum of Occupation yielded the lowest number of reviews, with a total of only 17 reviews in the period from 2014 to 2018, all of which were included in the analysis. The Benaki Museum garnered up to 100 available reviews dating back to 2011, from which we selected for analysis the most recent 35 reviews, dating from 2017 and 2018. The Art Museum of Catalonia presented the highest number of reviews over the previous decade, from which only the latest 77 reviews, dating from 2018, were included in the analysis. Qualitative data analysis was performed by using MaxQDA, a computer-assisted qualitative data analysis system which allowed for systematic coding and multiple modes of review analysis. We followed a deductive-inductive research cycle by initially creating a provisional code system based on the MUSEQUAL museum quality assessment dimensions of *Display, Subject matter, Facilities, Services* and *Staff,* supplemented by more specific aspects of each dimension derived from the description of each of these dimensions (see Table 7.1 above), and, subsequently, by expanding the code system during the analysis stage. We also added additional subcodes drawn from Facebook reviews in our corpus through open coding, to illustrate potentially interesting patterns. In assigning codes to reviews, we noted that a significant portion of the reviews yielded a combination of two or more codes, and multiple codes were assigned to each review in these cases.

Our analysis showed that there is no shared pattern for all three museums with regard to the relative frequency of reviews related to each of the five MUSEQUAL dimensions (Figure 7.6). Differences of scope and character between the

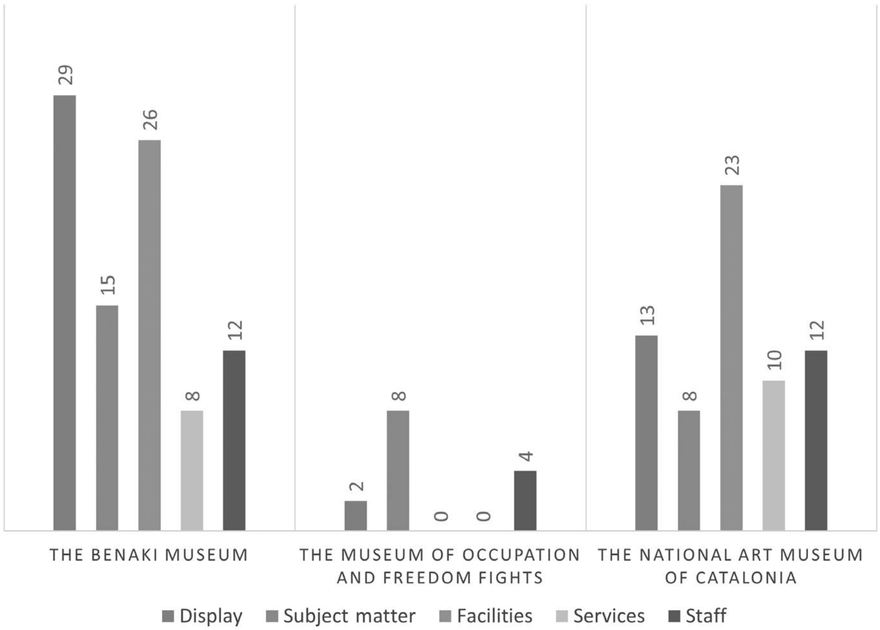

Figure 7.6 Comparison of frequency of Facebook reviews for three European museums across MUSEQUAL dimensions (*Display, Subject matter, Facilities, Services* and *Staff*).

selected museums seem to be reflected in the differentiation among quality assessment dimensions present in the Facebook reviews revealed by our analysis.

While *Display* was the most important museum quality dimension for the Benaki Museum audience, it was less important to visitors of the Art Museum of Catalonia and the Museum of Occupation who contributed to Facebook reviews. In many cases, *Display* was addressed broadly, with reviews mentioning EXHIBITION, COLLECTION, ARTEFACTS, etc. The qualities associated with *Display* were typically expressed as adjectives describing visitors' general impressions of the exhibition as a whole. For example, reviews of the Benaki Museum presented a wide array of positive adjectives, such as SPECIAL, EXQUISITE, WONDERFUL, MAGNIFICENT, EXCELLENT, GREAT, FABULOUS, IMPRESSIVE, SURPRISING, INSPIRING and SPECTACULAR, but also LARGE and HUGE.

> In rare cases, Facebook reviews also referred to more concrete qualities of the Benaki Museum's exhibition design as noted by this review (2018) "Superbly mounted in simple wooden frames, the photos themselves are framed by the wall behind - ochre or mustard - so they appear to float off the wall. Not to be missed. Be prepared for a visceral reaction."

Similarly, many reviews of the Art Museum of Catalonia regarding the dimension of *Display* describe visitors' impressions of the exhibition as GREAT, AMAZING, VERY GOOD, BEAUTIFUL, EXCELLENT and WONDERFUL. While the majority of the comments were positive, a few critical reviews were identified, which might be useful in identifying how particular aspects of the museum's display could be improved. For instance, the statement that 'sometimes the art was in direct sequence and sometimes it was very distant' (Reviewer of the National Art Museum of Catalonia 2018) may be interpreted as expressing a difficulty in grasping the conceptual organisation of the gallery in question, or, as a merely descriptive comment on exhibition flow and pacing. In other cases, critical reviews of the museum's *Display* were quite vague and may lack direct usefulness as to what may be improved to ensure a better visitor experience.

Judging by the frequency of relevant Facebook reviews, *Subject matter* was found to be particularly important to the visitors at the Museum of Occupation and of medium importance to visitors at the Benaki Museum, while in the case of the Art Museum of Catalonia it was the least-discussed dimension of museum quality. This phenomenon may be linked to the very different missions and characters of each of these museums. The Museum of Occupation is a historical museum, but also an official memorialisation site with a very strong and purposeful exhibition storyline seeking to represent the repression and state crimes during the period of Soviet occupation of Lithuania (1940–1941 and 1944–1991). Established in a former KGB building, it builds on an emotionally intense experience, allowing visitors to visualise the prison, execution chamber and offices of former KGB officials within an affective ideology of suffering and redemption (Klumbytė 2020); the fact that the Museum of Occupation is not just a curated exhibition of selected objects, but is housed in the very site of acts of state violence and is thus an authentic historic place in its own right, may be a factor contributing to the predominance of reviews on its dark *Subject matter,* compared to other dimensions of quality assessment in visitors' Facebook reviews. Some visitors related very strongly to this historic experience. For example, one of the reviewers of the Museum of Occupation and Freedom Fights (2018) had a very emotional response:

> The nation's anguish - my anguish <3 There was pain, humiliation, dehumanization, strangeness, distortion and lies that touched my mom, my dad and me… It's the Soviet-Bolshevik system – that's all is needed to say… Let's not forget what happened to our nation and other nations until the world is still so troublesome! Thanks to the museum's staff for the warmth, sincerity, and understanding within these walls full of torture![4]

The majority of Museum of Occupation reviews reiterated the museum's discourse on the period of Soviet occupation, reflecting on notions such as history, occupation, freedom, independence, suffering and prisoners in the context of the museum, but also on more specific historical references such as soviet union, kgb, soviet-bolshevik and gestapo. This last notion, rather unexpectedly in a museum of Soviet occupation, possibly relates to the prominence of a narrative framing the crimes of Soviet totalitarianism as genocide and equates them morally with those committed by Nazism (Snyder 2011; cf. Davoliūtė 2011; Katz 2016). In addition, the experience of the museum exhibition was described as great, valuable, interesting, impressive, emotional and true by other visitors.

But the Museum of Occupation's strong national narrative additionally evoked the occasional negative reaction related to its contested *Subject matter*, which as expressed in this review (2018): 'Enchanting Museum about a fantastic event. It is thanks to the "Soviet occupation" that the Polish city of Vilnius became the capital of Lithuania. If you condemn the occupation, return the benefits, or shut up forever'.[5]

Reviews of *Subject matter* in the Benaki Museum, on the other hand, were fewer in comparison to those on the museum's *Display*, but still identified aspects of Greek cultural history considered to be important by its visitors. Topics identified include smyrna 1920–1922, pointing to the relevance of an exhibition on the forced migration of Asia Minor Greeks from Turkey after the Lausanne treaty, prominent exhibited collections such as costume, jewelry and icons, exhibit provenance indicators such as aegean and asia minor, and broader notions regarding the museum's subject matter, such as greek heritage, full of treasures and memories and the ark of greek culture.

In the case of the Art Museum of Catalonia, prominent references to *Subject matter* in visitor reviews included, predictably, the names of leading artists represented in the exhibition, such as picasso, miró and dalí, as well as names of art styles and periods, such as romanesque. While (especially contemporary) art museums do generally involve visitors with strong evaluative views on artworks, artists, and artistic currents, Facebook comments from visitors to the Art Museum of Catalonia did not evidence such rich levels of engaged critical evaluation. This perhaps relates to the fact that the Museum typically hosts canonical exhibits whose value is widely established.

Judging from the frequency of visitor comments, the focus of visitors' attention in evaluating the Art Museum of Catalonia was conversely on the dimension of *Facilities,* including the museum's building and areas outside the exhibition galleries (i.e., *Facilities*). The most mentioned topics, in this dimension, were the TERRACE and the CITY VIEW, which might also be associated with the aesthetic and emotional rewards such features created for the museums' visitors; they described their experiences as OUTSTANDING, GREAT, AMAZING, SPECTACULAR, EXCELLENT, SUPERB, GORGEOUS, etc. This, of course, is testimony to the value of a particularly beautiful building and setting for the museum. In the case of the Benaki Museum, more attention was also given to the museum's RESTAURANT-CAFÉ and its INCREDIBLE VIEW, which was frequently praised by visitors. Additional topics related to *Facilities* mentioned in visitors' reviews included BUILDING, SHOP, CLIMATE CONTROL, BATHROOM, STAIRCASE and SIGNPOSTING.

Services was the least mentioned dimension of museum quality assessment in reviews for the Benaki Museum, the second least for the Art Museum of Catalonia, and was entirely absent in visitor reviews for the Museum of Occupation. The most frequently mentioned museum services were the ones related to EVENTS organised by the museums (LECTURE, PERFORMANCE, etc.), and the notion of ENTRY TICKET. Less common were restaurant-related *Services* (e.g., SOMMELIER, FINE DISHES), as well as AUDIO GUIDE and WEBPAGE functionalities.

Reviews concerning museum *Staff* can be divided into positive and negative comments. Positive reviews appeared for all three museums: for instance, Benaki Museum staff was characterised repeatedly as EXCELLENT and COURTEOUS. The most notable example of a negative review was identified for the Art Museum of Catalonia, where there were more negative comments about the staff (7) rather than positive (5). In this case, the main reason mentioned for visitor dissatisfaction was the attitude towards BREASTFEEDING inside the museum, which was viewed as inappropriate by the staff; visitors characterised staff's attitude as EMBARRASSING, UNACCEPTABLE, DISRESPECTFUL and OUTRAGEOUS. Some reviews even generated a longer thread of comments in which other users reinforced the reviewer's opinion. While the issue is indeed important for museums to consider, it is not clear whether the popularity of these comments related to a widespread dissatisfaction with museum's policy towards breastfeeding or was it only one incident that triggered visitors' negative reaction and consequently caused its lower rating (one star). In other cases, a lower rating usually indicates an issue that a visitor encountered regarding some specific dimension of museum quality, such as *Service, Facilities* or *Display*. For example, a comment with a four-star rating reported having troubles with the audio guide, which was not synced with exhibited art objects.

Lower ratings related to a museum's *Subject matter* usually reflected disagreements with the museum's interpretation of its collections and exhibitions. For example, the Russian-speaking visitor who wrote the negative comment on the Museum of Occupation discussed above also awarded a rating of just one star to the museum. Conversely, a less-than-perfect rating may not indicate any specific negative assessment of the museum. For instance, a comment with a four-star rating for the Benaki museum had no negative comments but did not provide any further explanation on why the rating was not a five-star one. In many cases, comments were quite generic and lacked deeper insight into what prompted visitors' lower ratings.

In our analysis of visitor reviews of museum quality on Facebook, we noted that museums do not always respond to visitor reviews. Of the three museums whose Facebook pages we analysed, only the Benaki Museum replied to more than half of the visitor reviews, typically with a short 'thank you' message for a positive review, or with an acknowledgment of the issue raised by a critical one. However, to ignore visitor reviews is, in our view, a missed opportunity for museums. Experience from the hospitality industry demonstrates that offering a response to both praise and criticism provides for a better institutional image and supports improved relationship management and the fostering of deeper dialogue with visitors.

Discussion

Previous studies have underlined the challenges and opportunities to develop enhanced knowledge and more effective strategies for visitor relationship management, first in hospitality services, and more recently in museums. Our analysis of visitor reviews of three very different Europe-based museums on TripAdvisor and Facebook show how two different methods, a software-driven quantitative topic analysis and a researcher-driven qualitative data analysis, may produce complementary insights on visitor assessment; this is achieved on the basis of an evaluation model specific to museums, MUSEQUAL, which consists of five dimensions of museum quality: *Display, Subject matter, Facilities, Services* and *Staff*.

Our analysis of TripAdvisor reviews was conducted using a software application requiring little researcher intervention, in an effort to retrieve information from a high number of comments, while qualitative data analysis was applied manually to the text of Facebook reviews. Each method has its own virtues, and they mutually complement each other. For example, topic analysis of a large number of reviews from TripAdvisor illustrates the common interests expressed by visitors on each of the museum quality assessment dimensions, and particular patterns could be traced across museums despite their particularities. In TripAdvisor reviews, we found that *Services* was the most frequently discussed dimension, while *Subject matter* was the least discussed. *Facilities*, *Display* and *Staff* were discussed more frequently than *Subject matter*. A different picture emerged from the results of our analysis of Facebook reviews, where each museum presented quite varying patterns. The most frequent dimension of museum quality assessment to appear in reviews varied from *Facilities* for the Art Museum of Catalonia to *Display* for the Benaki Museum and *Subject matter* for the Museum of Occupation. While *Display* and *Facilities* were frequently addressed in reviews of the Benaki Museum and of the Art Museum of Catalonia, it is striking how little these dimensions of museum quality appeared among reviews of the Museum of Occupation, where the predominant topics of discussion related to its *Subject matter*. It is clear that the relative importance of the five museum quality dimensions established by our MUSEQUAL model varies between different museums, and that the mission, objectives, curatorial strategies, character and audience of each particular museum played significant roles in determining which quality dimension is the most important to the commenting visitors.

Furthermore, differences between platforms remained highly relevant. The prevalence of topics related to *Services* and *Facilities* in TripAdvisor comments is to be expected, given the scope and character of this tourist community platform. TripAdvisor is used by tourists to inform other tourists, while their personal background or ideas about history and culture seem to be left behind. Naturally, this does not hold for Facebook, which provides for a much broader range of interactions and functions for its users, even if Facebook reviews call users to comment on the value of services or products provided by organisations. For this reason, we argue for a multi-platform strategy for assessing museum quality, going beyond reviews on TripAdvisor. Qualitative data analysis of Facebook reviews provides a useful complementary view, as the platform encompasses the private sphere and interpersonal communication. On Facebook, one's 'friends' and 'acquaintances' are among the first to see comments, even when users provide public opinions. TripAdvisor and Facebook offer distinct affordances, and the relative advantages of automated topic modelling for managing extensive data versus qualitative data analysis for gaining deeper insights into personal viewpoints create a synergy, making these platforms and methods complementary for evaluating museum quality on social network platforms.

Our study is not without methodological limitations. While the process of analysis is relatively straightforward, the selection of reviews, and therefore the constitution of the corpus used for analysis, presents challenges. The reliability of findings based on quantitative assessment, e.g., on the relative frequency of specific dimensions of museum quality evaluation, depends on how representative the sample of reviews analysed is, and smaller number of reviews may yield results with large margins of error. Additionally, in the case study presented in this chapter, we did not differentiate between reviews submitted by tourists and those from local residents, something that we might be able to surmise indirectly from the review language, or by the season and time of day a review was submitted; additional analysis in this direction might yield useful results. We also chose not to conduct statistical testing for significance, strength of association, or margin of error, as we prioritised outlining an approach easily accessible to researchers and museum professionals without specialised training in statistics. Instead, we limited ourselves to discussing strong patterns in our data that are clearly visible to the naked eye, rather than to reporting on exact numbers or percentages that could well vary if our reviews sample were different. Finally, we chose not to report finer distinctions that might arise from statistical errors.

An additional challenge we faced, and that others wishing to adopt our approach will likely face as well, is the rapidly changing technical environment and functionalities of social network sites. Constant updates and new service platforms introduced from time to time can be seen as opening new possibilities, but platforms also introduce limitations that may impede future research. An additional challenge is related to rising concerns about user privacy issues, which might significantly affect museum audience research on social media in the future. Conversely, rapidly emerging advances in computational classification and qualitative content analysis based on large language models (Liu *et al.* 2023; Xiao *et al.* 2023; Ziems *et al.* 2023) may soon offer researchers expanded opportunities to employ easy-to-use, digitally assisted conversational generative AI methods to document and analyse museum visitor social media interactions in terms of the MUSEQUAL quality assessment dimensions.

In this study, we drew from prior quality research models used in the service industry, such as SERVQUAL, HOLSAT and HOTELQUAL, but chose to base our analysis on a model attuned specifically to the assessment of quality in museums. Rather than carrying out inductive analysis of a single dataset based on a questionnaire survey, we chose to construct our model retroductively, drawing from earlier research and our own insights. The proposed model, MUSEQUAL, consists of five dimensions, two of which, *Display* and *Subject matter,* are specific to museums and heritage sites, while the remaining three, *Facilities, Services, and Staff,* correspond to generic quality dimensions as established for the hospitality industry by the HOTELQUAL model. Unlike other, more elaborate models, MUSEQUAL does not propose a predefined set of items (attributes, questions) for each dimension. Rather, we suggest that each study should identify elements that are relevant to the situation and public offering of the museum under study, and that additional elements should be added inductively during the actual analysis stage through open coding. In the definition of dimensions, we supplemented the HISTOQUAL model with elements from the SERVQUAL model. While we recognise the relevance of considering factors such as empathy and responsiveness, we believe that a model differentiating clearly distinct dimensions of what is being assessed is, pragmatically speaking, more useful as a tool for museum quality assessment. Since we primarily envisage our approach as a practical way for museum professionals to tap into the insights provided by readily available visitor reviews on social network sites, in order to identify problems and introduce improvements, we consider the dimensions of *Display, Subject matter, Facilities, Services* and *Staff* to form a more appropriate framework for museum praxis.

We envisage that findings from a museum quality evaluation study using MUSEQUAL, in tandem with a mixed-methods analysis of user reviews from complementary social network sites, will be useful in identifying issues and implementing remedies to improve museum service quality. Visitor concerns related to *Display* will invite interventions regarding issues such as a museum's museographic approach, physical exhibition design, digital exhibit design, programme materials, gallery accessibility design, and user experience design. Concerns related to *Subject matter* will feed into interventions regarding collection policies, exhibition meanings and discourses, exhibition planning, scenarios and storylines, interpretation and representation, curatorial research, information expressed in exhibition panels and captions, online exhibit content and narratives, and the content of educational programmes. Concerns related to *Facilities* will inform decisions on facilities provision and management, plant management, security and accessibility within the museum site. Concerns related to *Services* will be addressed through interventions related to visitor-side museum procedures, front-desk operations, docents and guides, visitor information and communication and customer relationship management procedures. Finally, concerns related to *Staff* will be addressed through staff development, training and evaluation, hiring policies and human resource management procedures.

Conclusion

In one of his latest public interventions, Kenneth Hudson argued that the only museums that will survive in the future are 'museums with charm, and museums with chairs' (Hudson 1999, p. 4). In making this provocative statement, Hudson issued a strong corrective to the idea that museums exist solely for the benefit of their collections, or as vehicles to produce exhibitions and programmes. As we progress towards the second quarter of the 21st century, the question of the social relevance and value of museums becomes, of course, even more central, particularly in light of the rising challenges of environmental sustainability (Davis 2020) and growing demands that museums address problems of social and historical justice. (Carter 2019). In our study, we sought to establish an approach to museum quality evaluation that encompasses not only the strictly museological aspects of a museum's subject matter and message but also dimensions of attractiveness and quality of display, human comfort and services provided, that resonate with Hudson's intuition:

> What you can not get without actually going to a museum is the magic of objects and the opportunity to discuss with other people what is there and to ask questions about those things. And in order to be able to do that properly you need to be able to sit down. It is not easy or comfortable to discuss standing up all the time.
>
> (Hudson 1999, p. 4)

In this study, we present a methodology towards museum quality evaluation based on an analysis of easily accessible visitor reviews on social network sites. We introduce a new model of perceived quality evaluation, MUSEQUAL, which is specifically designed to allow for the assessment of museum quality on the basis of easily understandable dimensions related to museographic approaches and media, subject matter and communication around exhibitions and programs, but also to facilities outside exhibition spaces and services offered by museums and museum staff. Each of these dimensions of quality assessment is relevant to different aspects of museums' professional practice, allowing the targeted identification of issues and the adoption of measures for improvements to the museum offering. For the analysis of social network site comments, we propose a mixed-methods approach, combining automated topic modelling using software with qualitative data analysis. The analysis does not require sophisticated equipment and it could be easily applied in any museum that is keen to understand the perceptions of its visitors. We suggest that corpora of visitor comments be compiled from different platforms, as in this case Facebook and TripAdvisor, to achieve a holistic view of existing audiences which accounts for the differences in how, and for what purposes, users communicate on different social media platforms.

We would like to conclude this chapter with a final warning, which is the limitations of our methodology and the nature of evidence used in this study, for constructing useful knowledge. The analysis of visitor reviews on TripAdvisor and Facebook reveals how visitors active on social media *perceive* different dimensions of museum quality; it is not an objective, nor by definition an authoritative, yardstick for what museums should strive to achieve. Of course, museums should heed the feedback of their visitors on their exhibition and digital communication approaches, subject matters and exhibition content, facilities and buildings, services provided to visitors and staff performance. But they should also seek to bridge the gap between quality as perceived by visitors and the museum's own value-driven objectives and criteria. While it is possible to identify the relative centrality of specific dimensions of museum quality in the reviews of visitors on social network sites, as advocated in our study, the actual identification and categorisation of topics raised by visitors, and most importantly, their assessments and the potential remedies they advance are not value-neutral; these instead depend greatly on the priorities and values of the museum and researchers conducting the study. We hope that the approach proposed in this chapter will be used in ways that prioritise the educational, cultural and social value of the museum within a framework of ethics of care: one that views museums as transformative, positive forces in contemporary society.

Notes

1 Benaki Museum [TripAdvisor page]. Available from: https://www.tripadvisor.fr/ShowUserReviews-g189400-d198714-r505146804-Benaki_Museum-Athens_Attica.html [Accessed 9 November 2018]. The Benaki Museum [Facebook page]. Available from: https://www.facebook.com/TheBenakiMuseum/ [Accessed 9 November 2018].

2 KGB Museum (Genocido Auku Muziejus) [TripAdvisor page]. Available from: tripadvisor.fr/Attraction_Review-g274951-d284404-Reviews-or10-KGB_Museum_Genocido_Auku_Muziejus-Vilnius_Vilnius_County.html [Accessed 9 November 2018]. Okupacijų ir laisvės kovų muziejus [Facebook page]. Available from: facebook.com/Okupacijų-ir-laisvės-kovų-muziejus-243230317476/ [Accessed 9 November 2018].

3 Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya [TripAdvisor page]. Available from: https://www.tripadvisor.com.ph/Attraction_Review-g187497-d257527-Reviews-Museu_Nacional_d_Art_de_Catalunya_MNAC-Barcelona_Catalonia.html [Accessed 9 November 2018]. Museu Nacional d'Art de Catalunya [Facebook page]. Available from: https://www.facebook.com/MuseuNacionalArtCatalunya/ [Accessed 9 November 2018].

4 Original review in Lithuanian: 'Tautos kancia - mano kancia <3 Ir tai tas skausmas, pažeminimas, nužmoginimas, svetimumas, iškraipymai, melagystes, kurie paliete mano mamyte, teti ir mane ... Sovietine-bolševikine sistema - tuo viskas pasakyta ... Neužmirškime, kas nutiko musu ir kitoms tautoms, kol pasaulis vis dar toks neramus! Aciu muziejaus darbuotojams už šiluma, nuoširduma, supratima šiuose kankinimu pritvinkusiuose muruose!'

5 Original review in Russian: 'Феерический музей про фантастическое событие. Именно благодаря «советской оккупации» польский город Вильно и стал столицей Литвы. Если осуждаешь оккупацию, верни приобретённое, либо замолчи навсегда'.

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8 Digital Outreach in Museum Development Strategies

Jean-Michel Tobelem and Marie Ballarini

Introduction

For decades, American, Canadian and British museums have been developing ambitious policies for raising funds from private donors, foundations and corporations, and at the same time creating membership programmes allowing many people to support museum activities through financial contributions of varying amounts, depending on their level of interest and financial means. Now museums in many countries are trying to mobilise private donations to complement their two traditional sources of funding: public subsidies and earned revenues generated by various sources (ticket sales, shops, restaurants, space rentals, etc.). These two types of funding models (those influenced by the North American and British museum traditions and others) now have something in common: the emergence of digital technology in all museum activities, from mediation to administration, communication and, of course, fundraising. But how does that translate into a museum's ability to raise funds? And what type of organisation can facilitate fundraising policies?

The Rise in Digital Communication

Methods for reaching potential donors have multiplied in recent decades with the rise of the Internet, social media and digital communication. But the old tools (post, telephone and e-mail) are still in use. New media exist alongside old media. In other words, each medium meets a specific need or specific mode of consumption. But the creation of new media offers new opportunities and increases the possibilities for delivering messages, collecting information and reaching out to potential donors.

This may complicate strategy development for fundraising managers, but it also makes it possible to adapt to donor characteristics based on three main criteria: their age, ability to contribute, and use of social media. It goes without saying that major donors should continue to be approached individually by their peers, while a text or Facebook message is more appropriate for reaching large numbers of donors for smaller donations (Kotler *et al.* 2008). The challenge is determining the optimal combination of communication channels depending on the type of donor and

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donation involved. To do so, several factors must be taken into account: the donor's socio-demographic profile, their interests, their active presence on one or more social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter/X, Instagram, YouTube, LinkedIn, etc.), and above all, their past relationship with the museum and any previous financial contributions. For example, a volunteer, member or 'friend' of the museum may be more willing to financially invest in the museum's activities.

Universcience (an institution combining the Palais de la Découverte and the Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie in Paris, France) conducts an annual fundraising campaign by post. Universcience allows donors to donate online, but many of its donors (mainly late-career or retired science enthusiasts) still choose to send a donation by cheque. In an effort to reach out to younger donors and communicate with a new audience specifically interested in new technologies, Universcience launched a crowdfunding campaign in 2017. Using these two tools, with two different target audiences, does not lead to a 'cannibalism' of donations, with one type replacing another. Instead, the annual campaign helps fund the museum's operations and goals by targeting those who have been fans of the museum for years, while the online campaign is a one-time effort that reaches a new audience, facilitates communication with the media, and focuses on a specific project.

Development staff must adapt the content of their solicitation messages to the characteristics of the social media platform they are using so that the fundraising message blends in with the thread of communication between the museum and its audience. Thinking that the immediate contact with the public made possible by social media can replace traditional fundraising techniques would be a mistake. It is still essential to spark potential donors' interest in the institution, to tell them how their donation will allow the museum to develop important and exciting activities and to create a lasting relationship before and after a donation is made.

Adapting the Message to the Medium

Regardless of the medium (newsletter, blog, Facebook, Instagram or Twitter/X) it is important to highlight the quality of the museum's programmes and its ability to offer new ones based on the funds it collects. Of course, as with any fundraising policy, two phenomena come into play: a large number of small and medium donations, which will make up in most cases a significant part of the fundraising objective, and a smaller number of large donations, which also make up a substantial part. One cannot exist without the other. Small and medium donations reflect the community's attachment to the museum, while large donations reflect its ability to mobilise major philanthropists and large foundations. These sources of larger donations are also solicited by various local institutions, such as universities, hospitals, other cultural institutions (libraries, orchestras, operas, theatres, etc.), humanitarian organisations, and sports clubs (depending on national laws on donations).

Therefore, with the help of social media, it remains essential to show the museum's singular value to the community as a whole and to each potential donor in particular. What contribution will the museum's new wing make to education? How will the new museum layout make the city more attractive to tourists? How will programmes outside the museum attract new visitors, etc.? The aim is to use a variety of fundraising channels while ensuring the museum is in control of them all. In that regard, the larger and more professional the museum's fundraising team, the wider the variety of fundraising options it can offer.

The Benefits of Social media

The benefits of social media compared to traditional fundraising tools are threefold:

- Responsiveness and the ability for instant communication, which makes it possible to quickly provide any information that may interest the audience following the museum's news;
- Interactivity, which makes it possible to receive comments from message recipients, who are themselves invited to forward the message by sharing it with their contacts, taking advantage of the viral nature of this kind of communication and
- Customisation, which facilitates the effective communication of targeted messages corresponding to the interests and concerns of the museum's contacts.

Finally, it is important to remember to collect information on users' wishes, needs, suggestions and interests. Statistical data provide valuable information for understanding a message's impact.

The thoughtful use of social media requires several steps:

1 Select a limited number of social media platforms the museum would like to use regularly, in proportion to its human resources. If the number is too large, many of its accounts will remain inactive, giving the museum a lasting negative image.
2 Design attractive content to be published on the social media platforms that the museum chooses to invest in first, depending on their format (text, image, video, etc.). Each platform has its unique characteristics, and ideally, content should not just be posted identically on every platform. Facebook is widely considered as useful. Twitter/X allows users to respond easily and participate in events like #museumweek; Instagram reaches a younger audience, etc. These tools are platforms through which Internet users can interact with the museum, so it is important to respond whenever possible and create personal connections, which play a decisive role in a fundraising campaign.
3 Identify individuals who will receive fundraising solicitations.
4 Send targeted messages to individuals who have agreed to receive such messages from the museum. In this regard, the museum staff must ensure compliance with national regulations on Internet users' rights, correcting information, deleting accounts and cancelling newsletter subscriptions.
5 Develop a policy to maintain the loyalty of new donors, with the aim of keeping them as contributors in the future and encouraging them to gradually increase the amount of their donation over the years. Someone who donates 20 EUR the first year, for example, may subsequently donate 50 EUR, then 100, and

then perhaps even 250. In this regard, benefits play a significant role, because if donors appreciate the benefits they receive for a 50 EUR donation, they will likely be willing to donate a little more the next time in order to receive even bigger benefits and an even closer relationship with the museum. This approach, however, works best mainly with relatively small donations. For bigger donors, attractive benefits (which are effectively negligible compared to the amount of the donation) will have less of an impact. Their motivation lies more in their personal relationship with the development department, curators or the museum's leadership.

What Benefits Should Be Offered to Donors?

As with any loyalty programme, maintaining a donor's attachment requires offering them benefits commensurate to the amount of their donation. Depending on their interests, these could include exclusive access, privileges or other special benefits. This confirms the need to get to know the donor, understand their needs and try to accommodate their wishes, in order to offer tailored, non-standardised benefits. Wrongly assuming donors' motivations would lead to a loss of resources for the museum and disappointment on the part of the donor, who may feel that their unique characteristics were not taken into account.

Online fundraising is growing rapidly, even though it represents a minority of the total amount collected from private donors (individuals, foundations and companies) (Ballarini 2019). Online donation amounts increased significantly during the pandemic. But in any case, it is important to remember that large donations are made by one person to another person, making the interpersonal aspect essential. And even if online donations may lead one to hope that it would be possible to skip the important work of 'cultivating' donors, convincing them of the cause, regularly informing them of the museum's projects and soliciting their feedback, this is not the case in practice (Ballarini 2020). While it is possible to collect many small and medium donations online, relationships with major donors continue to be based on personal trust. Depending on the size of the museum, donors could be provided with the option of donating by text message, on the museum's website, through a donation platform, or through a specific mobile application.

Each medium has its specific costs (such as subscriptions, commissions or fees) that must be measured and considered when choosing which donation tool to use. They can also be combined, on a one-time or sustaining basis. A museum can also use the same tool differently depending on what it wants to publicise. The Musée du Louvre, for example, uses its online donation site four months out of the year for its *Tous Mécènes* campaign, during which donors can donate only to that year's specific project. The rest of the year, website visitors can use the online donation system to give to the cause that speaks to them most, such as maintaining the Jardin des Tuileries, restoring artworks, developing educational projects, etc., depending on their interests.

With online donations, a museum must have an online collection system that is effective, easy to use, secure and, if possible, connected to Customer Relationship

Management (CRM) software. But once again, beware of the illusion of the ease of technology. Using software that meets the museum's needs takes time for the various departments involved to understand, learn and collaborate on, requiring an organisation that is as 'horizontal' as possible, as opposed to an organisation where everyone works in isolation. There is therefore a significant cost to installing a CRM tool that goes beyond the simple acquisition of the technological solution. There are also costs for training, update and maintenance, and especially for mobilising internal human resources, which include many more people than those in the IT or Development departments.

Digital Fundraising Methods

The simplest online fundraising method consists of allowing Internet users to give directly on the museum's website, using a specially designed button. Such ease of use is advantageous, but the role of the development and communication departments is to encourage website visitors to use the feature, because fundraising will not happen on its own. A logical approach should be followed consisting of identifying segments of potential donors to target first, developing an attractive, convincing message, offering a range of attractive, proportional benefits, and ensuring the user-friendliness of the website to facilitate donations.

Another online fundraising method consists of leveraging the viral nature of digital communication, particularly through social media. In this case, the museum should develop a powerful message, using a video, for example, ideally delivered by someone famous or influential. The message must be easy to share and clearly encourage the recipient to make a donation to the museum, for example, for a new acquisition. This means the message should spark an emotion in the person who sees or hears it, because that is more important than its informational content alone. This strategy is also easier to use if the museum already has many friends or followers on platforms such as Facebook, Snapchat, YouTube, Instagram or Twitter/X. Similarly, soliciting donations by text message requires both a powerful message and ease for users to make a payment via their mobile phone. The principle remains the same: convincing a multitude of donors to give to the cause of their choice.

Of course, the existence of online fundraising campaigns facilitates giving, because it means donations can be made with a single click. But in reality, faced with competition from thousands of other, equally attractive campaigns, most donors will probably come from a combination of circles of people who are already somewhat close to the museum: its friends, followers, members or volunteers, people who receive its newsletter and messages, and people in its contacts database. Only very prestigious and well-known institutions can convince distant donors with no existing relationship to the museum – even a tenuous one – to make a donation. The museum must also accept the idea that even if conducting an online campaign is not very costly; it still has costs: expenses related to the salaries of museum staff working on the campaign (preparatory work, internal meetings, meetings with service providers, benefits management, etc.), expenses related to the communication tools that will be used to launch the campaign and follow up with potential donors, and expenses related to outsourcing for crowdfunding platforms, PR, event planning, media relations, etc.

Unique Characteristics of Crowdfunding

Beyond the financial objective and the desire to enlarge its donor base, a crowdfunding campaign can allow a museum to project a modern image of itself, and even more so if it gives rise to a publicity campaign. But there is a limitation to this funding technique. It is best suited to one-time solicitations – such as for the restoration or acquisition of a work of art, for example – but is not appropriate for covering a museum's day-to-day operational costs and therefore cannot replace other fundraising tools. Incidentally, European museums tend to use this technique more than museums in North America, for example, as they already have a number of other regular channels for reaching out to their audience (members, volunteers, donors, etc.). In addition, these campaigns are difficult to reproduce regularly, at the risk of exhausting contributors. While the Louvre may be able to conduct its *Tous Mécènes* campaign every year, thanks to its size, image and reputation, it is much harder for a smaller museum to justify appealing to the public's generosity for multiple large projects.

Donors generally come from three circles: the circle close to the institution, the more distant circle on social media, and the viral circle that did not previously know about the museum but develops an interest in it thanks to an effective campaign. To reach one circle, the museum must reach out to the previous circle and then gradually expand. In other words, a crowdfunding campaign is unlikely to succeed only thanks to people who are not close to the museum in one way or another. But if a core group of donors is seriously mobilised, it will be possible by extension to reach additional individuals, who are caught up in the momentum of the campaign.

For most projects, a museum can reach a circle of people who are close to the cause being funded. In order to fund the urgent restoration of historical models of medical devices, for example, the Bar-le-Duc Museum in eastern France appealed to medical doctors' associations, who were sensitive to that specific cause even without having any previous attachment to the museum. While geographic proximity between the museum and its potential donors is an important element in a campaign's success, the communication strategy, the museum's image and media actions can greatly facilitate the development department's efforts to reach people who are geographically further away.

> The Musée des Impressionnismes in Giverny, France, conducted a campaign to raise funds from all over France, on and offline, to acquire a painting by Caillebotte. While the museum is relatively new and has no real collection to speak of, it benefitted from the image of the village of Giverny (associated with the memory of painter Claude Monet) and the general public's interest in Impressionist works, but it also took advantage of effective media publicity.

How to Communicate Effectively?

No campaign can be launched successfully without a real effort to communicate, including on social media, using tools offered by different platforms (news, comments), and even offline (flyers). There is a positive correlation between the number of a museum's friends or followers on social media and a campaign's chances of success. The communication strategy (content to share, media plan, etc.) should therefore be developed before the campaign, which often takes longer than planned. Determining the right fundraising goal is crucial to a project's success. For one, most crowdfunding platforms operate on an 'all-or-nothing' principle, which means that an overly ambitious goal will cause the campaign to fail. What's more, it has been shown that the higher the goal, the lower the chances of success. When determining the amount, the museum would like to raise, it is therefore necessary to establish the minimum amount needed to achieve the project (rather than the ideal amount), even if that means setting additional goals during the course of the fundraising campaign once the initial goal is met. All of these tasks can be carried out internally, by one or more staff members. Preparing and managing even a small campaign can take a full-time staff member two to three months to complete, especially if it is their first campaign. The task can also be outsourced to a communications firm, as the Musée d'Orsay in Paris, France, did for its *Painter's Studio* campaign; however, this type of service must be included in the total campaign budget (in addition to the platform commission).

What steps must be taken to launch a crowdfunding campaign?

The main steps in launching a crowdfunding campaign can be summarised by the following questions:

1 What is the museum's goal? To reach new donors and/or fund a project (and for what amount)? The strategy the museum should use will depend on the balance between these two priorities.
2 What is the project? The project should symbolise the museum and be easy to promote to the public.
3 For what amount? The average crowdfunding donation in France is around 50 EUR (*Baromètre du crowdfunding en France* 2018), so to meet a 5,000 EUR goal, the museum would have to convince at least 100 people. It is better to set a modest goal initially and add additional goals later.
4 For how long? Contrary to what one might think, the longer a campaign runs, the less likely it is to succeed, because there needs to be a sense of urgency to keep donors from procrastinating. Taking into account the content that must be put online to bring the campaign to life, it is generally recommended that a campaign with a reasonable fundraising goal last no longer than eight weeks (Etter *et al.* 2013; Mollick 2014).
5 What benefits? While ensuring compliance with national laws (in France, for example, benefits are limited to 25 per cent of the value of the donation, up to a limit of 69 EUR), benefits may be symbolic (such as a name on a wall of donors) or material (such as a catalogue). Benefits often include inviting the donor to the

opening of the project, a private visit or even a lunch with the curator; all, obviously, in proportion to the amount of the donation.

6 How to turn one-time contributors into regular donors? It is important to maintain a connection with these contributors, because they can become recurring donors if kept regularly up to date on the project's progress, invited to events or encouraged to promote it as a project ambassador. For example, contributors to the restoration of Courbet's *The Painter's Studio* at the Musée d'Orsay received regular updates on the project and its progress. Three years after the campaign ended, they are still receiving information about the painting. Contributors can also be invited to join the Friends of the Museum association, if one exists, to become members of a donor's circle, or even be the first contributors in the next campaign.

Some principles to follow in order to conduct a successful fundraising campaign using digital tools include: setting a realistic fundraising goal, choosing the right time for a campaign, planning and coordinating the efforts of the different departments involved in the campaign, calling on volunteers, using digital technology – especially for potential donors who would wish to use it – explaining the purpose of the campaign and how donations will be used, setting a time limit (even creating a feeling of urgency), communicating about the project before the fundraising campaign, and, finally, thanking all of the donors.

Data Collection

The museum must first and foremost maintain the public's trust by collecting information freely and voluntarily, or its image and reputation could be damaged. With that principle in mind, different methods can be used to collect such information in a non-intrusive way, e.g., by mining past contacts with visitors (ticket sales, donations, store transactions, etc.), any stated interests or preferences, socio-demographic data, etc. Other types of data can be collected through surveys conducted regularly or on a one-time basis by the museum, internally or by an outside service provider. Collecting such data requires collaboration among the museum's different sections or departments, which is essential to ensuring the success of the process. Advanced statistical analyses can reveal specific profiles of members who share certain characteristics and whose characteristics differ from other profiles identified through research. Identifying different families of potential donors makes it possible to develop tailored arguments and effective forms of communication. Message recipients will then be more interested in their content, more likely to open, read and respond to them, and even share them with their contacts. Database segmentation is typically done by marketing departments, which usually only exist in museums of a certain size.

However, it is possible, even in smaller institutions, to use CRM tools, which help automatically manage members, followers and donors. Different software programmes offer services for customising a museum's relationship with its audience, such as online registration and ticket sales, online donation forms, automatic letter or email mailings, publications on social media, etc. For example, by entering their membership number, a person can automatically receive discounts in the museum store. Automating certain routine procedures allows a museum to dedicate more time and resources to more complex efforts. Another crucial requirement is maintaining up-to-date information, without which a database will quickly lose its relevance and effectiveness.

With accurate, up-to-date information, a museum can test the effectiveness of planned project campaigns among a sample of respondents in order to choose the most effective project. Using statistics on email opening rates, the number of clicks on links in the message, unsubscribe requests and conversion rates, it can vary the form of a message, its content, its frequency, or even the type of customisation used in order to learn relevant lessons about the fundraising strategy. One of the most advanced museums in terms of using these tools is the Whitney Museum in New York. During construction of its new building, the museum specifically recruited a large digital team with statistical expertise. Smaller museums can still use these types of analyses by taking advantage of the tools mentioned above or by training employees to conduct them.

What Type of Organisation Should Be Used?

Depending on the size of the museum, development can be managed by a specific department focused exclusively on fundraising or by the marketing and communication departments, or even by the museum's leadership. In countries where sponsorship is not a major source of funding, there is rarely a team dedicated exclusively to raising private sector funds, and only large museums can create such a specialised department, made up of experienced professionals who work with volunteers and liaise with the board of directors. Conversely, museums in other parts of the world always have a development department, or at least one person responsible for fundraising operations.

It is still useful, however, to involve a variety of people from different backgrounds, because fundraising efforts must target different audiences, such as companies, foundations and individuals, and have different goals: funding ongoing needs, funding a one-time project, raising money for a particular fund, funding an investment (renovations or construction of a new wing, for example), raising contributions to endowment funds, etc. Finally, it is also useful to consult bequest specialists when planning fundraising campaigns, as discussions with potential donors can often include technical, legal and tax-related aspects.

The development team may be placed under the authority of the museum director in order to facilitate contacts between major donors and museum leadership, as is the case at the Musée des Beaux-Arts in Lyon, France, or the Musée du Quai Branly in Paris, France, or it may be placed within the communications department, like at MoMA (the Museum of Modern Art) in New York. What is most important is collaboration among departments with the aim of reaching the museum's fundraising objectives. General management and the museum's sponsorship, marketing and communications managers should agree on objectives, share information and regularly report on the results of their efforts. The participation of the curatorial and public outreach departments is also essential. Their knowledge and expertise are critical in developing content to send to donors, and their participation in organising private visits, for example, can transform a donor's experience. That is how the entire organisation can be as effective as possible in conducting fundraising campaigns, whether digital or not (Tobelem 2023).

Conclusion

The role of digital technology is set to increase in every sector, including in museum fundraising. In the near future, the portion of online donations (particularly from mobile phones) should rise from approximately 10 per cent of the total amount of donations to between 20 percent and 30 per cent. One can also reasonably expect that social media will continue to play a greater role in fundraising. Museums must therefore actively prepare for this change while strategically reflecting on their fundraising goals and ways to meet them. While the development of information and communication technologies has made it easy and inexpensive to launch a fundraising campaign, and while it is now possible to make a donation simply by using secure payment solutions on a mobile phone, the increase in potential donor solicitations, and the growing difficulty of capturing their attention, will require adopting a highly professional, strategic approach.

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9 Audience Engagement

Experiences from the European Audience Development Project SmARTplaces

Jasmin Vogel and Britta Lerch

The digital revolution has transformed society on a global level like no other revolution before in terms of speed as well as reach (Matzler *et al*. 2016, p. 13) and is therefore similar to the process of literacy, in which society as a whole learned a new cultural technique and was thus able to 'develop new courses of action and new forms of perception as well as new structures of thoughts' (Philocast 2019, min. 1:06).

The pace of development has reached a state where it permeates all areas of life accompanied by an intense feeling of uncertainty (Couldry 2012, p. 9).

Digitality as a transformative force[1] is directed both inwardly with regard to personnel, professionalism, processes and production logics and 'outwardly' to an urban society and the political sphere. Digitality is thus a design component that affects and changes all of these dimensions and relationships (Krusch and Vogel 2021).

These changes are forcing cultural institutions around the world to take on new, more complex and flexible roles. Amid this upheaval, it becomes clear how important it is to establish new methods of innovation-oriented culture and competence management. However, this requires changes in work and organisational culture as well as in how programmes are developed (Vogel 2021, p. 209). Nevertheless, cultural institutions in general, and museums in particular, are slow in adapting to transformation processes. The recurring call for museums to change highlights the discrepancy between theoretical requirements and their practical implementation (Vogel and Neugebauer 2018, p. 68). There is, on a practical level, a strong need for a safe environment to experiment with and in which to learn from new forms of artistic and cultural production. In addition, (digital) transformation does not happen in isolation and requires a holistic approach where people (employees, audiences) are at the heart of the process (Lerch and Vogel 2015, p. 8). For these processes to be supported by the entire institution and its environment, it is necessary to understand how each institution's own specific mechanisms function and how – taking into account the respective 'intrinsic logic'[2] of each institution – the process can be made transparent. A multi-perspective and 'tailored' approach is, therefore, the method of choice (Löw 2011, p. 29).

How can the shift from an object-centred approach to an audience/user-centred approach be successfully designed? What are the consequences of

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digitisation for cultural institutions on a practical level in terms of programmes, communication, audience and behaviour, as well as in regard to establishing a more flexible, future-orientated process and workflow both within the organisation and when collaborating with external partners? Since all museums struggle with limiting factors such as budgets, capacities and human resources, how can museums find their own ways to deal with the digital disruption and close the gap between their digitally enabled audiences and institutions' own ability to keep up?

Project Approach and Core Concept Variables

The questions above framed the basis for the smARTplaces project. All participating institutions realised that they had to face these challenges and initiate a (digital) transformation process in order to establish digital tools to enhance their audience development practices. They agreed that the transformative nature of the project required a holistic approach that allows equally for fostering internal capacity building measures, knowledge exchange and the redesign of internal work processes (Lerch and Vogel 2015, p. 3). Unlike other projects that facilitate enhanced internal and audience development digital approaches via a top-down process, this project was initiated by middle management in the marketing department, thus engaging the entire institution and creating a sense of ownership among participating staff.

Bearing in mind experiences with past digital projects, the smARTplaces project was drafted in 2014 to be a digitally enabled rather than digital-first project. All project members agreed that the technology itself would not be regarded as the leader of digital change, but rather as an enabling factor that would be able to enrich visitor experiences in multiple ways. Therefore, the smARTplaces project was conceived as an experimental project, providing a 'safe' environment to develop, test and assess the effectiveness and acceptance of different forms of digital technology in regards to practising new audience engagement strategies.

It was clear that the use of digital means could only be successfully established through good local practice, experiences and activities. There was no 'one-size-fits-all' solution that could be standardised and replicated across different institutions. For that reason activities were designed and tailored to local conditions to address diverse segments among existing and prospective audiences of each institution, including under-represented groups (Lerch and Vogel 2015, p. 8). Since every institution in the smARTplaces network had limited resources, most joint activities were adapted from existing local formats to enable the sharing of good practices, technical and human resources across the network.

Project Structure and Stages of Implementation

The smARTplaces project was designed as a four-year cooperative project co-funded by the Creative Europe Programme of the European Union addressing the Culture Sub-programme's objectives: Audience Development, Capacity Building in Digitisation and Training and Education.

Under the lead of the Dortmunder U – Center for Arts and Creativity (Germany), the project partners included the following institutions:

- Musée de Picardie, Amiens (France)
- ETOPIA – Centre for Art and Technology, Zaragoza (Spain)
- Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven (Netherlands)
- ZKM I Center for Art and Media, Karlsruhe (Germany)
- Azkuna Zentroa – Contemporary Cultural and Social Centre, Bilbao (Spain)
- WIELS Centre d'Art Contemporain, Brussels (Belgium)
- Associated partner: Liechtenstein National Museum, Vaduz (Liechtenstein)

Research and evaluation were conducted throughout the project life cycle by two academic partners, the Birmingham Centre for Media and Cultural Research, Birmingham City University (UK) as well as the Oulu University of Applied Sciences, Oulu (Finland), with the latter leading the technological innovation processes and development of digitally enabled products from the work programme that augmented experiences.

The project's structure was designed to resemble a 'hub and spoke' model, which allowed for a central vision and the coordination of deliverables from different work groups steered by a central project management team; this allowed for an agile and flexible leadership structure as well as supporting all partners in building 'a comprehensive digital literacy' (Price and James 2018, p. 7) within their institutions. This two-person project management team located at Dortmunder U was responsible for coordinating the overall project, its work packages, milestones and outcomes, as well as communicating with stakeholders throughout project implementation. This team amalgamated the project of the decentralised work groups of varying size and composition, each responsible for the delivery of milestones from one of six work packages and activities: Project Management, Change Management, Technology, Communication, Operational Activity Management and Research and Evaluation. Each was led by one or two partners, depending on their expertise and institutional mission.

On the local level, a project manager for each institution, supported by local staff, oversaw the development and implementation of local formats, as well as the evaluation and documentation processes. This structure helped all partners to adapt the planned activities and experiments to local needs and pace while at the same time establishing a sense of ownership of the sub-projects.

To ensure a steady workflow among the different work groups, twice-yearly steering group meetings as well as monthly virtual meetings ensured that all consortium members were well informed about the status of various sub-projects and upcoming milestones. Physical meetings were attended by the steering group members and – depending on the core topics – additional members of local teams from administration, communication, education or technical departments. These meeting formats allowed for discussion of project developments, current challenges and deliverables needed from the other project partners, as well as augmenting local initiatives with new digital tools, conceptual approaches and mediation formats.

Examples from the Work Programme

As explained above, smARTplaces focused on audience engagement and capacity building. The programme included 57 activities (17 joint and 40 local) that were divided into the following categories:

- Capacity building activities and change management
- Networking and experience exchange
- Educational and cultural activities
- Development and testing of digital tools

Capacity Building and Change Management, Networking and Experience Exchanges

People were at the heart of the smARTplaces project process; therefore, the majority of time was spent identifying and building capacities among staff members via educational formats such as hands-on training and seminars on audience segmentation, strategic process management, technology, content development and management, as well as e-Learning opportunities. Staff members from different departments experimented with more agile workflow management tools, such as project management software like Smartsheet, gaining insights from different digital projects throughout the consortium and identifying training needs.

Establishing a more audience-centred communication and storytelling approach by offering new narrative experiences was one of the project's central objectives. Consequently, it emphasised conducting long-term experiments on digital identity building, capacity building around digital storytelling,[3] and change management around existing formats; this occurred over an 18-month period with the support of external experts. The project structure included a central content manager who not only oversaw management of all virtual communication channels (e.g., the project website www.smartplaces.eu) and the creation of the project website and social media content but also acted as an advisor to each institution, helping partners to establish systematic content management and editorial workflows, as well as improve their narrative skills to broaden audience engagement approaches. Furthermore, participating in experience exchanges was a valuable step in the process. Members of the consortium frequently shared their experiences on new methods in cultural education, digitally enhanced visitor experiences and the development of new digital products. Three conferences took place at ZKM Karlsruhe, Germany (2018), Etopia, Zaragoza, Spain (2019) and Dortmunder U, Dortmund, Germany (2020). The conferences were planned to showcase the primary themes of the project: audience development, digital culture and new forms of mediation – and offered a platform for a conversation about digital activities in the cultural sector through real experiences for more than 300 participants, thousands of live stream attendees and 90 speakers.

Mediation and Cultural Activities

In order to help all partners to become more audience-centred and to manage the inner transformation process **together** with their audiences, a wide range of participatory experiences that engaged diverse audiences was a key element of smARTplaces. Through the implementation of digital technology and digital storytelling strategies, our goal was to support a more accessible and inclusive culture. Therefore, much emphasis was placed on experimenting with new transnational collaborations, new forms of participation, co-creation, art education and mediation through 57 local and joint formats. What follows are four examples that illustrate our approach:

Innovative Citizen – Co-Creation, Participation and Maker Culture from Germany to Spain

'Innovative Citizen – festival for a more democratic technology' is a festival of workshops and participatory activities that celebrate maker culture, DIY practices and sustainability; that has been held annually since 2014 at Dortmunder U. smARTplaces-partner Etopia Center for Art and Technology in Zaragoza, Spain (Nordstadtblogger-Redaktion, 2017) introduced their own version of this festival, an example of knowledge transfer across institutions where we take a well-established format (prior to smARTplaces) and adapt it to a different local context.

Small Cabinets of Curiosity – Mediation Tools from France to Liechtenstein

Created by our partner Musée de Picardie, France and in collaboration with Landesmuseum Liechtenstein, the 'small cabinets of curiosity' are devices designed to host collections in places that usually can't display artefacts from museums. They stress exchanges between publics, institutions and countries and target young people as a priority. Each institution curates a cabinet for another, enlisting visitors in the process.

These small cabinets of curiosity are designed to tour across the network. The goal is to reach out to communities that are not yet engaged with the museum and to install exhibitions in geographically and culturally remote locations, offering visitors the opportunity to discover another European country and culture through the exchange of symbolic objects from their collections. (Maguet 2019). This includes groups who may be curious about a partner offering but are unable to visit for a variety of reasons. The cabinets also present an opportunity to make a radical departure from current models of public engagement by posing questions to curators: What happens when we don't set the rules of engagement? Does this break down barriers? Does it encourage curiosity or even a sense of playfulness?

Media Facade Academy – Digital Art Trainings

The Media Facade Academy at the Etopia Center for Art and Technology in Zaragoza, Spain, is an intensive training programme designed for artists, professionals and students from Spain interested in the skills, abilities and framework needed to operate Etopia's Media Facade, as well as in creating and developing unpublished works visible in that impressive artistic media display.

As part of smARTplaces, the project cooperates with Azkuna Zentroa and Dortmunder U on an annual edition. Each institution explores the possibilities of the urban screens used as a media art broadcasting platform through different activities, giving participating artists the opportunity to experiment with the media façade; it also affords them opportunities to receive training and mentorship to develop their personal projects, with the possibility of being broadcast on different media walls and facades (Zarranz 2018).

The Art of Skate

Skateboarders often use public spaces around cultural institutions like Dortmunder U and Azkuna Zentroa to skate. But how do they redefine urbanity for their purposes, and how do they perceive the city? While it is widely accepted for artists to rethink urban environments, a redefinition offered by other groups such as skateboarders is not seen as a creative or artistic process. Accordingly, how can cultural institutions collaborate with specific communities by redefining the outside and inside of spaces to tell a new story about both? These were the initial questions the Dortmunder U and Azkuna Zentroa in Bilbao asked their local skateboarding communities as a starting point and as part of their mutual collaboration (Kötting 2018).

This collaboration represents a step towards learning the rules of engagement in terms of giving way to different cultural concepts, and resulted in cross-cultural exchange visits and a co-curated exhibition in which opened in May 2019. This included digitally enabled showcases such as a 360-degree skateboarding tour through the city for non-skateboarders, allowing audiences to explore the formers' perception of the urban spaces that surround them. This case study can provide an example of how cultural institutions can practise a change of perspectives in order to initiate a long-term relationship with this specific community, which has potentially positive outcomes.

Developing a Digitally Enabled Toolkit That Augments Experiences

Expanding cultural experiences beyond physical visits through the use of digital infrastructure, tools, services and products was one of the central aims of the smARTplaces project. Different sub-projects explored the possibilities of expanding the user experience into the digital world and allowed different audiences to consume services, explore stories and perceive museum collections and cultural formats from different perspectives and narratives.

Several digital tools, as well as social media platforms and content strategies, were tested for use in cultural institutions in regards to effectiveness, acceptance and feasibility of operation. These strategies included digitally enhanced local activities like live streaming, content production ranging from different video formats to podcasting, offering free visitor Wi-Fi, interactive maps, virtual art experiences, transmedia storytelling, chatbot systems, augmented reality and gamified elements. Below we describe a few of these initiatives more specifically.

#TheWorkofArt Live Dialogue Series

From February 2018 to May 2020, all smARTplaces partners host – on a triannual basis – one of eight live dialogue sessions, consisting of a Q&A simulcast on Facebook Live, where the public is able to virtually attend and participate, discovering different perspectives on art, and glimpsing what happens behind the scenes in museums and cultural institutions.

This project was conceived to experiment with how digital tools can be used for transnational storytelling across different countries and around selected themes. In this instance, we interpreted storytelling as a sharing of processes by people and teams who are normally not visible to members of the public – including curators, artists, editors and technical teams. We have observed that although live streaming is a very useful format to engage audiences that are not able to participate physically, it requires the same logistical effort to provide high quality content as any other offline format to enable active audience participation during live dialogues.

Mobile Apps

Two mobile apps were developed and released between 2017 and 2019 that fulfil different information and entertainment purposes for the general public. The 'experience_zkm' app provides information to expand and enhance the onsite exhibition experience. This includes audio guides and augmented reality experiences (ZKM Centre for Art and Media Karlsruhe 2017). The smARTplaces app (released in spring 2019 for iOS and Android) is an iteration from the experience_zkm app and includes an augmented reality compass, augmented reality indoor tours, and an augmented reality art hunt through different cities that lets users discover artworks that are virtually placed throughout them, as well as an innovative story world in which users can playfully discover non-linear stories from participating cultural institutions across Europe. The app follows a tripartite approach that enables partners to not only present their institution internationally (level 1) but also to include individualised virtual contents, augmented reality tours and unique user experiences that target local interests and specific use cases prior to (level 2) and during a physical visit (level 3). Moving away from the initial, more static 'one-scope-fits-all' approach, it was instead decided to offer a highly scalable and customisable modular app solution, which allows for future additions that will be able to accommodate rapidly changing technical developments, as well as to the limited (financial) resources available to cultural institutions. By the end of 2019, further feature additions included virtual museum tours, automatic image recognition, location-based services, indoor positioning and multi-language options.

Furthermore, mobile app concepts and prototypes were developed locally and tested as mediation and educational tools to reach certain audience segments, such as school-aged children. The Liechtenstein National Museum notably experimented with a 'Digital museum treasure hunt' for children, a contemporary cultural education offer that invites the youngest visitors to (discover?) the permanent exhibition in a child-friendly and playful way. With this personalised museum tour, children will get to know some of the most interesting and representative objects in the museum. By combining chosen objects from the exhibition with questions and observations from the children during their tour through the museum, the digital treasure hunt offers children an age-appropriate form of access to either their cultural heritage, or to some unique objects strongly connected to Liechtenstein.

At the Van Abbemuseum, the Kijkwijzer app was implemented in 2016 for educational purposes. Through this mobile phone application, young visitors, often through school visits, can explore the museum independently. Through interactive software, their visit becomes very active. Instead of listening to a tour guide, they are forced to think for themselves. Typically, for the Van Abbemuseum, the tool is not designed to solicit right or wrong answers but instead leads the students to relate their own lives and experiences to the artworks they see at the museum (Erica 2019).

Outcomes and Findings, or, the Project Itself Is Always Smarter Than You Are

While smARTplaces was initially conceived as an audience development project – with the aim of reaching new target groups and improving interaction with existing ones – it became clear over the course of the project that the establishment of innovation-promoting structures within institutions and their transformation into learning organisations represented the real challenges. When the first activities were delivered, it soon became clear that the participating cultural organisations had great difficulty in positioning themselves within a culture of digitality rather than having already embedded it across the organisation (Price and James 2018, p. 45).

During the first phase of the project, we learned more about the nature of cultural collaboration between institutions across the EU in terms of organisational and operational challenges. These are inflected by local conditions and expectations (funding frameworks, for instance) as well as by diverse audience segmentation models and orientations towards engagement and development. As we have discovered, again, local factors within institutions and their contexts can run counter to the swift and responsive nature of digital opportunities (Lerch and Long 2019, p. 11).

There were five key findings in our learning experiences we would like to share:

- There is a need to learn the rules of engagement and practise a change of perspective/mindset;
- Technology should be an enabler tied to local practice;
- The human factor is the biggest challenge and there is a need for new models of leadership to enable organisational development;

- There is an urgent need for more complex audience data and evaluation efforts/comparability of results and
- The project needs to be explained and communicated properly to all relevant stakeholders.

Rules of Engagement and Change of Perspective

During the first year, it became evident that partners had to find a common understanding of Audience Development and to focus on participation and engagement in order to have an impact. Buying a ticket to an exhibition or participating in a workshop and having a meaningful encounter thus represents only the first step (Simon 2010, p. ii). It is not only about attracting increasing numbers of diverse audiences to a social object or programme; it is even more so about learning the rules of engagement and a practised change of perspective. This implies partners giving up power to their audiences and local communities (sovereignty over interpretations, agenda-setting, controlling aesthetics, etc.) (Sternfeld 2012, p. 120). Through various experiments, as the qualitative analysis by our research partner verifies, all partners were able to understand their role in the city – both the physical space and as part of the cultural fabric – as well as to acknowledge good practice and the strengths of their institutions in encouraging a more reflective way of working.

Technology Should Be an Enabler Tied to Local Practice

One central hypothesis that could be further verified as a key finding has been movement from a form of technological utopianism or determinism – in which cultural organisations expect the digital to provide direct solutions to problems or support in realising objectives by design – to the understanding of technology as tied to local expertise rather than representing an 'off-the peg' solution. All partners realised that they need to assert their expertise and input with regards to technological design issues, particularly to address the conflict between the delivery of high-quality, creative content while recognising and drawing on the digital literacy of creative workers, intermediaries and audiences. In the creative processes of dealing with digital, the production of a 'proof of concept' for project initiatives can be used to develop and test ideas on a small scale in order to demonstrate to and inspire colleagues and institutions. As a 'light touch' mode of development, this also allows for cheaper 'failure', mitigating risk and enabling creativity and experimentation (Lerch and Long 2019).

Therefore, as a learning and concrete outcome, the Dortmunder U developed a six-month project called DigiTrans. Digi-Trans aimed to explore the theoretical and practical aspects of developing an agile mindset for the cultural sector. The programme focused on four themes: Rethinking Leadership, Rethinking Teams, Rethinking Success and Rethinking Collaboration. The activities included curriculum development, prototyping and public engagement workshops to share good practice with the region and beyond.

Contrary to the norm of ‘move fast and break things’, we followed a reflective approach. This involved taking small steps to understand how the agile mindset can be incorporated by the GLAM community, which is at a unique point: embracing digitalisation while actively seeking to redefine its purpose in this age of rapid societal change.

The project was supported by a cross-departmental group at the Dortmunder U. We also invited multidisciplinary experts in the fields of digitalisation, cultural engagement, curatorial management and accessibility to contribute to the programme (Adhikari 2019).

The Human Factor: Cultivating New Models of Leadership and Organisational Development

During the project, it became evident that the human factor is the biggest challenge for successful digital transformation processes. Most people in cultural institutions feel as though they are lost in, and late to, digitalisation. They need an anchor that gives them control over these resulting changes. Since the project was initiated in and coordinated by the marketing department, internal communication and implementation turned out to be more challenging than expected. To increase acceptance and understanding of the process, certain experiments helped to foster interaction with representatives from other departments, enabling project team members to understand the opportunities and barriers partners face when running activities, building trust and bringing clarity to the process.

Against this background, it became clear that a contemporary cultural institution needs an innovative and institution-specific leadership approach and, above all, a management team with a wide range of competencies to be able to cope with this complexity. It is important to find the right balance between administrative, marketing and artistic perspectives as well as overall development. There is an urgent need for an agile organisational structure, which provides new spaces for content development together with all relevant stakeholders, and takes into account the different needs of all staff members around leadership and hierarchy awareness.

Urgent Need for Audience Data and Evaluation Efforts/ Comparability of Results

Even though some institutions, such as the Van Abbemuseum and the ZKM, work with different forms of visitor surveys and evaluation methods, there was no baseline for comparing results. In order to measure the success of each institutional transformation process towards an engaged audience and relevant institution, there is an urgent need for (a) more complex audience data as well as a greater effort to raise this data, (b) systematic investment in establishing and expanding the necessary personnel resources to accomplish these goals and (c) new forms of contextualisation and categorisation. There is also a need to move from quantifiable values such as visitor numbers, ticket sales and social media reach to qualitative methods that measure the impact and performance of the institution in different dimensions

(Jacobsen 2016, p. 2). We have to ask ourselves the following: What do we need to know about our visitors and at what point will we become ‘data leeches’? At what point do we have to fulfil our role of reflecting society/social realities?

Communicating Project Guidelines with Relevant Stakeholders

Apart from the struggle of leading a digital transformation process within the institution, communicating with different stakeholders of each partnering institution, as well as with funders, had been a challenge. Since digital transformation processes focus on sustainable and qualitative effects such as social impact, capacity building and change of mindset, conflict is inevitable when the definition of success of cultural projects is still widely associated with and communicated through traditional key statistics such as visitor numbers or generated revenue. Additionally, the temporary nature and standardised and extensive reporting requirements of co-funded projects collide with the ability to measure long-term qualitative effects that might not become apparent until after the project has concluded. Consequently, the shift from selling something to our audiences to listening and learning about audience interests, building relationships and seeking to understand what we can do together in order to benefit local communities is one that must be communicated to politicians, media, sponsors, funders and other stakeholders. It is a new way of thinking and acting, and therefore, all stakeholders have to be carefully included in the process.

Conclusion

After leading such a complex project as smARTplaces, we can assert that it successfully provided a ‘safe’ test environment for all partners to practise audience engagement via digital means, and to learn how to better collaborate with their local communities as well as within an international network of partners. Capacity-building measures and the ongoing exchange of experiences can be regarded as useful measures to further design the transformation process from an object-centred to an audience-centred approach within institutions. The experiments have helped to create an environment for all staff members to practise process-oriented thinking and acting and the courage to step out of their comfort zones and experiment with possibilities of failure and learning. Although each institution had to find its own ‘tailored’ approach and pace within the project, these collaborative activities fostered the establishment of a more flexible future-orientated process and workflow organisation.

Still, a project like smARTplaces can only function as an impetus and starting point. We can conclude that the actual digital maturity level of all institutions has increased; however, it is still lower than what we envisaged at the beginning of the project. The project has thereby raised awareness around the gap between our initial digital vision and its practical implementation. Without further investment in capacity building and experimental projects, medium-sized cultural institutions must be vigilant about the risks of falling further behind in terms of digitisation and digital literacy. All participating institutions will have to reflect on new models of leadership, as well as how they might continue to shape and lead ongoing digital transformation within their respective institutions. SmARTplaces ended in the middle of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020, and the crisis has highlighted even more strongly the museum sector's ongoing struggle to evolve in the face of social, political and technological upheaval. During periods of lockdown, the possibilities of accessing digital tools have increased the existing differences between medium and small-sized institutions in contrast to big players; at the same time, it revealed transformation and structural deficits within the entire museum sector.

Against this background, transforming into a learning organisation, in particular, is key to necessary (digital)transformation processes in the cultural sector. Since it is often not possible to build up additional personnel capacities, existing resources must be exploited in a meaningful way. Therefore, implementing innovation as a meta-competence is essential for the (digital) reorganisation of our cultural infrastructure. At the organisational level, this implies the integration of continuous competence management that takes into account the individual learning needs of all employees in a wide range of functions. In the long term, different learning opportunities and formats (e.g., leadership development, mentoring, knowledge sharing, self-directed learning, peer-to-peer, digital learning/capacity building, design thinking, etc.) must be expanded to create a holistic learning landscape, including collaborative work processes. In the future, permanent innovation-promoting structures are required within all organisations. This means both a strategic and structural reorientation and the cultivation of a constant willingness and capacity for change within institutions.

Simultaneously, we are seeing an urgent need for grassroots innovation to engage communities with issues of democracy, global warming and racism. Acting confidently in the digital space is, therefore, a prerequisite for the ethical and democratic use of digital technologies, as well as for addressing changes within this area. In summary, this means that the opportunities presented by digital transformation for cultural institutions lie above all in recognising and working out how institutions can help society to integrate the emerging potential of digital development meaningfully, socially and ethically into societal processes and discussions. In the end, this involves new methods of democratic exchange and togetherness (Vogel and Neugebauer 2021, pp. 93-95).

To be clear, this does not mean indulging in superlatives such as 'disruption' or 'reinventing the wheel'. Neither should we adopt jingoistic terms such as 'digital-first' and 'agile'. We can draw on a multitude of examples from cultural institutions across Europe that offer strategic and operational solutions. We need to parse through these and append the resulting insights with cross-sector knowledge on three fronts: new business models, organisational design and better digital processes. In concrete terms, we have to ask ourselves how (digital) transformation processes affect the system – in our case, the 'culture' – and how our structures have to change as a result.

Projects such as smARTplaces, therefore, show, on the one hand, how important it is to bundle competencies across departments and disciplines and to work on common challenges collaborative and across a network. On the other hand, these projects reveal the need for other funding frameworks that focus on infrastructures and processes, and which are designed for institutional change (Vogel 2022, p. 250).

Notes

1 According to the culture and media scientist Felix Stalder, digital technologies were not the starting point of the current social transformation processes. They were furthermore the driver of already ongoing change processes. Mainly, they could only be developed after an idea of their possibilities had already been formulated (Stalder 2017, p. 21). Therefore, the authors refer to transformation processes in general.

2 The term intrinsic logic (Eigenlogik) comes from the fields of Urban Affairs and Spatial Development and assumes that each city as well as public institutions develop specific and distinguishable constellations, coherent knowledge and expressions that shape people and their practices in different ways. Each location is assigned to its own logic and suggests specific actions. Cities primarily perceive this approach as a 'context of meaning and space' that cannot be summarised in 'administrative boundaries' (Terizakis 2011, p. 14). The concept of self-logic inevitably goes hand-in-hand with the approach of developing a tailor-made solution for every city (Terizakis 2011, p. 14) The concept of intrinsic logic is a substitute term since it does not mean the 'hidden ratio of a city', but rather the 'stubbornness' of a city. This something is 'own (singular) and still has a logic' (Gehring 2008, p. 156).

3 In the project, digital storytelling is understood as the strategic application of storytelling techniques to create new/different engaging narratives around existing formats, e.g., an exhibition, in the form of non-physical media, tailored for digital communication channels such as social media.

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Part III

Accessibility and Community Engagement

Taylor & Francis
Taylor & Francis Group
http://taylorandfrancis.com

10 Museum Accessibility in Italy

Past, Present, Future

Annamaria Ravagnan and Enzo Grossi

In recent years, the concept of accessibility has evolved naturally, moving from an almost exclusive focus on people with physical disabilities (motor, vision and hearing) to a broader understanding of the range of physical, social, cognitive and relational conditions. Helen Chatterjee states: ‘Gone are the days when museums were viewed as static and inert. […] from a more contemporary perspective they offer an interactive environment that can contribute positively to present day well-being’ (Chatterjee and Noble 2013 p. x). The project carried out by ICOM Italy on this topic has brought many concrete results: ones that better define the concept of accessibility, inclusion, usability and, recently, audience emancipation and equity. ICOM Italy was the only ICOM National Committee to have created the Thematic Commission on Museum Accessibility in 2007, led by Dario Scarpati, and today chaired by Lucilla Boschi, Curator of Museo Tolomeo at Istituto dei Ciechi (the Institute of the Blind People) and Francesco Cavazza in Bologna. Today the leading organisational figure of ICOM Italy’s projects is Anna Maria Ravagnan, who was appointed to the Probiviri Committee in 2016. The Italian word *probiviri* denotes individuals who, enjoying particular esteem and prestige for their skills and proven honesty, are called upon to be part of collegiate bodies, public bodies, associations or parties, with the task of giving opinions, judging the progress of an institution and verifying the respect of internal rules and the ethical behaviour of members.

The Commission, which deals with accessibility, inclusion and museum usability in all its facets, currently consists of more than 50 active members in Italy. During its more than ten years of existence, the Commission has developed systems for understanding the relationship between facilities and people with physical, sensory and cognitive disabilities and has studied the exhibition facilities and services offered to the public. The Commission has promoted a cognitive survey of Italian museums in order to open a dialogue between the museum and society, using the interview method and through the administration of a questionnaire to professional figures such as directors and curators. Following an experimental phase during which the museums of Bari, Mantua, Milan and Rome were interviewed, the project was extended to the whole country. Thanks to data obtained from the interviews, the creation of a glossary of terms related to the theme of museum accessibility has been initiated and will soon be submitted to ICOM Italy members

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for validation and subsequent publication in Italian and English. The Commission has also worked on the elaboration of guidelines that should serve as a stimulus for museums and museum workers.

One of the Commission's objectives is the recognition of museum personnel and the different functions they perform, both to include these new professions both in ICOM Italy's museum experts document and to present these new professions to MiBACT (Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Tourism). Another important objective in recent years has been not only the definition of quality standards to be adopted in the museum field but also the definition of simple practical guidelines in response to the FAQ, with the aim of making the museum accessible. The Commission has been highlighting best practices on its website with the aim of disseminating interesting projects and linking project managers to each other.

Both international and Italian regulations on museum accessibility have been published on the Commission's website and continuously updated, alongside a reference bibliography. In addition, in recent years, the Commission has promoted and supported numerous museum accessibility and inclusion projects for people with motor or cognitive disabilities, migrants, homeless people, prisoners, etc. A Glossary is also being developed since building a common language is key. For instance, a psychologist will use the terms of his discipline in a much more precise way than a museum professional, and vice-versa. But if they have to come together to describe an 'accessible' museum, they must utilise the same language.

Recent Italian Projects Promoting Museum Accessibility

In recent years, increasing attention has been paid to the theme of museum accessibility in Italy. The following is a non-exhaustive list of projects worthy of mention.

1 Born with Culture

This Italian project provides parents with newborn babies a pass allowing the child and its family free entry to the museums of their city of residence or those located in the nearest city.

2 Museo Teatrale alla Scala

For groups of people affected by intellectual disabilities, visiting the Museo Teatrale alla Scala and attending workshops during regular opening hours for disabilities is a real challenge. A detailed description of this experience is provided in this article as a practical example of how to implement this philosophy to avoid ghettoisation.

3 Museum for people experiencing homelessness

The Museo dei Cappuccini in Milan has adopted the slogan 'Art Nourishes the Spirit and the Body' and invites people experiencing homelessness to visit the museum. Individuals who come to the Opera San Francesco per i Poveri for lunch, or to use the shower facilities, are invited to visit the nearby museum, accompanied by staff from the education department. Visiting the museum can help to restore dignity.

4 Montecassino Abbey Museum

This is an inclusive experience project developed by Ivana Bruno and Luca Bianchi in Montecassino Abbey museum, whereby a hearing-impaired art historian and an expert in museum accessibility who is visually impaired use Italian Sign Language (LIS) and tactile exploration to guide visitors through the museum, showing how all the senses are important and superfluous at the same time.

Following several years of working in the Italian territory, the Commission gradually assumed importance as a point of reference for many Italian institutions; in 2014, Commission members therefore began discussing the possibility of creating an International Accessibility Committee. The first proposal was presented during the 2016 ICOM International Conference in Milan, but this process was not followed up even though more than 60 museums supported the creation of the International Committee.

In agreement with Dario Scarpati, founder and first supervisor of the Commission, we have always believed in the importance of creating an International Committee for Accessibility, Inclusion and Usability. Therefore, we tried to address this issue by organising a meeting during the ICOM General Conference in Kyoto on 4 September 2018, where many interventions stated the utility of creating an International Committee for Accessibility, Inclusion and Usability.

Participation in cultural life and delight in the arts are fundamental human rights enshrined in Article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which specifies that:

1 Everyone has the right to freely to participate in the cultural life of the community, to enjoy the arts and to share in scientific advancement and its benefits.
2 Everyone has the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author (United Nations 1948).

The role of museums in enhancing wellbeing and improving health through social interventions is one of the foremost topics of importance in the museum sector today. With an aging population and emerging policies on the social responsibilities of museums, the sector is facing an unprecedented challenge around how to develop services that will meet the needs of its communities in more holistic and inclusive ways. In *Touch in Museums: Policy and Practice in Object Handling,* Helen Chatterjee sets the scene for the future of museums: one in which the health and wellbeing of communities is at the top of the agenda (Chatterjee 2008). The authors gather existing research and best practices in the area of museum interventions in health and social care and offer a detailed overview of the potential outcomes of such interactions, including benefits and challenges. This timely book is essential reading for museum professionals, particularly those involved in access and education, students of museums and heritage studies, as well as practitioners of arts in health, art therapists, care and community workers.

A New Perspective on the Museum's Mission

Museum functions have increased with the passage of time, and it is not out of place to define a museum today as a place to meet and create relationships, as well as a place that is capable (in many cases) of mitigating social tensions. It is in this context that the concept of museum accessibility must be interpreted. The importance of effective communication to improve accessibility has been underlined by the Italian government. special attention to establishing guidelines for captions, signage installation, and subtitles, in addition to labels and object descriptions Furthermore, the government defined specific guidelines for accessibility plans within museums.

A strong priority for the future success of ICOM is to establish the theme of accessibility as a multidimensional and transversal one, expanding from overcoming architectural barriers to other museum functions like communication, education, environmental psychology and new technologies. The themes of accessibility and inclusion need to be expanded from people with motor and sensory disabilities to people with cognitive disabilities, not forgetting all those at risk of social fragilities, such as prisoners, deprived, people experiencing homelessness, migrants and hospitalised patients.

The future of psychological and social wellbeing also depends on museum participation and engagement, as demonstrated by a case study in Milan. A multidisciplinary working group designed a project to assess this issue with a cross-sectional study based on a sample of 1,000 citizens of Milan. Our objective was to assess how cultural participation affects mental health relative to subjective wellbeing (measured on the Psychological General Wellbeing scale) and social wellbeing (measured on the Social Index scale), which combines community development and the intensity of social volunteering activities. The survey was carried out with the assistance of Doxa, an Italian pollster company, through telephone interviews, and used a large database of contacts and the master data of 20,000 families in Milan. The households interviewed were randomly selected electronically, removing any possibility of choice and thereby avoiding distortions in the sample. Gender, age, education level and employment status were taken into consideration for stratification purposes. The average social index and subjective wellbeing index of the study sample were 18.79 and 80.70, respectively. The social index and subjective wellbeing index of 327 people who had not visited a museum in the previous year were 13.91 and 77.95, respectively, while the 102 people attending museums at least ten times a year had an average social index and subjective wellbeing index of 32.65 and 84.65, respectively, with a highly statistical significant difference ($p < 0.001$). No other cultural activity produced better results. The results suggest an important link between cultural capital, social capital and subjective wellbeing that deserves special attention for future studies.

Outcome Research: From a Problem to an Opportunity

In recent years, we have learned that cultural engagement through museums can be associated with important health outcomes. The British Longitudinal Study of Ageing (Fancourt *et al.* 2020) shows that for adults aged 50 and older, visiting museums every few months or more often was associated with a lower incidence rate of dementia over a 10-year follow-up period compared with those who visited less frequently. This association was independent of demographics, socioeconomic status, health-related variables including sensory impairment, depression, vascular conditions, and other forms of community engagement. Visiting museums may be a promising psychosocial activity to support the prevention of dementia (Fancourt *et al.* 2020), but how can we measure short-term outcomes immediately following a museum visit, and in particular for people with intellectual disabilities?

In recent years, many museums have developed specific projects for people with mental health problems. Although the word 'wellbeing' seems to be omnipresent, there are very few indications of the methodology to be adopted to detect any beneficial effects in the daily context, and this constitutes the main difficulty in measuring the impact of these initiatives. In other words, when talking about wellbeing, it is obviously fundamental to have at one's disposal appropriate measurement tools. Only in the last 20 years have scholars begun to systematically address the study of psychological wellbeing with appropriate measurement tools under the impetus of the birth and development of positive psychology. Most of the available tool's focus, however, on the evaluation of a 'state' condition that reflects the individual perception of wellbeing relative to a previous period (generally the last four weeks). Very few efforts have been made to develop tools capable of measuring momentary psychological states.

Aesthetic Experiences at the Museo Teatrale alla Scala

Significant efforts have been carried out in Italy in recent years to develop instruments that are able to capture the outcomes of accessibility projects. The following section describes the feasibility of an aesthetic experience in Museo Teatrale alla Scala in 17 adolescent and adult subjects suffering from different forms of neuro-psychiatric diseases, and guests of the Villa Santa Maria Institute, an Italian Rehabilitation Center. Generally speaking, the tools currently in use for measuring momentary psychological states have been oriented to the study of negative sensations such as pain, depression, nausea, etc. However, there is nothing preventing the use of the same instruments for the quantification of positive sensations, such as, for example, those associated with viewing artistic objects or listening to musical works.

As part of our case study's methodology, we refer to simple descriptive scales, which use adjectives (for example, little – enough – very much) to grade positive sensations or to numeric or graphic scales. One of these graphic scales, the so-called Visual Analogue Scale (VAS), appears to be the most reliable, sensitive and accurate method, thanks to the enormous experimental work carried out in the field of pain (Joyce *et al*. 1975; Scott and Huskisson 1976). The classic VAS is made up of a segment of a predetermined length (usually 100 mm) with two well highlighted extremes corresponding to a minimum theoretical value (0 mm) and a maximum theoretical value (100 mm) of the subjective state. The subject is asked to position himself at a level corresponding to his momentary state by using a pencil to draw a bar perpendicular to the segment itself. The distance in millimetres between the zero end and the crossing of the bar traced on the segment represents the entity of the sensation felt at that moment by the subject. Unfortunately, the use of the classic 100 mm VAS poses certain problems, especially in subjects with physical and/or intellectual disabilities for whom the understanding of the operation of the scale can be difficult. In addition, bias connected to a possible poor understanding of VAS by certain subjects generates difficulties in statistical analysis (Maxwell 1978; Stubbs 1979). The need to perform the evaluation of the sensation in two successive phases (marking of the subject on the 100 mm segment and subsequent measurement of the length of the segment by the operator) and the alteration of the length of the segment, which may occur if the data collection forms are photocopied rather than printed, represent additional sources of potential error that limit the usefulness of the VAS.

To improve the VAS, in 1983, Grossi developed a special version called the Analogue Chromatic Continuous Scale (ACCS) (Grossi *et al.* 1983, 1984). The ACCS consists of a coloured strip measuring 100 mm in length and 25 mm wide, in which the colour fades with an increasing intensity: from zero, at which point the colour is almost absent, to 100, at which point the colour intensity is at its maximum. In the ACCS original version, used for pain measurement, the stripe colour was red. For the study described in this article, we decided to re-adapt the ACCS to measure momentary wellbeing among subjects.

In the new version of ACCS used for wellbeing measurement, the colour of the stripe is blue and the two labels placed as anchor points at both ends are: 'absence of wellbeing' and 'maximum possible wellbeing'. These terms are inscribed on a white background. The colour passes from a very pale blue, corresponding to absence of wellbeing, to a dark blue, corresponding to maximum possible wellbeing. The coloured stripe is located on one side of a double-sided ruler (Figure 10.1) with a transparent slider containing a thin black line perpendicular to the coloured strip and a stopper inside the slider itself, which ensures its stability when it is positioned at the chosen level. On the back of the coloured strip is a 100-mm graduated segment that is not shown to the subject. A second black line, corresponding to the one on the coloured face, allows the operator to directly measure the length of the segment subtended by the cursor (length corresponding to the choice made by the subject) simply by turning the ruler and reading the value in millimetres. The value is immediately recorded in a specific database for subsequent statistical processing. From previous scientific works, it is known that the ACCS is equivalent to the visual analogue scale of 100 mm (VAS) but more sensitive and easier to understand and use (Grossi *et al*. 1983, 1984). The above has led us to use the ACCS scale in the evaluation of the subjective state of wellbeing of subjects with

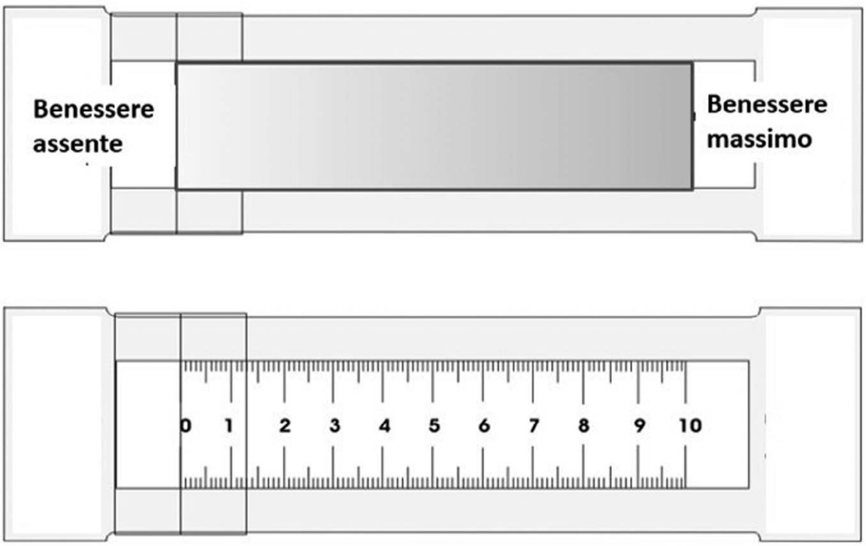

Figure 10.1 Continuous Analog Chromatic Scale, Italian Wellbeing ACCS scale, front and rear face.

cognitive disabilities before and following a visit to the Museo Teatrale alla Scala: one that was enriched by a musical and theatrical performance.

The two anchor point labels in English are 'absence of wellbeing' and 'maximum possible wellbeing'.

Three groups of people with intellectual disabilities of various etiologies and residing at the Villa Santa Maria Institute were involved in the study: six adolescents with autism (aged 10-17); five adolescents with psychopathologies (aged 12-17); and adults with various types of intellectual disabilities (31-62 years old) (See Table 10.1). Wellbeing measurements were carried out for five consecutive days before participants visited the Museo Teatrale alla Scala, asking subjects to use the ruler to determine their temporary psychological wellbeing levels at given times of day, usually between 10 a.m. and 11 a.m. This measurement is taken in the days prior to the museum visit aimed to establish a basic level of reference

Table 10.1 Characteristics of the subjects involved in this experiment

	Group 1	*Group 2*	*Group 3*
	N = 6	N = 5	N = 6
Diagnosis	Autism	Psychiatric diseases	Intellectual disability
Gender (M/F)	6 m	5 m	5 m 1 f
Age (range)	10 to 17	12 to 18	36 to 62
Mild ID	1	5	1
Moderate ID	5	0	3
Severe ID	0	0	2

for wellbeing. On the day dedicated to the theatre experience, the same type of evaluation was carried out at 11 a.m., immediately prior to the experience; at 12.30 p.m., immediately following the experience, and at 2:30 p.m., on the participants' return to the Institute. The experience consisted of a visit to the museum, with an explanation and description of the setting, carried out by a cultural mediator with experience in the field of inclusion for people with cognitive disabilities, who had previously defined the method of the visit in coordination with the head of the Educational Service and Specialized Education of the Istituto Villa Santa Maria. At the end of the visit and immediately following it, overlooking the Teatro alla Scala hall from a theatre dais which was suitably secured with a transparent screen, guests were asked to sit in the Exedra hall, where the famous Steinway piano belonging to Franz Liszt is located. There, Maestro Fabio Sartorelli, Professor of Music History at the Conservatory Giuseppe Verdi in Como, presented alongside his collaborators a special adaptation of *Singspiel The Magic Flute* by Mozart. They illustrated the opera's history and individual characters using drawings and objects such as the music box, and accompanied by the singing of famous arias performed both on the piano and flute and with stage movements and dances. The performance lasted about half an hour.

The impact of the artistic experience on the mood of the subjects was evident both to the staff of the Institute Villa Santa Maria and to the collaborators present. All the subjects showed smiling expressions and participated in the representation applauding happily. The basic level of wellbeing of the previous days was rather stable over time, with an average value of 66 mm (14.5 SD) in the group of subjects with autism, 58 mm (13.6 SD) in the group of subjects with psychopathology and 60 mm (12.5 SD) in the group of adult subjects. The measurement of perceived wellbeing immediately after the experience showed a strong emotional impact, with a statistically significant increase in momentary psychological wellbeing, which was 37 per cent in the autistic group, 64 per cent in the psychopathology group and 50 per cent in the adult group.

Comparing the average VAS value of the previous days with the actual VAS value immediately after the musical and theatrical performance, a significant increase in VAS value after the experience was registered in all three groups with a p-value <0.001 (Figure 10.2). The results obtained seem to indicate that this approach is valid and robust even in the presence of intellectual disabilities for two fundamental reasons: firstly, the trend observed completely overlaps across three groups of subjects despite very different neuropsychiatric problems, different levels of cognitive abilities and a wide age range from adolescence to adulthood. Secondly, the measurements carried out in the days prior to the experience give rise to rather stable values in each subject and are neither fluctuating nor random. This fact encourages and pushes us to continue the experiment across groups of extended subjects, hopefully allowing us to confirm what has been obtained.

Apart from these methodological aspects, the results obtained also suggest the effectiveness of using museum visits and musical and theatrical performances as a tool to promote quality of life in subjects with neuropsychiatric disorders. This is important since high levels of accessibility for people with

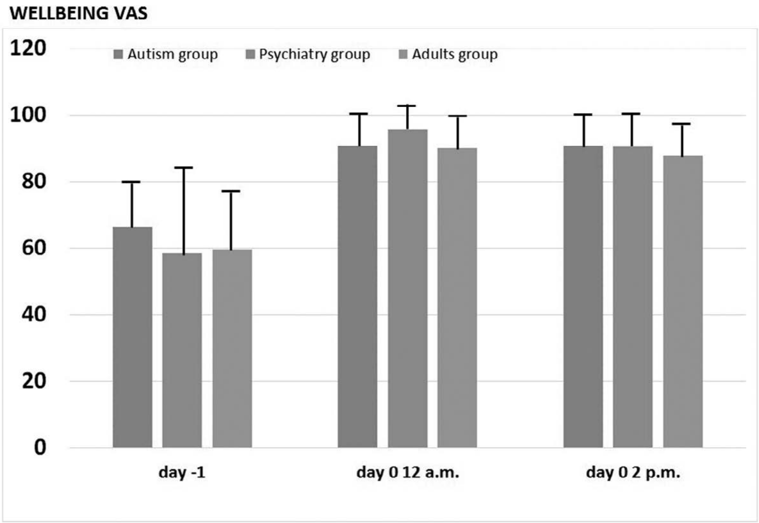

Figure 10.2 Subjective wellbeing before and after the experience at the Museo Teatrale alla Scala. Histograms show mean values and whiskers standard deviations.

cognitive disabilities have not yet been achieved in museums. This pilot study suggests that a visit to a museum can stimulate parts of the brain that remain intact even after the onset of neuro-psychiatric diseases and that the measurement of temporary wellbeing is feasible even in the presence of cognitive deficits. The measurement of wellbeing both in the days immediately before and after the museum experience suggests a strong emotional impact, with a statistically significant increase in momentary psychological wellbeing on the order of 30 to 40 per cent. In conclusion, we believe that this study is an important element of reflection for all those involved in museum accessibility for people with cognitive disabilities.

Final Considerations

ICOM Italy's 2019 proposal for ICOM's new Museum Definition contained the concepts of inclusion and accessibility:

> The museum is a permanent, non-profit institution at the service of society and its development, open to the public, accessible and inclusive, which carries out research on the material and immaterial testimonies of man and his environment, acquires, preserves, and communicates them and specifically exposes them for the purposes of study, education, enjoyment and participation, through forms of shared planning of activities and overcome those barriers that still obstruct the full participation of citizens in culture.

After a lengthy debate, a new definition was approved at ICOM's Extraordinary General Assembly in Prague on 24 August 2022, which mentions that a museum must be 'open to the public, accessible and inclusive' (ICOM 2022).

We believe that the future focus must be not only on inclusion and accessibility for people with motor disabilities or physical disabilities but also for people experiencing homelessness, prisoners, detained people, migrants, newborns and infants, people with low incomes, and people affected by cognitive disabilities, among other marginalised and vulnerable groups. For example, it is not possible to visit museums with a pet, with the exception of visitors who have support animals such as seeing-eye dogs. In this regard we should consider the fact that a number of people living alone refrain from attending the museum without their preferred pet, especially dogs. A recent museum philosophy for wide inclusion aims to create pet-friendly museums. In Italy, several institutions, including the Museo Lapidario Tergestino in Trieste now allow dogs to accompany visitors.

However, ghettoisation, marginalisation, and the creation of closed enclaves for frail and marginalised people should be avoided. One unique and diverse public for museums. Let us not forget that the museum experience is also one to be shared. In this respect we should be aware of the important role played by mirror neurons. Since the discovery of mirror neurons, we have seen a tremendous increase in scientific publications revolving around the question of the neural computations and networks that enable us to share the feelings of others. Mirror neurons are those neurons in the brain's frontal cortex that when activated, result in imitation or mimicry: ones that many scientists now believe are the foundation of empathy. Therefore, perceiving joy, happiness and wellbeing from other people attending a museum can positively influence our mood, predisposing us to the same feelings. This emotional amplification can be the secret for the success of a particular museum that is able to foster interaction and empathy between visitors.

New terms have become part of the museum vocabulary: accessibility, inclusion, usability, equity and user's emancipation. Recent studies (Camic and Chatterjee 2013; Jackson 2019) have shown the importance of the social role of museums in the wellbeing of all citizens. However, unlike accessibility for people with motor disabilities, good levels of accessibility for people with cognitive disabilities have not yet been achieved. We reiterate our previous reflection that the museum experience is about sharing! We need to build a common language, spread the best practices models and share methodologies to assess the results obtained.

We are sure that the theme of accessibility is common to all ICOM Committees; it is for this reason that we believe it is important to set up a specific International Committee: this will allow us to address this complex issue in a shared and participatory manner, to share best practices and common guidelines, in addition to coordinating shared actions and composing glossaries and bibliographies. The themes of accessibility and inclusion in cultural institutions increasingly involve not only people with motor, sensory and cognitive disabilities but also all people at risk of social fragility. It is in this context that the concept of museum accessibility must be interpreted. Perhaps the most important result achieved is the focus on cognitive and social accessibility. It has been a slow and difficult but constant step.

Conclusion

The themes of accessibility and inclusion in museums increasingly involve people with different forms of medical disabilities and social disadvantages. Many governments are now, finally, concentrated on this theme, including Italy, which has recently created within the MIBACT (Department of Cultural Heritage) a specific working group for public museums. Taking additional inspiration from the latest data on the strong impact of culture on health and its social role, ICOM Italia has included accessibility, sustainable development and wellbeing in its proposal for a new definition of museum.

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11 The Pachacamac Site Museum

A Tool for Territorial Management

Denise Pozzi-Escot and Carmen Rosa Uceda

The Pachacamac archaeological site is located south of Lima, on the central coast of Peru. Its 460 hectares house around 50 adobe and stone buildings, in addition to several cemeteries from various eras (200-1533 A.D). The centralisation and expansion of the city of Lima, stimulated by migration and urban growth, pose a major challenge for the Pachacamac archaeological sanctuary team. The Pachacamac site museum must adapt to this urban expansion, but the challenge lies in ensuring that the history and heritage of the local area are respected, and the integration of local communities achieved.

The Pachacamac archaeological sanctuary was one of the most important sanctuaries and places of pilgrimage of the pre-Hispanic Andean world. Even today, it remains an important ceremonial centre. It was visited during the Inca period (1470-1533 AD) by pilgrims from diverse places who arrived at the site via the great Inca Trail or Qhapaq Nan, to worship the mighty god Pachacamac, a Quechua name meaning 'creator of the world', consecrated in an oracle, the centre of the entire coastal region.

The Pachacamac Site Museum was created thanks to the Qhapaq Ñan Project by the Ministry of Culture of Peru, with the aim to offer the public a space that meets appropriate conditions of conservation, preservation and dissemination of the cultural wealth that it encloses. The museum is accessible to people with limited mobility and has guides printed in Braille so visitors with visual impairments can access the information on the exhibit panels. It also has explanatory videos for children that can also serve people with cognitive disabilities. The aim is to make the museum accessible to all.

The museum was designed to maintain architectural balance with the existing environment. The design – by local architects Llosa and Cortegana – includes a series of ramps with a moderate slope that allows problem-free passage. The exhibition presents the universal values of the site through photographs, panels, videos and 277 artefacts recovered mainly from inside the sanctuary.

The Management Plan for the site (Equipo del Plan de Manejo 2012) summarises the general guidelines for the management of the sanctuary. It proposes the active inclusion of the population located in the immediate vicinity for the benefit of the archaeological complex and its conservation. This prompts the question: who makes up the local community? The community bordering the sanctuary is

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heterogenous and relatively recent, made up of migrants from other regions of Peru with practically no links to the remote pre-Hispanic past. It is, therefore, essential to establish this link with the remote past, which must be considered our common heritage; it is the Pachacamac site's mission to disseminate this heritage now, in the 21st century.

The Pachacamac Museum has been working to raise awareness and participation of the community, in the protection and conservation of the site, to enhance its educational and historical value and to promote participation of current populations. Always bearing in mind the need to be accessible to different audiences, texts are quite short, precise and simple. Panels contain detailed information in bilingual texts (Spanish and English) on some of the most important pieces.

As part of the educational and community relations programmes, a plan of activities has been designed in and with the schools and with the populations surrounding the archaeological site (Pozzi-Escot and Uceda 2019a; Pozzi-Escot and Uceda 2019b). This programme, aimed at students and the community at large, consists of dynamic workshops on heritage education and conservation of the archaeological site, and of programmes to provide young people in nearby communities with the opportunity to extend their training, such as photography workshops.

These projects are part of the policies and guiding principles of the Management Plan of the sanctuary of Pachacamac, specifically when it refers to developing programmes and projects to which the population and interest groups commit themselves for the conservation of the site and its values (Equipo del Plan de Manejo 2012). In some cases, these projects will facilitate a direct improvement in the participants' quality of life, generating economic revenue for people in the local community who are part of these projects, as is the case with the women of the Association of Artisans.

SISAN: Asociación de artesanas del Museo Pachacamac

With support from the Sustainable Preservation Initiative (SPI) and the Kani Association, the participatory project, Community Development of Pachacamac, brought together a group of women with scarce financial resources, who were trained to improve their techniques and refine their knowledge to create artisanal products to sell and earn an income. The training taught them about the history of the archaeological site, and gave them information about running an enterprise, about tourism and business opportunities.

After over than four years, SISAN became a formal organisation thanks to the accompaniment of the Education and Community Work team from the Pachacamac Museum. In this new stage, it forms part of the 'Second Flight' project in which the discontinued uniforms of the airline LATAM are reused by the artisans to create different products, which are sold in the museum shop and even in a few flights of the airline.

Our educational and community projects are collaborative as we invite the community to act as active partners in the creation of institutional projects driven and managed by the museum (Simon 2010). The Pachacamac Site

Museum's relationship with this group of women led us to search for different funding sources in order to generate sustainable conditions and extend our management vision for the site and the museum so the community can benefit from its conservation.

Moreover, educational programmes are run in coordination with schools near the archaeological site. One of the programs, ran by the museum curator Angelica Isa, and the museum's education department, with the sponsorship of National Geographic, simulates an excavation or conservation of objects and the students can participate in the preparation of an exhibition; we evaluate the lessons learned after four sessions at the museum.

The most common activities carried out by the teachers and students are guided tours of the museum, with observation sheets and colouring sheets (for the smaller children) on exhibition topics. One of the assumptions of the Management Plan is thinking about education not only as a service provided by the sanctuary for the community but also as an action that integrates communities from the surrounding areas, which can be expanded to areas further afield (Equipo del Plan de Manejo 2012, p. 17). Community participation in our different activities seeks to generate a sense of ownership of the heritage among local populations. In other words, raising awareness of the importance of their heritage among the community will ultimately lead to their involvement in its conservation.

BiciTour

A new initiative called BiciTour aims to link archaeological heritage and youth of the neighbouring areas by offering them new social and cultural value and economic development, with support from National Geographic and SPI. We proposed approaching a subset of the population who, after completing their schooling, were considered vulnerable: young people who faced a lack of employment opportunities. Because of their economic deprivation, they can develop antisocial behaviour, creating problems in their community and surroundings. The museum focuses on these young people, offering them opportunities to identify with the sanctuary of Pachacamac that surrounds them and encouraging their engagement with the preservation and protection of its heritage.

These young people accompany visitors on a cycling tour of the archaeological circuit; they are not guides. Their mission is to ensure the safety of the cyclists, to avoid any damage to the sanctuary and to ensure that the cyclists respect the established route. At the end of the tour, they receive donations from the visitors. We have seen an improvement in the interpersonal relations of these young people as they share experiences with foreign and national visitors. Also, despite the training for bicycle maintenance and repair being very basic, some of these young people have launched businesses in their neighbourhoods and offer bicycle repair services. This drives positive behaviour and personal development while, at the same time, promoting the heritage of the archaeological sanctuary.

The Management Plan indicates that the sanctuary aims to become an integral and inclusive site for the socio-economic development of the area. In this regard, it was considered important to establish connections between the museum and the governing boards of organisations in the surrounding communities who were found to be willing, though hampered at times, by frequent change of management personnel, leaving results pending. Even so, the Site Museum is perceived by surrounding organisations as a valuable asset for their projects, especially for developing tourism in the area. The participation of representatives of community groups in the meetings held to create the Management Plan demonstrated their interest during the diagnostic, organisation and analysis of the information.

Play Area

The Pachacamac Site Museum created recreational-cultural spaces as a tool to increase integration of the local community in the sanctuary. Local community visitors, and visitors in general, are mainly pre-school-age children, who are frequent visitors to the museum for pedagogical reasons, guided by teachers and parents.

With the support of the University of Girona, Spain, this space was developed for pre-schoolers. It offers qualitatively distinct play activities while at the same time helping to create a change in mentality and opinion and provide free time activities for the pre-school population of the archaeological sanctuary area.

The purpose of the play area is to provide children with materials related to the values of the heritage of Pachacamac in a quiet space, favouring communication and improving their relationships with adults.

Inter-Institutional Cooperation

The process of integrating local populations is long and complex, but we have had a good turnout due to management involving different actors, which has enabled us to achieve results, gain credibility and establish alliances with various institutions. In this regard, partnerships have been extended to various actors that have contributed significantly to the improvement of services offered by the museum and sanctuary to the community, thereby strengthening the methodology of the conservation of property, spreading the new knowledge that archaeological research has developed in the sanctuary, among others.

In a significant show of private sector collaboration with archaeological heritage, the Pachacamac Museum has joined efforts with the University of the Pacific in California to develop the landscape recovery project of the Urpiwachaq lagoon, one of the natural spaces linked to Pachacamac. This recovery will allow us to offer an alternative circuit and ecological visit (Pozzi-Escot and Oshiro 2015).

Similarly, the museum signed a three-year agreement with the Antonio Ruiz de Montoya University (UARM) for the benefit of students in the Technique of Analysis and Management of Tourist Information in the Sustainable Tourism programme. Students developed proposals to improve information and services in the archaeological circuit, which were duly implemented by the museum. Likewise, evaluations were carried out to manage tourist information at the Pachacamac site, asking museum visitors to fill in questionnaires in order to learn their perceptions of the service offered to visitors.

In addition, the UARM, through its Institute of Social Projection, created 'Volunteering Pachacamac', a programme whereby students of Journalism, Political Science and Sustainable Tourism studied the population of the museum's surroundings from various perspectives. The aim was to study how to best implement existing services for the satisfaction of visitors from the surrounding areas. Information was collected on domestic-local tourism and a joint project was carried out in the workshops the museum has run with neighbouring populations.

The museum won the support of the Global Heritage Fund, which over four years contributed to the development of Archaeological Conservation Workshops under the direction of conservation expert John Hurd. Professionals from archaeological sites in Peru were convened to participate in these training sessions, the goal of which is to offer archaeology professionals a space for research and archaeological conservation, as was proposed in the Sanctuary Management Plan.

Conclusion

The Pachacamac Site Museum is dependent on the Ministry of Culture of Peru, its centralised management affects the performance and effectiveness of the Site. However, the museum is given the flexibility to manage its international resources and we have entered into a number of international cooperation competitions, which has enabled us to carry out different activities to attract new audiences and also to obtain necessary, new generation equipment for conservation and research. An example is the pre-Hispanic Chakra project, which provides a space in the sanctuary for cultivating plants from pre-Hispanic Peru that are still consumed today; it is financed by the Banco Interamericano de Desarrollo. Funding to provide equipment for conservation, research and education in the sanctuary is provided by the Government of Japan through the Japan International Cooperation Agency.

In accordance with the provisions of the Management Plan, 20 publications have been completed in 10 years in order to disseminate the archaeological research carried out, the findings and archaeological conservation activities. We also created publications for teachers, schools and children and printed catalogues of museum artefacts. In sum, the Management Plan for the archaeological sanctuary of Pachacamac analyses the causes of urban and other pressures and offers proposals for treatment or solutions. As such, it is an important management tool designed to ensure the preservation of the Sanctuary's values by promoting collaboration in management tasks. The results achieved so far on this path encourage us to continue our efforts.

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12 Reimagining Museums in Belize

Houses of Culture as Catalysts for Community Engagement

Sherilyne Jones

Houses of Culture (HOC) in Belize are cultural establishments, often housed in historical physical infrastructures, which serve as platforms for local communities and interest groups to facilitate the implementation of cultural initiatives and projects. They bridge the gap between the Museum of Belize (MOB) (under the National Institute of Culture and History n.) and diverse communities around the country, forging connections, introducing fresh perspectives for the preservation, transmission and promotion of the cultural and artistic heritage. In some cases, they can be considered community museums and play multifaceted roles extending beyond the provision of artistic instruction and the facilitation of cultural expressions.

HOC indirectly cultivate environments conducive of fostering civic engagement and solidarity, contributing to the transformation of urban 'cultural' landscapes and the preservation of collective memory of the community where they are located. They act as an intermediary for the MOB but essentially rooted in the community. Due to the grassroots nature of engagement, HOC become catalysts for empowerment, decolonisation, promoting collective voices on relevant issues in the community and creating unique experiences for those who visit. Teresa Morales asserts that spaces such as HOC or community museums provide opportunities for 'community members to develop initiatives regarding their own identity, through which they may resist the coloniality of being' (Morales-Lersch and Camarena Ocampo 2023, p. 26).

Belize's version of HOC (administered by the MOB) was created based on the Cuban model of 'Casas de Cultura', managed by the National Institute of Culture and History (NICH), under the Ministry of Culture. The NICH is an organisation with corresponding legislation created by the Government of Belize in 2003 to bring together diverse government departments that had historically worked to preserve and promote Belizean culture under one entity. This legislation was enacted in 1999 but did not go into effect until 2003, effectively creating four institutions which actively worked in tandem to promote, manage, safeguard national heritage, creative industries, and shared national identity. This included the Institute of Archaeology, Institute of Creative Arts, Institute for Social and Cultural Research and the MOB & HOC. Referencing the legislation, the NICH Act provided that 'There shall be established in each district of Belize, as a division of the Museum, a House of Culture for the promotion of Belizean Culture' (Section 30:2 of NICH CAP 331, p.20,). With the Belize government's efforts to instil pride and understanding of its

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cultural heritage and national identity, the development of HOC began, establishing the first HOC, Benque House of Culture, on 6 September 2001. This HOC was in the small western town of Benque Viejo del Carmen, located approximately one mile from the Guatemalan border town of Melchor de Mencos. The success of this HOC was driven by an active group of artists, cultural stakeholders and the community.

The settlement of Benque Viejo del Carmen, along the Mopan River in western Belize, relied on the extraction of logwood and later mahogany for economic growth. The Mopan River offered the British (who occupied then British Honduras) the tributary to float logs downstream to Belize City, where they were exported to the United Kingdom. With the decline of logwood and mahogany, sap of the chico zapote tree began to be exploited commercially, giving rise to the chicle boom. Chicle harvesting quickly became the principal driver of the town's economy as an important industry in the manufacturing of chewing gum (Grant 1974). In 1904, Benque Viejo was officially recognised as a town by the Colonial Government. With decades of growth, Benque Viejo del Carmen has seen the arrival of migrants from Central America and with a fusion of their cultures and history, many historical traditions can be attributed to new citizens, particularly from Guatemala, with which it shares a border. Throughout its development, the town remained culturally steeped in religious practices, Catholicism and many traditions have been passed down from the Jesuits who established early convents and schools in the municipality.

In this case study, the establishment of the Benque HOC was not only to raise awareness of the Maya/Mestizo culture and history but also to be an epicentre for culture, art and historical development in that municipality. The community had always been active participants in promoting and preserving the arts as early as the 1980s and throughout the 1990s. Benque Viejo saw the rise of notable trailblazers and artists who advocated for the development of visual arts programmes within their community. The Cultural and Historical Association of Benque Viejo (CHAB) was one such driving force and was established in 1992 and worked with the Belize Arts Council to provide outlets for drama, music and art in schools and the wider community. This group was led by brothers David and Luis Ruiz who, along with other town residents, spearheaded the initiative for the establishment of the HOC. The development of a House of Culture in Benque was instrumental in the advancement of the initiatives for the creation of the MOB (2002) and the creation of the National Institute of Culture and History (2003). Luiz Alberto Ruiz then successfully developed Poustinia Land Art, a hundred-acre sculpture garden developed on a former cattle ranch. According to its website, Poustinia is an 'outdoor gallery for both ephemeral and permanent art; a place where the beauty of human inspiration can be contemplated within the beauty of nature' (Poustinia Land Art Facebook page).

In 2001, David Ruiz, in his opening address for the Benque House of Culture, stated that 'the site would be a staging ground for exhibitions, cultural events and a place where the culture of the people and educational activities designed for young people could merge' (Holmes 2010, p. 164). He went on to say that 'When a group of us first meddled in the magical realm of art and culture back in 1990, little did we know that we were breaking ground for the House of Culture in this community. We consider that our endeavours have fared well' (Channel 5 Belize 2011, n page).

CHAB would later reorganise and transition into the Community of Artists for Cultural & Historical Endeavours (CACHE) after the establishment of the Benque House of Culture, relinquishing control to the MOB, which then became responsible for its financial sustainability. The early manifestation of the Benque HOC embodied the principles of the *new museology* and re-oriented the relationship that the State agency, in this case, MOB/NICH, had with the local community. This shift ensured that the community would have access to resources it needed for the preservation and promotion of Mestizo culture and would be involved in decision-making processes, thus allowing for inclusion and engagement on the development of this cultural space.

When the MOB was established in 2002, the galleries were filled with artefacts from the vast National Collection, the majority of which was from the ancient Maya. The building was constructed in 1855 with bricks, known as 'London stocks', brought from England and used as ballast on ships. This building was used as Her Majesty's Prison (HMP) up until 1998 when renovations began to convert to the National Museum. The early displays and dioramas of the MOB facilitated a brief overview of the Mayas' majestic civilisations and presented an understanding of Maya life but very little on the history of Belize's other ethnicities. While the Museum, located in the old capital of Belize City, provided an educational outlet for students on school visits, much of the general public did not know that the museum existed or did not see its relevance to their lives. Many people, especially in the district towns and villages, never visited, given the distance from their communities.

The establishment of HOC was intimately linked to the government's imperative to decentralise cultural accessibility and artistic initiatives, moving them beyond Belize City to reach the towns within the districts. The challenges and, ultimately, the success of each of these HOCs are a direct result of the level of autonomy they experience, the bonds they share and the financial support they garner for their activities and programmes from their local community. Based on the success of the Benque House of Culture, the National Institute of Culture and History, through the MOB, developed six additional HOC throughout the districts in the country, with each representing specific geographic and cultural locations. The success of this type of museum thus infers that in Belize, museums that consider individual characteristics are more successful than mainstream Western models of museums. While each HOC is unique in its conceptual development, physical location, and varying ethnicities of communities, they remain close to the ecomuseum concept developed by Hugues de Varine in the 1960s (De Varine 2005).

HOCs have successfully empowered community leaders to be more active in the dissemination of cultural traditions to younger generations. Theodore Low suggests that 'museums must be willing to alter and to modify their internal structures and their ideas to fit a changing world and the advances of social thought' (Low and Anderson 2004, p. 36). I would argue this is successfully done by the HOCs in Belize as they are considered dynamic, creative community centres, and are seen by the public as more accessible than the National Museum of Belize. The Benque model of community engagement demonstrates that community members are actively involved in safeguarding their intangible and tangible heritage in alignment with the nation's cultural policy, developed in 2016, which states that the government shall 'provide information and facilitate the access by the national and community organisations, custodians and practitioners of intangible cultural heritage … and assistance towards effective safeguarding of the intangible cultural heritage' (National Institute of Culture and History n. d, p. 7).

An excellent example of community engagement in Benque Viejo and the Benque HOC is the case of the marimba. Marimba, meaning the goddess in Guatemalan mythology, is a 'long (2.16m) wooden keyboard instrument with large resonators played by three musicians (treble/melody, centre/harmony and bass/rhythm) who perform in most musical occasions, secular and religious' (Pellicer 1999, p.10). As part of its collection, the Benque HOC was in possession of two antique marimbas. One was kept in storage due to its fragility and age, but the other was displayed in the lobby where the artistic designs and intricacies of this musical instrument could be admired, and its melodic sounds, which resonated at every public function or activity in the community, could be heard. While music was an integral aspect of Benque Viejo's town history and daily life, the intangible skillset needed to play this delicate instrument was held only by a few elders in the community. The art of playing this instrument was on the verge of being lost and through a small grant, the Benque House of Culture embarked on an ambitious project in 2015 to teach youth how to play the marimba.

With master instructors from the community, fourteen marimba students – aged 9 to 15 – signed up to learn how to play the marimba and it was encouraging to see that there was interest in learning how to play. By the end of the summer, ten students completed the introductory course on the basics of marimba. The museum, through the auspices of the Benque HOC, effectively identified an important aspect of the community's culture that was in danger of being lost and provided regeneration and renewal initiatives that instilled a sense of pride in a cultural tradition that was unique to Benquenos (inhabitants of Benque Viejo del Carmen). As the catalyst for regeneration initiatives, the management of the HOC facilitated open dialogues with community members harnessing their enthusiasm and commitment to a shared redevelopment process while providing the necessary tools to successfully assist in developing the capacity of local communities to address their own needs (Sandell 2007).

The Benque HOC created a welcoming environment for the community and while the marimba programme was conceived as a one-time programme, it blossomed and developed into a community empowerment initiative for youths as well as elders. By providing an enabling, creative, perhaps less intimidating forum through which community members could gain the skills and confidence required to actively participate, achieve agency, and safeguard a cultural tradition of importance to them and interest in the marimba project grew. At the end of the summer, the community, but more interestingly, youths approached the HOC management to ask whether the programme could continue throughout the year.

They were inspired to learn more, to understand how and why the marimba became important to their culture and they understood the vital importance of safeguarding this intangible aspect of their cultural heritage, as it represented who they were in Belize's multicultural society. Today, the marimba students are now divided into senior and junior groups of students whose dedication to learning the craft is unwavering.

For the first time, the HOC, by relinquishing control of how the marimba classes would be administered, granted community leaders decision-making opportunities previously controlled by those in authority. By the following summer, the small group of 10 students had blossomed into a strong group of 20 youths. The lessons continue to this day and the House of Culture provides a base for all marimba-based activities and lessons. The original group members have since formed the Benque Marimba Academy, aptly named *Los Hijos del West*, and are dedicated to inspiring as well as teaching. They have not only learnt and are mastering playing classical and traditional marimba but also how to care for and tune the instrument.

Another issue is that the cost of the instrument itself is very high. The HOC initially only had one marimba available for use and made significant efforts to procure additional marimbas. Efforts included approaching various levels of government and local officials to source the necessary funding for the purchase of new marimbas for the HOC. The House of Culture became the collaborator rather than the agency of authority and guided the community's initiatives on the procurement of additional marimbas. The Marimba project demonstrated how a community can come together to safeguard a dying cultural tradition.

Benque House of Culture now has three marimbas and twenty-three full-time members who can play it (with an additional fourteen seasonal memebers according to school schedule). All members must ensure that they are able to maintain sufficient grades in school. The marimbas are not only for practice but also to entertain the public at official functions within the community. *Los Hijos Del West* has gained new members and national prominence and has travelled, regionally and internationally, performing at musical festivals, official ceremonies, and national events. The simple act of teaching marimba classes became a source of community pride and honour. The involvement of the community ensured the sustainability and guaranteed that the music played by the elders will be appreciated across the country for generations to come. The community saw the interest in this cultural revival initiative and actively worked to safeguard their culture and support the House of Culture and youths of the community.

Similarly, the development of the Corozal House of Culture in the north of the country was analogous to that of Benque. The drive to establish the Corozal HOC was done by a small but very active group of community members engaged in arts and the preservation of their town's historical records. The Corozal HOC, like the Benque HOC, is housed in a historical structure that was repurposed. The building was originally a public market and was built in 1885 with a prefabricated cast iron frame from England that was assembled once it reached Belize. The market, located near the public pier, was inaugurated in 1886 and used for over 100 years until space limitations forced its closure in 1986. The building remained in a state of disrepair for several years but received some funding and was refurbished in

1995, it was utilised by numerous organisations up until 2000, when it was once again abandoned. It remained vacant until 2011 after another series of restorations took place and the Corozal House of Culture was officially opened. This highlights the value of community participation to achieve their goals with little or no governmental support. Morales discussed and supported this type of engagement suggesting that 'the community representatives had begun a process of negotiating directly with their neighbours without intervention from the government' to develop community museums (Morales-Lersch and Camarena Ocampo 2023, p.31).

With the establishment of the Corozal HOC, the community was able to come together and identify important aspects of their culture that were in need of preservation. Drawing on their own unique culture and identity, they symbolised the importance of collaboration, communal practices, and customs and their significance to their culture. One such tradition that had become overshadowed by the prevailing narrative of the dominant culture was the celebration of Hanal Pixán (food for the soul in Maya). The tradition of Hanal Pixán is similar to the Dia de los Muertos celebration in Yucatán Mexico. In Belize, it is celebrated in the northern and western districts, where the demographic is predominantly Yucatec Maya and Mestizos. The revival of this celebration was spearheaded by community members and Maya activists with limited support from the House of Culture. The enactments in the villages, particularly Xaibe, instil values that foster hope, teach about death, and respect for the dead. Individuals who provide offerings believe that their own survivors will take care of them in a similar manner when they die. This assures their immortality and because this practice is multigenerational, it ensures the safeguarding of the tradition and becomes a critical role in the reproduction of national identity/heritage. This is expanded by Morales and Ocampo who assert that once the collective process of re-examination of the community's own history takes place, opportunities arise for members to have 'the opportunity to make evident internal contradictions within their attitudes and beliefs' (Morales-Lersch and Camarena Ocampo 2023, p. 33). The community's feeling of self-worth as well as their connection to their communal identity are strengthened by the experience of learning about their heritage and traditions and by appreciating the significance of their communal activities. The Corozal HOC persisted in fostering and establishing an environment that is conducive to the growth, preservation, promotion, and expression of cultural heritage with the support of the MOB.

This intangible culture is showcased through events, outreach programmes, activities or museum displays in which the materiality of the objects is downplayed, and their meaning, value, or use is given precedence (Varutti 2013, p. 71). This is reflected in Belize's HOC, where the main aim is cultural preservation by practising heritage, the displays in all the HOC countrywide are focused on the stimulation of locally based cultural and creative initiatives that benefit the community, empower participants, encourage curiosity, openness and tolerance toward different cultures and traditions. Community engagement then bridges the gap between the government and the constituents they serve by allowing a more participatory approach to programmes and activities.

This example and others from various HOCs illustrate the type of civic engagement that makes the HOC successful and true to the Cuban model: that the people and community, rather than the state should determine the direction of cultural development. By decentralising access to cultural activities through the HOCs, the MOB removed direct government control and established an innovative view ensuring that management, resided with the people, giving them agency in determining what was most valuable and needed safeguarding.

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13 Managing for Accessibility and Inclusion

The Uses and Abuses of Community Engagement

Helen White

Community engagement in museums can mean many different things. Aside from the cabinets of curiosity created by one person alone for their personal delectation and meditation, museums have from their inception been in some sense concerned with a community, however small – for what would be the point of them otherwise? This is particularly the case for publicly-funded institutions: as Peter Latchford (2018) asserts in relation to civic museums, 'the collection may give the museum its authenticity and legitimacy, but the community gives it its purpose' (p.17). The definition of that community, and the control and access factors that determine who forms part of that community, or communities, are critical factors in the way that a museum conceives of itself and is perceived by others. Moreover, the roles that different communities perform in relation to the policy, content and activity of a museum are intrinsic to its character and values.

Museum leaders naturally have different levels of genuine interest in managing for inclusivity. Many have been led into museums through love of a particular art form, historical period or area of scientific study. They probably would not have achieved a management role without an enthusiasm for communicating their subject to the public. But community engagement goes far beyond this and is fraught with questions of authority and authenticity.

The history of community engagement in museums in the UK is a comparatively long one, which has been characterised by anxiety and complacency in almost equal measure, at least at governmental level. It is on the UK that this chapter primarily focuses and from which evidence and examples will be drawn. The context in which a museum operates is (or should be) crucial to the meanings it is able to create in the process of bringing together people and collections in a particular place. Museums in nations and regions worldwide will, of course, be operating with different circumstances, opportunities and constraints, but the UK experience may be useful in informing the broader global discussion on the uses of museums.

The civic museums established in the UK in the late 19th and early 20th centuries had clear educational, moral and social purposes. As well as promoting local pride and prestige, they were places where 'the working man' and his family could come to learn about the wider world, both spatial and temporal, by looking at art, archaeology and natural history material laid out according to predetermined

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systems of chronology or classification. They were places that aimed to familiarise working people with middle-class notions of cultural value, fostering fuller participation in, and loyalty to, a cohesive and smoothly functioning society (see Bennett 1995 for an elegant exposition of this theme). The words of Councillor Thomas Smith, presiding at the opening of Gateshead's Saltwell Park Museum in 1933 during a period of industrial depression, were reported in the *Newcastle Courant* under the headline 'Spreading the Light of Knowledge', and reflected a mixture of civic pride and the desire to educate local people:

> The wonderful history of our town will duly be recorded here. The children will have access, and lectures on botany, bird life and natural history, and industrial progress are being arranged for them. I've been inundated with offers of exhibits by firms and private individuals who are interested in Gateshead. There has been talk recently about the borough being overlooked, but we are going to see that doesn't happen again, and that our people are provided with all the amenities and facilities that the times can afford.
>
> (Anon 1933)

This drive for cultural improvement was embedded in the brave new world of post-1945 Britain, when the first majority Labour government came to power with a clear commitment to providing access to good standards of health, education and culture for the whole nation. In 1948, *The Times* quoted the Labour Party Minister for Education, George Tomlinson (who himself had started work as a cotton weaver at the age of 12), bemoaning the prevalence of non-improving, escapist leisure pursuits: 'In place of real interests and worthwhile amusements, people drugged themselves with constant visits to the cinema, football pools, fun fairs and all the rest of the meaningless paraphernalia of commercial entertainment' (Anon 1948). Despite post-war austerity, there was state investment in the creation of the Arts and Design Councils, the development of the Reithian BBC (with its remit to 'inform, educate and entertain') and the staging of the Festival of Britain in 1951. The post-war consensus meant that, even after Labour lost power, the importance of approved forms of culture in national consciousness continued to be promoted and celebrated.

Arts centres were established in the regions, and arts institutions benefited from direct central government funding through the new Arts Council, established in 1946. With the emphasis on 'living art', municipal museums, funded by local authorities, tended to be left behind in this shiny new world, but they continued to operate in their local context, more or less engaged with local people depending on the interests of their staff and the extent to which local politicians saw them as useful to their communities. The national museums continued to value connoisseurship and academic reputation above all else, although some of the South Kensington museums took steps to enhance their effectiveness in public education (most notably the Science Museum with its press-button interactives, often derided as simply entertainment, and its much-loved immersive recreation of a coal mine, opened in 1951).

The 1990s saw the histories of 'ordinary' people (i.e. those not part of the cultural elite), given an increased value and prominence in museums. Social history had been growing as a museum discipline in the 1980s, with the transformation in 1982 of the Group for Regional Studies in Museums (GRSM), whose members had been concerned mainly with the ethnographic study of folklore and 'bygones' collections, into the Social History Curators Group (SHCG). The SHCG championed issues-based urban and working-class history in a period of de-industrialisation and the dismantling of a class system based largely on heavy industry. This necessarily involved a broader range of people in donating both artefacts and memories to create content in museums. Whether this change in content and engagement amounted to the democratisation of museums that it was sometimes claimed to be is questionable, but there was undoubtedly a strong movement towards giving the people whose communities were portrayed in museum displays a role in presenting their own histories. Many amongst the new generation of social history curators had themselves come from working-class backgrounds, which meant that they were close to the subjects they were interpreting, rather than viewing them from a patronising or analytical distance. There was little evidence in UK social history museum practice of an academic ethnography approach, nor of a national focus, such as the one exemplified by the Musée National des Arts et Traditions Populaires in Paris.

Towards the end of the 20th century, a role for museums in combatting the scourge of what came to be framed as social exclusion (some would say a new name for poverty) and in promoting its opposite, social inclusion, came to the fore in the UK. The urban riots of 1991 amongst what were considered to be traditional white working-class communities, whose young men clearly no longer felt any loyalty towards the institutions of state as represented in those communities (post offices were burnt down, for example) had surprised and disturbed the political establishment, and not solely the Thatcherite government that was then in power. In 1993, following riots in the West End of Newcastle in 1991 and ongoing regular fire-setting in the area, the nearby Science & Engineering Museum reinvented itself as Newcastle Discovery, with a remit to cover the social as well as the industrial history of Tyneside. Supported by government City Challenge funding, Tyne & Wear Museums appointed its first Outreach Officer, whose brief was to work with community groups from the West End to create exhibitions in the newly established 'People's Gallery', a sizeable exhibition space with a photographic darkroom and workshop within the main museum building.

The Social Exclusion Unit set up by the Labour government that came to power in 1997 defined social exclusion as 'what can happen when people or areas suffer from a combination of linked problems such as unemployment, poor skills, low incomes, poor housing, high crime environments, bad health, poverty and family breakdown' (Office of the Deputy Prime Minister 2004). A clear statement that social exclusion was one of the British government's highest priorities prefaced the Department for Culture, Media and Sport's (DCMS) policy guidance on social inclusion for DCMS-funded and local authority museums, galleries and archives in England, issued in May 2000 (Department for Culture, Media and Sport 2000). Museums were acknowledged to be 'agents of social change in the community, improving the quality of people's lives through their outreach activities' whilst the caveat remained that 'action to tackle social exclusion will have to be balanced against their other important responsibilities, such as the acquisition of new material, the conservation and interpretation of their collections, scholarship and education'(Ibid.). There was a suspicion that excellence, as defined by an arts audience, would always trump social inclusion initiatives, but the period of the Labour government from 1997 to 2010 did see a significant shift in emphasis towards the conceptualisation of museums as agents for social change. Moreover, at least until the world economic crisis of 2008, an increase in funding was targeted towards this end.

Some of the projects created to mark the turn of the millennium in 2000 provide insight into the thinking of museums at that time. Tyne & Wear Museums (TWM) implemented two linked initiatives: *Objects of Desire*, in which local people were invited to create exhibitions from items in TWM's collections, and *Making History*, in which a representative cross-section of more than 200 people from Tyne & Wear, selected so far as possible to reflect the region's profile in terms of socio-economic, ethnic and disability characteristics, created a new special collection of 1,000 objects that were personally meaningful to them, each individual being invited to donate or nominate up to five objects. The objects, documents, poems, drawings, music and intangible items (for example, the memory of a landscape) collected by the *Making History* project were accompanied by a commentary from the donor explaining their choice and the significance of the object in their lives (Tyne & Wear Museums 2001). The choices made were authentically those of the participants, whose contributions were supported rather than 'curated'. The items collected were intensely personal and did not make for a cohesive exhibition, but the assemblage (including the accompanying recordings and documentation) remains as a historical artefact in its own right, reflecting how a region's people looked back over their lives from a particular point in time.

At the same time a similar, but more tightly structured, project was being delivered by the Museum of London. The c*ollecting 2000* project collected one object from each of 200 groups across London, who were asked to select and donate one object, image or recording 'that for you summarises who you are at the start of the 21st century' and to provide a 50-word statement to accompany their donation. The museum was confident that there was an even spread in terms of geography and special interests but did not claim socio-economic or ethnic representivity (although several groups affiliated with minority ethnicities took part). It was focused as much on the audience who would consume the exhibition and its related publication as on the participants themselves: 'We wanted to reveal to the Museum's audiences the impact that these voluntary organisations have on all our lives' (Museum of London 2000, pp.11–12). The museum was concerned with how to make sense of the collection and superimposed a structure of seven themes (belonging, campaigning, faith, friendship, helping, learning and playing) into which it organised the groups, based on what it understood to be the members' main reasons for joining the group. The collection is a less personal and individual one than that formed in Tyne & Wear, and the accompanying book is concerned as much with the museum's own process as with the outcomes for participants and current audiences: 'This book aims in part to provide as much information as possible about our motives for collecting this material as it does about the objects and groups themselves' (Ibid.).

These experimental collaborative ventures only extended as far as 'allowing' people access to resources that had previously been closed to them, but they were early forerunners of later 'co-curation' initiatives which claimed to be predicated on a more equitable power relationship between institution and participant. The Museum of London clearly felt a need to justify such a radical approach to curatorial practice, and to express this self-reflexivity in the publication associated with *collecting 2000*. Tyne & Wear Museums were confident that this was a valid approach: the participants were centre-stage and the donated items, which in some cases came with extensive accompanying information, would remain for posterity as a valid part of the collection, even though such an open-ended proposition made it difficult to weld these items into a satisfying narrative for contemporary audiences who may or may not feel an immediate connection to them.

The use of culture as a driver for social inclusion was in some ways a reference back to the 19th-century paternalism that saw culture as a force for moral and social improvement: one that could foster a healthy, well ordered society in which citizens perceived themselves to have a recognised place within the political, educational and social hierarchies of the status quo. The richer national museums based in London continued, for the most part, to serve cultural consumer audiences on an increasingly international scale, as London's status as a global focus for tourism and investment took off. And there was a backlash in cultural circles: both Marxist and Right-wing commentators complained about an instrumentalism that was distorting the true purposes of museums and galleries in favour of social engineering. For Richard Dorment, writing in 1993 about the new *Art on Tyneside* gallery at the Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle, in the Daily Telegraph (a right-wing broadsheet national newspaper) the issue was an alleged 'dumbing down' of content to appeal to lowest common denominator tastes and attention levels:

> If some visitors are so unimaginative that they need half-baked gimmicks to make history come alive, then by all means let them have them.
>
> But not in an art museum.
>
> (Dorment 1993, cited in Whitehead 2008, p.42)

For the anti-statist thinktank known as the Institute of Ideas and the allied internet magazine *Spiked Online*, with their roots in the Revolutionary Communist Party and *Living Marxism* magazine, the use of museums for social ends was part of the Blairite project (reflecting the New Labour values of Tony Blair's government) to pull the teeth of any genuinely radical influence that the arts and culture might have the potential to enact: '"Socially included" individuals effectively become New Labour stooges… museums geared towards social inclusion are actively bringing their visitors into a more intimate relationship with the state' (Appleton 2001).

So how has the nature of community engagement in museums progressed in the succeeding two decades? The late 1990s and 2000s saw a growing feeling that national and even local democratic institutions and processes were not functioning in a way that was perceived to reflect the needs and desires of many communities, and this thinking influenced public institutions in the UK, museums included. 'Democratic deficit' was a term first used as early as 1977 to describe the remoteness of the workings of the European Community from the needs of many of its citizens, and the consequent rise of campaigning pressure groups and citizens' action:

> there is throughout our continent a malaise, a sense of alienation and a lack of confidence in the ability of the economic and political system to solve our problems. …to take into account people's needs…
>
> There needs to be a fundamental shift of power down to the lower levels, closer to the people and to the problems. There needs to be an introduction of democracy at the place of work in order to transform the labour/capital conflict, and in the local community'.
>
> (Corbett 1977)

Tony Blair's New Labour government recognised the democratic deficit as a real danger that was alienating large sections of the population who were voting in significantly decreased numbers: the 2001 UK general election saw an 18% decrease in the percentage of the eligible population voting compared with the previous election in 1992 (Statistica 2023). Urban regeneration programmes attempted to elicit community engagement, and in 2007 the Department for Communities and Local Government published *An Action Plan for Community Empowerment,* which aimed 'to give citizens the means of participating in decision-making at every level' with an outcome of 'Greater participation, collective action and engagement in democracy' (Department for Communities and Local Government 2007, p.5). In 2009, the Arts programme of the London-based Paul Hamlyn Foundation (PHF) commissioned an investigation into engagement in UK museums and art galleries. The resulting report, entitled *Whose cake is it anyway?*, found that the well-intentioned rhetoric still current in museum policy documents 'displays an almost nineteenth-century view of a passive subject, outside the institution, awaiting improvement' (Lynch 2011, p.16). The museum 'reveals a centre/periphery view of its communities, in which the organisation is firmly placed in the centre. Despite its undoubted wish to be of service, [it] too often places the subject (community member) in the role of "supplicant" or "beneficiary" and the museum and its staff in the role of "carer"'(Ibid.). The report praised organisations that had, by contrast, shifted the role of their community partners to that of active agents and partners (Ibid., p.20).

The PHF went on to fund a three-year 'Our Museum' programme in which nine of the 12 museums and museum services that had participated in the original study were encouraged to make the fundamental organisational and systems changes that would transform their community relationships into more equal partnerships, involving meaningful participation and devolving 'agency' to community members. The nine institutions (of varying sizes and with contrasting organisational and funding structures) experimented with different models of community engagement, including facilitated forums bringing together museum staff and community members, volunteer development programmes, the creation of conversation spaces and the establishment of structured channels of communication, whether through advisory boards or an 'alternative management team'.

Two years after the programme had ended, the PHF revisited the seven institutions that were still participating in the initiative to capture further learning and to review how far it had been possible to embed significant changes in culture and working practices. Of the four programme outcomes ('Rooted in local needs', 'Community agency', 'Capability building' and 'Reflection'), the one for which the least progress had been made was that of community agency. For the PHF, community agency meant that 'communities are sustainably at the core of all values, strategies, structures and work of museums and galleries: actively and regularly participating and collaborating in dialogue and decision-making about the work of the museum/gallery' (Paul Hamlyn Foundation, n.d.). None of the seven museum organisations had succeeded in involving communities effectively in 'decision-making around long-term strategy and policy' (Bienowski 2018, p.15).

The paths taken by some of the museum organisations that took part in the Our Museum programme serve to illustrate different nuances of approach to community engagement. In August 2015 the National Museum of Wales produced a comprehensive *Community Engagement Strategy, 2015–2020.* This declared that community agency would be 'placed at the heart of our decision-making processes with regular participation and collaboration embedded as a way of working' (National Museum of Wales 2015, p.4). The programme for Our Museum had been based at St Fagans National Museum of History, Cardiff, and focused on 'broadening the volunteer base and embedding opportunities for volunteers in all aspects of the Museum's work': this continued to represent a major activity stream. More radically, during its capital redevelopment programme the museum worked with nine participatory forums representing 'a range of organisations from the public and third sector and the diversity of communities in Wales, to guide the redevelopment and inform activity programmes and gallery content', and this approach was carried through into the concept development stage of redisplay of the natural science collections (National Museum of Wales 2015, p.11).

Glasgow Museums is part of a wider organisation, Glasgow Life, which includes community development and youth services as well as sport, libraries, arts and music amongst its service areas. As part of its Our Museum programme, Glasgow Museums developed a new mechanism for widening participation in decision-making, 'Creative Café', directly linked to its planning cycles. Museum staff described the Café in the following way: 'a regular discussion forum hosted several times a year by Glasgow Museums … an opportunity to bring people together from across Glasgow Life and external partners across the city, to share ideas about Glasgow Museums' work, collections and forward plans' (Paul Hamlyn

Foundation 2015, p.6). These Creative Café forums were stimulating and enjoyable, and increased the likelihood of more effective partnership working across the city; but their effectiveness in promoting community agency remained to be seen:

> We have continued to be challenged by the question of what scope of influence community partners can have within a local authority-funded organisation such as ours. While the Creative Café is proving to be a more effective mechanism to involve community partners at a generative point in our working processes … we are still discovering how, by inserting greater agency at the outset of initiatives, this in turn may lead to greater agency in later parts of our planning cycle.
>
> (Ibid.)

Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums (TWAM) – the county archives became part of the museums service (formerly Tyne & Wear Museums) in 2009 – experimented with an alternative management team during the course of the Our Museum programme, but in general did not find the setting up of advisory groups to be a useful way of achieving tangible outcomes. Its Outreach Team structured long-term partnership working across four strands of activity: the Wellbeing Programme, supporting people with mental health issues; the Recovery Programme, supporting people in recovery from addiction or who were involved in the criminal justice system; the Platinum Programme, aiming to improve the health and well-being of people aged over 55 by focusing on the Five Ways to Wellbeing (Keep Learning, Connect, Be Active, Take Notice, Give); and the Network Programme, working with groups of people from across Tyne & Wear to build new and develop existing community heritage and archive collections, exhibitions and events. The museum service worked closely with health and social care providers and agencies to deliver benefits defined by workers, professionals and end-users in those fields, and was responsive to ideas and initiatives from outside the organisation. By emphasising benefits for defined groups of people rather than broad community empowerment, TWAM's approach ran the risk of ghettoising such work to the Outreach Team rather than embedding it across the organisation as a whole. It also tended to locate the decision-making process within the domain of professional workers, albeit from a wide range of community-based occupations. It followed what Mark O'Neill (2011) termed the 'welfare model' of community engagement. It did, however, enable the museum service to feel confident that it was engaged in work that is of value to workers and their clients in the social care and health sectors, a view backed up by a growing body of academic research, for example, in the fields of dementia, stroke survivors and mental health (Chatterjee and Noble 2013; Not So Grim Up North Research Team, 2018).

Another initiative orientated towards a welfare benefit rather than an agency model is that of the 'Happy Museum', led by Tony Butler, first at the Museum of East Anglian Life and then at Derby Museums. The initiative subsequently embraced projects that were commissioned across a network of 22 English and Welsh museums. The Happy Museum linked wellbeing with the theme of environmental sustainability, and initiatives included the 'Re:Make' project at Derby's Silk Mill Museum, during which more than 200 local people were involved as 'co-producers and makers' in designing and making furniture, object displays and fittings for the ground floor space, which had previously been mothballed. The project provided experience of co-production that has been carried forward into other initiatives as a regular way of working, but one of the key outcomes was said to be a health benefit for participants. For example, as the project literature notes: 'Through a partnership with the University of Derby, the physiological impact of the activity of making was measured – revealing a small but significant drop in the level of stress hormone cortisol in those taking part in making activities' (The Happy Museum 2016, pp.4–5). The 'happiness turn' in museums has been critiqued by Bernadette Lynch, thought-leader of the Our Museum initiative, who believes that museums must relinquish some of the power they hold rather than simply providing experiences that make individuals feel better about themselves: 'some forms of unhappiness – such as a sense of injustice or anger – need hearing, not treating' (Lynch 2017, p.19). Lynch argues that museums, rather than providing a soothing distraction activity, should enable dissenting voices to be heard, maintaining that 'a focus on happiness diverts away from this ability to disagree, to act, to self-determine and make change happen' (Ibid.).

The 'social justice' model presented by Mark O'Neill, then Director of Policy, Research and Development at Glasgow Life, as an alternative to the welfare model entailed 'Reaching out into the least well off and most excluded in society, and representing their experience in the museum, even in the most prestigious sites of civic and national pride' (O'Neill 2011, p.83). The museum should provide 'civic leadership by introducing new and difficult subjects and challenging prejudice and negative heritage' (Ibid.). The term 'social justice' gained currency amongst museum professionals and was defined a year later as 'the ways in which museums, galleries and heritage organisations might acknowledge and act upon inequalities within and outside of the cultural domain' (Sandell and Nightingale 2012, p.3). The model was an ambitious one: by shaping as well as reflecting social and political relationships and having a positive impact on the lived experiences of people who experience discrimination of various kinds, 'museums can contribute to more just, equitable and fair societies' (Ibid.). David Fleming, who had led organisational change to embed social inclusion as Director of Tyne & Wear Museums in the 1990s, and then as Director of National Museums Liverpool in the 2000s, welcomed the social justice agenda and described the challenges in building new organisational cultures that actively encouraged social inclusion/social justice approaches (Fleming 2012, pp.74–79). In some ways, the social justice model can be seen as a halfway position between the welfare model and the community agency model, in framing the museum itself as an agent for change.

The concept of the 'useful museum' is one that has gained currency over the past decade, and seeks to synthesise both welfare needs and community agency. It was adopted by Alistair Hudson when he took over as Director of Middlesbrough Institute of Modern Art (MIMA) in 2014, as a way of dealing with a contemporary art gallery that had landed like an alien spaceship on a soulless green space in the centre of a depopulating post-industrial town in north-east England. Hudson likened the gallery to a colonial power descending from above to convert people to contemporary art: he hoped to remake the museum as a civic institution that actually worked for its constituents, rather than catering primarily for the cultural capital of the art market. Rejecting 'participatory' art as merely asking people to participate in someone else's agenda, Hudson embraced community agency:

> the ambition – and this is why I talk about 'usership' and the useful museum – is that you create an institution that is created by and through its usership, so that the content and the function is increasingly less determined by those in power, but rather you redistribute authorship, you redistribute power, to make the institution the true manifestation of its community. Now that takes a long time, it's not something you do overnight.
>
> (Hudson 2017)

Hudson's first exhibition at MIMA, *Localism* (October 2015–February 2016), presented a history of art in Middlesbrough with, in his words, 'the idea that we should not tell the story as singular curators, but we should open up the narrative to the communities around us – so we basically did an open call and in effect crowd-sourced the exhibition. It was this mayhem of artworks suggested and contributed by people, artists, non-artists and archives from the environment around us' (Ibid.). A subsequent exhibition, called *If all relations were to reach equilibrium, this building would dissolve* (June–September 2016), of work by migrant and asylum seeker artists, didn't just represent them, it was also a useful resource:

> The gallery also operates as a centre for service provision, learning and debate. Free resources and activities include a suite of computers with Internet access, a food bank, study groups, and opportunities for convening such as a communal weekly lunch, creative workshops and ESOL informal sessions.
>
> (MIMA 2016)

As we have seen, community engagement in UK museums has been much thought about, and debated, over the past 40 years, and there is no one agreed definition. In 2013 the Museums Association, the membership and organisation for museum professionals in the UK, launched the *Museums Change Lives* Campaign which advocated 'socially engaged practice' in three areas for change: Enhancing health and wellbeing; Creating better places to live or work; Inspiring engagement, debate and reflection (Museums Association 2013). It thus attempted to encompass the various ways in which museums view their community engagement remit. Whilst the first category for action clearly sits within the welfare model, the other two categories move further towards a social justice model. The Museums Association website carries a toolkit for measuring socially engaged practice in museums developed by the Esmée Fairbairn Collections Fund to help it evaluate grant applications and the outcomes of the projects funded. The toolkit uses the same three areas of change as the *Museums Change Lives* campaign and suggests a range of methods by which social impact might be evaluated, from Theory of Change and logic models to quantitative and qualitative outcomes and outputs. Like the campaign, the toolkit avoids being prescriptive in how it expects socially engaged practice to operate (Museums Association 2018a). Also in 2018, the Museums Association published on its website a framework for participatory practice (Museums Association 2018b.)

Ways Forward?

Museum professionals who believe that community engagement is central to the work of their institution have a complex task ahead of them, but there is now a plethora of advice and experience to draw on, and it is worth concluding with a few observations that may be of use in navigating what will most likely be a messy and unclear process:

A museum is part of a network of community assets and needs to find a role that can effectively complement other resources. Museum staff need to understand the circumstances, needs and priorities of the museum's constituencies and communities.

Consultation exercises are just that: they do not empower a community. If followed up with commitment, they can be the start of an ongoing dialogue.

Projects should be part of an ongoing activity stream, not ends in themselves. There should always be options for future engagement for people who have been involved in a project.

Museums aren't just about 'creativity'. There are lots of other routes of engagement – and a participatory art project may not be the one that individuals will find the most stimulating or useful.

A museum's staff are members of communities too. Members of the front of house staff, for example, may be a vital untapped link in connecting the museum with communities who are less likely to make use of its resources.

Voluntary sector organisations are vital partners in community engagement but they are not the community. They are made up of workers and activists who form sectoral interest groups and will have their own agendas (Wilcox 1994, p.4). This throws up one of the most fundamental dilemmas of community engagement: who do you talk to? Volunteers or 'Friends' groups often reflect the interests of a relatively narrow socio-economic band of people with a committed interest in the museum: focusing on them risks simply reinforcing the status quo. Community engagement is usually taken to mean looking beyond elected members of parliament or of local authorities. Instead, community representatives are sought: these may be self-appointed 'gatekeepers', and it is difficult for an outsider to know how representative they really are, especially if they haven't been elected. This last point is key: for a museum to be genuinely engaged with its communities, its leadership and staff must have an intimate knowledge of its local 'ecology'.

All this is, of course, easier said than done, and it is difficult for a great national institution based in South Kensington to approach the idea of community engagement in the same way as a municipal or local museum. But no publicly funded museum in the UK can afford to ignore community engagement, and after several decades of work in this field there is no excuse for the approach to be tokenistic or superficial. The debates played out in the wider cultural and intellectual world will prove equally challenging when the museum has to face them – the 'platforming' (or not) of anti-liberal opinions, for example – but this is no longer an excuse for museums to stand apart from what is going on around them; indeed, they have a critical role to play in these fractured and turbulent times.

Postscript

This chapter was originally submitted to ICOM in the spring of 2019: it goes without saying that the world has undergone seismic change since then. By mid-September 2021 the Johns Hopkins University had recorded more than 225 million Covid-19 cases worldwide and more than 4.6 million deaths across almost 200 countries. In the UK alone, 7.3 million cases of Covid had been recorded, and 134,772 people had died (Johns Hopkins University & Medicine 2021). Despite the development of new vaccines and more effective treatments, the threat that Covid posed hasn't gone away, and its lasting impacts are myriad. Amongst these impacts are the accelerated growth of conspiracy theories; the widening gulf between those who have to go to out work and those who can work from home or indulge in 'hybrid working'; the developmental delay suffered by young children who were isolated from welfare services and socialisation; and the ongoing 'long Covid' illnesses suffered by many. Most poignant of all, yet often unheard, are the grief and anger of people whose lost loved ones could perhaps have been better protected from the virus.

The impact of the pandemic on priorities and practice in the museum sector has been the subject of countless 'Zoom' webinars, and much speculation has focused on the virtual experiences that replaced in-person visits for those with the leisure and inclination to explore online offerings. Yet early indications were that the 'new normal' of pandemic life was much like the 'old normal' of an art and cultural audience characterised by significant inequality. A report analysing data from two large-scale surveys of cultural consumption patterns in the UK suggested that the 'digital pivot' prompted by the pandemic did not open up avenues of participation to new audiences previously unengaged in cultural activity, but simply shifted existing audiences online (Feder, T. *et al*. 2021; Redmond 2021).

In May 2020 the death of George Floyd on a street in Minneapolis beneath the knee of Derek Chauvin once again brought the structural racism of Western societies into sharp relief. In the UK, attacks on statues coincided with a foregrounding of colonial histories and a redressing of the imbalances of historic representation. Work in these areas that had begun long before the death of George Floyd was now in the spotlight.

The National Trust, a charity devoted to protecting historic buildings and natural landscapes in England, Wales and Northern Ireland, experienced a particularly bitter and protracted campaign by some of its members in opposition to its 'Interim Report on the Connections between Colonialism and Properties now in the Care of the National Trust, Including Links with Historic Slavery' (National Trust 2020). The report had been in preparation since 2018 under the leadership of Corinne Fowler, Professor of Colonialism and Heritage at the University of Leicester. Its publication provoked the formation in 2021 of a right-wing pressure group, the Restore Trust, which criticised the report and campaigned against 'the distraction of ephemeral trends and political activism' (Restore Trust, n.d.).

In response to the toppling of the statue of Edward Colston in Bristol on 7 June 2020, and the initiation of reviews into memorials of people associated with the trade in enslaved people, the museum and heritage sectors were reminded by the Culture Secretary that 'as publicly funded bodies, you should not be taking actions motivated by activism or politics' (Department for Culture, Media and Sport 2020). The government promoted a policy of 'retain and explain' on issues of contested heritage. In January 2021 new legal protection for statues was announced: no historic statue or monument should be removed without listed building consent or planning permission, and the power to grant the latter was transferred from local authorities to central government (Department for Culture, Media and Sport 2021). In May 2021 a new Heritage Advisory Board was set up and in October 2023 new 'Guidance for custodians on how to deal with commemorative heritage assets that have become contested' was published, setting out procedures for three potential responses: doing nothing, 'retaining and explaining' and (in very rare cases) removing a statue or monument that was causing controversy or offence (Department for Culture, Media and Sport 2023).

For museums, the challenges have been less about whether to keep something on display, and more about interpreting the motives and activities of the people who originally acquired and donated these collections. Art curators have made more effort to place artworks in their social, political and cultural context. The curators of Tate Britain's *Hogarth and Europe* exhibition invited academics and artists to contribute their own commentaries beside Hogarth's paintings. They were accused of giving wall space to 'wokeish drivel' under a headline that announced: 'Britain's Brexiteer artist yanked into today's culture wars' (Januszczak 2021), and even left-leaning newspaper *The Observer* criticised the curators' 'extreme anxiety towards social attitudes… They treat the work like bombs that are about to detonate' (Cooke 2021).

Museums and heritage sites may have become flashpoints in the so-called 'culture wars', but the roles that museums play in people's lives are many and multi-faceted. The ambition to practice meaningful engagement that enriches and empowers communities, rather than merely paying lip-service with 'add-ons' that tick a funding box, should be regarded as a critical one for all museums. The journey towards realising this ambition has in many places made significant progress, but still has a long way to go.

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Part IV

Decline in Public Funding

14 New Governance Models for Museums

The Case of *Organizações Sociais* in São Paulo, Brazil

Anna Mignosa and Christian Mayer Tibeau

Introduction

In Brazil, the organisation of public cultural institutions has evolved through time, through a process of decentralisation and *désétatisation* (removal from state control) (Klamer *et al.* 2006), which has characterised the reorganisation of cultural policies; this implies the reduction of the role of central governments in the implementation of cultural policies and the devolution of power to lower levels of governments and the private sector. The latter has been increasingly active in financing and managing cultural institutions through various hybrid models that are examples of public-private partnerships (PPPs).

With these agreements, public cultural institutions are run in cooperation with private (both for- and not-for-profit) organisations. The public sector plays a regulatory role, provides administrative support and facilitates investments. The private sector provides financial and human resources together with skills and competencies that are often currently absent from the public sector. Examples of PPP are appearing in many countries. One example is that of the *Organizações Sociais* (*OS* – social organizations) introduced in Brazil at the end of the 1990s. This model was introduced for all sectors of public intervention; however, for the purpose of this study, the focus is on OSs responsible for the management of cultural organisations, and in particular, museums. The analysis will consider the effect of OSs in terms of attendance maximisation, as well as financial stability and reduction of dependence on public funds. Existing literature on OSs is still scarce and focuses more on legal, qualitative and implementation aspects. To the best of our knowledge, a quantitative analysis regarding the assessment of the effectiveness of the model and its evolution has been missing.

The next section provides a brief illustration of the evolution of cultural policies and the introduction of PPPs in the cultural sector. The focus will then shift to OSs in Brazil, considering the motivation for their introduction as well as the pros and cons of their application and their use in the cultural sector in Brazil.

The Evolution of Cultural Policies: PPPs and Culture

Reduction of government funds to support the cultural sector intensified during the 1990s and increased the demand for public accountability, leading to the adoption of performance indicators to monitor operations and management of cultural

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organisations (Pignataro 2011). This resulted in a general complaint around the alleged inappropriateness of the managerial approach used in the cultural sector. As a consequence, in many cases, new organisational models were introduced to create more efficient and flexible institutions (e.g., the transformation of Dutch public museums or of Italian opera houses into foundations and, more recently, the reform of Italian national museums and historical sites) or to reduce costs (e.g., the merging of cultural organisations in the United Kingdom or the Netherlands after the 2008 crisis and the reduction of public expenditures for culture).

In some cases, new hybrid organisations involving both the public and private sectors were introduced. These PPP models regulate the cooperation among the various actors involved. The National Council for Public-Private Partnerships (n.d.) defines a PPP as a 'contractual agreement between a public agency … and a private sector entity. Through this agreement, the skills and assets of each sector (public and private) are shared in delivering a service or facility for the use of the general public'. Bramwell and Lane (2000), meanwhile, define PPP as a pooling of knowledge, expertise, capital, and other resources from various stakeholders.

PPPs have been commonly used for infrastructure or industrial projects but were slower to take root in the cultural sector (Dubini *et al*. 2012; Macdonald and Cheong 2014). UNESCO (2013) acknowledges the potential of the cultural sector for partnerships in the area of culture. Though the debate about PPPs for culture is rather controversial, there are a growing number of examples of PPP in the cultural sector: PPPs have been formed for the management of World Heritage Sites in the Netherlands (Keuper 2015), for the management and conservation of heritage sites in Italy (Dubini *et al*. 2012; Klamer and Mignosa 2019), and the management of public theatres and museums in Brazil. The last example is the focus of this work.

Motivations for the Creation of the *Organizações Sociais* (OS)

The concept of the OS model was included in a 1995 plan to reform the Brazilian state, *Plano Diretor de Reforma do Estado* (Alcoforado 2005; Costin 2008; Fiore *et al.* 2011). The idea was to adopt more efficient mechanisms to manage public services (e.g., museums, theatres, hospitals and scientific institutes). According to this model, the private sector could step in to run public organisations.

Costin (2008) underlines that Brazilian legislation for public services was elaborated to prevent the misuse of resources and human capital by politicians and public managers. The legal framework, created to avoid undesired behaviour from public agents, resulted in a bureaucratic, inflexible and inefficient structure, with strict norms in terms of hiring, purchase of supplies and other expenditures (Fiore *et al.* 2011). The concept of the OS was meant to make public services in Brazil more flexible, agile and efficient.

Federal law no. 9637, of May 1998, officially created the OS. The OS is a qualified organisation of the third sector (i.e., a not-for-profit association) that can be contracted by the state for the provision of public services (Alcoforado 2005). The legal instrument that regulates the relationship between the state and the OS is the 'management contract' (*contrato de gestão*), which defines the rights and obligations of each party. On the one hand, the State is responsible for financing of activity and/or the concession of public assets. On the other hand, the OS is responsible for the execution of the activities and the provision of the public service (Costin 2008). The contract defines the overall responsibilities of each party, the specific goals of the OS, the amount of public resources involved in the agreement, the rules for the evaluation, and penalties in case of contract breach (Fiore *et al.* 2011). The performance evaluation of the OS considers performance indicators and goals. In the case of a cultural OS, the contract sets specific goals related to earned income (e.g., admissions and sponsorships), fundraising (e.g., donations) and project support using tax benefits (Alcoforado 2005).

Benefits and Limitations of the OS Model

Besides the benefits in terms of increased efficiency in the management of cultural services, according to Fiore *et al*. (2011), OSs can provide services with higher quality not having to follow strict bureaucratic procedures when choosing a service provider. Furthermore, the model facilitates access to external funding through corporate sponsorships, corporate support to specific projects (allowing the company supporting the project to get tax incentives) and ancillary activities (e.g., shops, restaurants), reducing an organisation's dependency on public resources. The model also allows the sharing of management of public services with civil society (Costin 2008). Fiore *et al.* (2011) argue that, as many OSs have artists, cultural managers and personalities as board members, civil society is brought closer to the formulation, execution and evaluation of public policies.

Some authors, however, criticise the OS model. Fiore *et al.* (2011) expose two opposite views of the role of OSs for culture: they can have a high level of autonomy, designing and implementing cultural policies; or they can still be highly dependent on the government, the OS being a mere tool to avoid the bureaucratic and inflexible framework of the public system. Depending on the autonomy given to OSs, Costin (2008) believes that there is a risk of the state losing control over public policies. In her opinion, OSs are instruments for the implementation of public policies and should not participate in the formulation or coordination of such policies (*ibid*.). Some authors also highlight problems with transparency, government oversight and lack of control over OSs (Fiore *et al.* 2011); they call for a more transparent online system (Martins 2016), providing open access to citizens, who would be able to consult OSs' objectives, goals and the evolution of performance indicators.

Regarding the methods to assess OSs' accomplishment of the goals set out in the contracts, on the one hand, Fiore *et al*. (2011) argue that many performance indicators – used to evaluate the OSs – are still incipient and crude, making proper analysis impracticable. On the other hand, they suggest that there is a lack of qualified OSs capable of managing cultural organisations. Therefore, the state is dependent on already-active OSs, although they may not have expertise in the required cultural field (Fiore *et al*. 2011). While there are OSs throughout Brazil, the focus of this paper is on the State of São Paulo, where it has been used as the primary model for cultural activities management.

Organizações Sociais (OS) and Culture

With the first culture management contracts signed in 2004, OS became an established model in the State of São Paulo (Fiore *et al*. 2011), and it remains the only model for the implementation of new cultural activities and programmes. In 2015, 79 per cent of São Paulo's budget for culture was assigned to OSs (Unidade de Monitoramento da Secretaria da Cultura do Estado de São Paulo 2016a). In 2017, 30 entities qualified as an OS; 18 of them having contracts for 28 cultural institutions (*Secretaria de Estado da Cultura*).[1] Hence, some OSs are responsible for more than one contract.

In São Paulo, OSs' cultural activities are divided into the following four categories: Libraries and Reading (*Bibliotecas e Leitura*); Cultural Dissemination (*Difusão Cultural*) related to performing arts; Cultural Education (*Formação Cultural*) including artistic and cultural education; and Museums (*Museus*).[2] Figure 14.1 shows a ten-year evolution in the number of management contracts since the adoption of the OS model for cultural institutions in the State of São Paulo; it is evident that contracts for the management of museums prevail.

In this study, to make the analysis feasible, we restricted our research to the OSs involved in museum management active in the municipality of São Paulo. The final sample includes six organisations (Table 14.1).

To prove that they reached the goals set in the contract, OSs are legally required to disclose, in addition to their financial statements, the assessment of goal achievements (operational, financial, educational, etc.). This study acknowledges the importance of a broad concept of accountability in non-profit organizations (NPOs), which should consider financial, non-financial, quantitative and qualitative data (Carnegie and Wolnizer 1996), as well as their mission statements (Barton 2000; Rentschler and Potter 1996; Turbide and Laurin 2009). However, to avoid the use of potentially biased data because of the different information that funding agencies

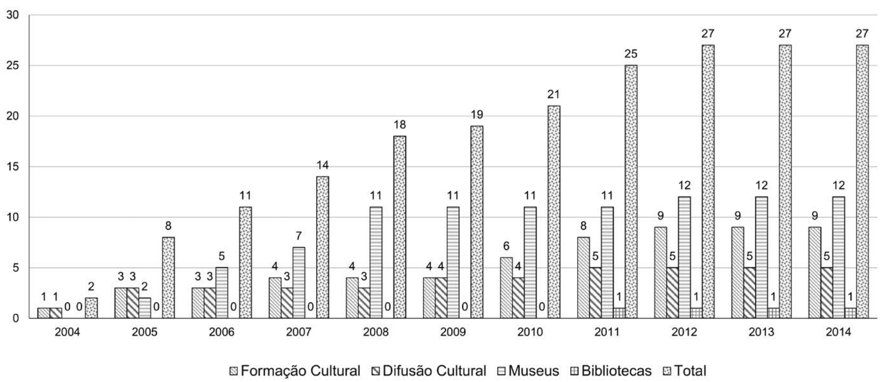

Figure 14.1 – Evolution of the number of management contracts for cultural institutions in São Paulo. Unidade de Monitoramento da Secretaria da Cultura do Estado de São Paulo (2016b).

Table 14.1 Selected social organisations

Social organization – OS	*Legal entity taxpayer registry (CNPJ)*	*Date of incorporation*	*Date of qualification as OS*	*First management contract*	*Cultural equipments*	*Management contract in force*	*Term*	*Number of employees (2015)*
Associação Pinacoteca Arte e Cultura – APAC (Former Associação de Amigos da Pinacoteca do Estado)	96.290.846/0001-82	11.01.1993	18.08.2005	01.01.2006	Pinacoteca Luz Estação Pinacoteca Memorial da Resistência de São Paulo	05/2013	22.12.2013 to 30.11.2018	196
Associação do Paço das Artes Francisco Matarazzo Sobrinho	71.929.889/0001-34	22.08.1993	16.08.2006	30.11.2006	MIS – Museu da Imagem e do Som Paço das Artes	06/2013	01.01.2014 to 30.11.2018	110
Associação Museu de Arte Sacra de São Paulo – SAMAS (Former Sociedade Amigos do Museu de Arte Sacra)	67.848.994/0001-71	18.05.1992	07.05.2007	01.07.2007	Museu de Arte Sacra	07/2013	01.01.2014 to 30.11.2018	50
A Casa – Museu de Artes e Artefatos Brasileiros	03.031.145/0001-48	16.03.1999	30.04.2008	02.05.2008	Museu A Casa	10/2016	01.01.2017 to 31.12.2021	54
IDBRASIL Cultura, Educação e Esporte (Former Instituto da Arte do Futebol Brasileiro)	10.233.223/0001-52	24.06.2008	22.08.2008	08.09.2008	Museu do Futebol Museu da Língua Portuguesa	04/2016 08/2016	01.07.2016 to 31.12.2020 01.01.2017 to 31.12.2020	131
Associação Museu Afro Brasil – AMAB	07.258.863/0001-02	17.02.2005	07.04.2009	22.06.2009	Museu Afro Brasil	04/2013	22.06.2013 to 31.12.2017	68

Source: Anna Mignosa and Christian Mayer Tibeau.

and cultural institutions possess (Peacock 2003),[3] this study only uses data about visitor numbers and financial data, which are less susceptible to manipulation due to mandatory accounting standards and the assessment of independent auditors.

For the purpose of this research, each organisation's funds were classified into five different streams:

1 Public Direct Funds: transferred by the government to the OS according to the management contract;
2 Public Indirect Funds: derived from Federal, State or Municipal tax incentives to taxpayers who invest in selected cultural projects;
3 Earned Income: tickets sales, museum shop sales, facility rental, registration fees, sponsorships, etc.;
4 Private Support (Donations): donations collected by the organisation and
5 Financial Revenues: generated by the financial investments of the organisation.

An important part of this research is based on the analysis of historical performance indicators, which measure the relationship between the volume of inputs (e.g., money) and outputs. The comparison of resource inputs with outputs over time demands that deflation be taken into consideration using an appropriate price index (Peacock 2003). To avoid this problem due to the use of nominal values, which create unrealistic data in countries (such as Brazil) with high inflation rates, this study uses the IPCA (*Índice Nacional de Preços ao Consumidor Amplo*)[4] price index to deflate all financial data to 2016 Brazilian Real values (Earp and Estrella 2017).

Results of the Analysis

The results of the analysis allow some interesting reflections with respect to three main aspects: attendance, dependence on public funding, and financial results. Firstly, as evident in Figure 14.2 and in reference to attendance, the total number of visitors for the six selected OSs increased by 33 per cent from 2009 to 2016.

This represents a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 4 per cent. 2014 was a record year with approximately 2.6 million visitors. Possible explanations are the fact that Brazil held the FIFA World Cup in 2014, as suggested in IDBrasil's 2014 financial statements, and the attractiveness of two blockbuster exhibitions: *David Bowie* and *Castelo Ra Tim Bum* as argued by the Associação do Paço das Artes.

The museum had more than 352,000 visitors in 2014, around 14 per cent of the sample's total attendance. The Associação do Paço das Artes shows impressive results; it managed to increase its attendance on a yearly average (CAGR) of 67 per cent. The decrease in attendance in 2016 can be explained by two main events: the economic crisis derived from the impeachment of Brazil's president; and the fire at *Museu da Língua Portuguesa* in December 2015.

The second set of results refers to the evolution of the funding structure, and specifically, dependence on public funding. In the cultural domain, OSs introduced more agility and flexibility for institutions seeking revenue diversification. For example, when selecting a private company to operate ancillary activities (e.g., shops,

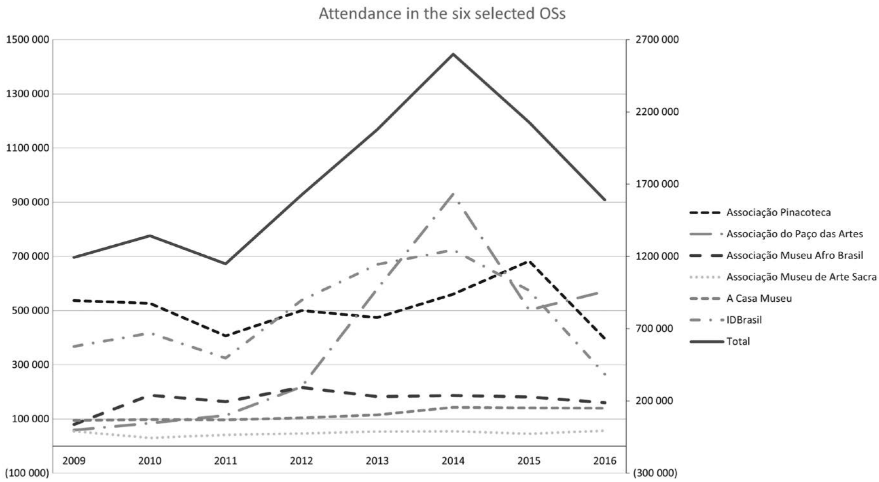

Figure 14.2 – Attendance in the six selected OSs. Elaborated by the author based on OSs' Activity Reports.

restaurants, parking lots), cultural OSs are not legally required to use public tenders. The management contract states that the cultural organisation must look for additional financial resources on the market (e.g., admissions, sponsorships, donations and support to cultural projects leading to tax benefits). It is thus clear that one of the main objectives of the use of the OS model in the cultural sector is to reduce dependence on public funds. Therefore, when analysing the data on the evolution of the OSs' funding structure, it is important to verify whether or not OSs are evolving towards a more balanced funding structure: one less dependent on public resources. An overview of the samples' funding structure evolution for the period 2010–2015 is shown in Figure 14.3.

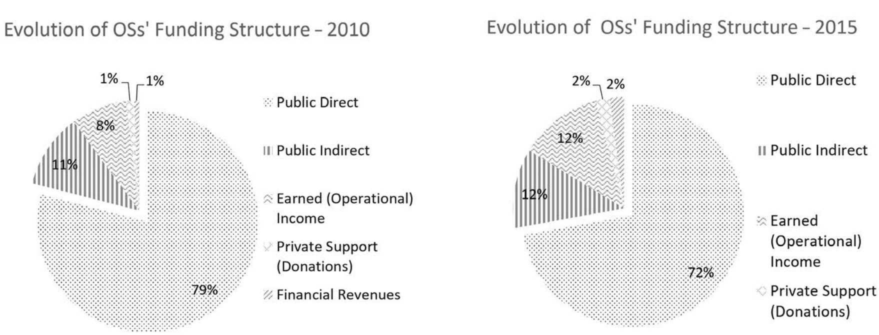

Figure 14.3 – Evolution of OSs' funding structure (2010 and 2015).
Elaborated by the author based on OSs' financial statements.

Overall, data show a reduction in the OSs' dependence on public direct funding of 7 per cent and the reliance on a more diversified operational income, which increased by 4 per cent in the period. Public indirect funds, donations and financial revenues also contributed to OSs' funding structure. Although the decrease in public funding is still small, it shows a shift towards a more balanced funding structure that might lead to financial stability (Carroll and Stater 2009), unless this reduction is only due to a decrease in public direct funding, which is not compensated by an increase in other income streams. It is then fundamental to assess OSs' financial performance.

Regarding financial results, the analysis shows that they have become less volatile through the years and that OSs have succeeded in diversifying their funding resources. Four OSs showed positive financial results[5] and two accumulated losses. On average, OSs presented financial stability, which, however, might be affected by unexpected changes in public direct funding. Higher levels of financial stability corresponded to the years in which organisations achieved greater revenue diversification (i.e., in the last years of the analysis). Some organisations, such as Associação do Paço das Artes, which had reduced the ratio of expenses to income from 0.91 in 2009 to 0.84 in 2012[6], in 2013, had the highest ratio (1.27) in the OS's history. A possible explanation is that until 2012 the organisation had accumulated significant profits, which, according to the management contract, had to be returned to the government by the end of the agreement in 2013. Interestingly, that year, the Associação do Paço das Artes posted the highest loss. Nevertheless, after termination of the management contract the same year, the organisation was selected by the government for another five-year contract. In subsequent years (2014, 2015 and 2016), the organisation managed to reduce the ratio of expenses to income again. These data might be interpreted as evidence of a strategy of deficit optimisation to ensure optimal subsidies from the government. An organisation does not have an incentive to keep costs at the minimum level and might decide to adopt uneconomic behaviour (Peacock 2003). Frey and Meier (2006) underline that for public museums that rely exclusively on public grants, a surplus might lead to a decrease in public grants. Without incentives to produce a surplus, museum managers might change their focus to emphasise 'non-commercial aspects, such as referring to intrinsic "artistic", "scientific", or "historical" values' (Frey and Meier 2006). In line with what the theory suggests (Netzer 2011), the results also demonstrate that OSs might be strategically optimising their deficits.

Concluding Remarks

The OS model has been used as a tool for the management of cultural institutions by the state of São Paulo since 2004. The model's importance has grown considerably in terms of budget allocation and expansion of cultural activities and assets involved. The OS continues to be the preferred model for the development of cultural activities in the State of São Paulo. Between 2010 and 2021, 73 per cent of São Paulo's budget for culture was assigned to OSs, achieving as much as 86 per cent in 2016, and reduced to 54 per cent and 71 per cent during the Covid pandemic years of 2020 and 2021 (Unidade de Monitoramento da Secretaria da Cultura do Estado de São Paulo 2022b). It appears that the OS model continues to be effective in reducing not-for-profit cultural organisations' dependence on public funding. In 2015, the private funds (i.e., Earned Income and Private Support) raised by OSs represented 28 per cent of the Public Direct funds transferred by the government to the OSs, while in 2019, this figure reached 33 per cent (Unidade de Monitoramento da Secretaria da Cultura do Estado de São Paulo 2022a).

Overall, the results show a clear evolution in terms of museums' attendance in the sample investigated. The analysis shows that the OS model is effective in reducing not-for-profit cultural organisations' dependence on public funding. Thus, the OS model can be seen as an effective instrument to generate greater accountability for public money, as it demands a balanced funding structure for the supply of cultural services. Moreover, the model also enhances accountability by encouraging a more commercial and economic approach in cultural NPOs. In this sense, the observed diversification of revenues is a means towards financial stability (Carroll and Stater 2009).

However, the development and improvement of the OS model in terms of the strengthening of oversight agencies, OSs accountability and application of penalties and sanctions is still poor. Martins and Olivieri (2019) analysed OSs operating in the cultural sector in the State of São Paulo, and their findings point to low transparency from the selection of the OSs to the measurability and timeliness of information, which has a negative impact on the accountability of the OS. Their research emphasises the need for public agencies to improve the mechanisms of internal control and the results of the management contracts.

It is necessary to strive for the continuous development and improvement of the OS model in terms of performance indicator quality (Ferraz 2008; Fiore *et al.* 2011), the strengthening of oversight agencies (Fiore *et al.* 2011); and the application of penalties and sanctions (Martins 2016) to boost the effectiveness and efficiency of the OS model for cultural institutions in the State of São Paulo, especially in terms of revenue diversification and decreased dependence on public funding.

Notes

1 http://www.transparenciacultura.sp.gov.br/organizacoes-sociais-de-cultura/os-qualificadas/, accessed on 18 May 2017.
2 The 'Libraries and Reading' and 'Cultural Dissemination' categories were merged by Decree number 61.832/2016 and renamed as 'Cultural Dissemination, Libraries and Reading' (*Difusão Cultural, Bibliotecas e Leitura*).
3 In economics, this is known as asymmetry of information as one of the parties has private information, i.e., not shared with the other.
4 The IPCA index is measured by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics – IBGE (Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística) and can be retrieved from http://www.ibge.gov.br/home/estatistica/indicadores/precos/inpc_ipca/ipca-inpc_201704_3.shtm
5 For this study, positive financial result is considered as profit generation or result equal to zero, due to the nonprofit nature of OSs.
6 Detailed presentations of each organisations' individual performance can be provided by the authors.

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15 Ethical Fundraising in Museums

Marek Prokůpek

Introduction

Museums have always had limited budgets (Greffe *et al.* 2017), but in recent years, they have faced greater pressure than ever before. Museums have had to respond to a rapidly changing social, political and economic climate and demonstrate their value and relevance, and this shift seems to be the most significant in Western Europe (Prokůpek *et al.* 2022). These pressures have been intensified by declining public funding for cultural organisations, a trend that has impacted the majority of cultural institutions. At the same time, museums have been asked to provide a wide range of activities and to attract more visitors, thereby increasing operating costs. In short, museums have been forced to do more with fewer funds since the 1980s. Therefore, they have had to react to a decrease in public investment and secure more private funding, develop partnerships with the private sector, and, in some cases, compromise their values.

For example, the sale of 4,000-year-old Egyptian statues from the Northampton Museum and Art Gallery collection to a private collector in 2014 can serve as an example of how such behaviour can lead to a loss of accreditation and reputation. In this case, the Northampton Borough Council, which was at that time the governing body of the museum, made a decision contrary to professional codes of ethics, such as those of the International Council of Museums (ICOM) or the Museums Association UK, and did not maintain values that are generally held in the museum sector.

As a result, community groups, social campaigners and environmental activists have scrutinised sources of museums' funding and the ethical basis of museum work. This led to expectations that museums will not only seek to diversify their audiences but also to take account of, and engage with, contemporary inequalities and contested social and political issues in their employment, curatorial and public programming activities and funding.

The aim of this chapter is to identify the main ethical issues museums have faced in these challenging times, to explore the ethical dilemmas of fundraising in museums, and to provide guidance to museum professionals in ethical fundraising.

Some partnerships between cultural institutions and private companies or foundations have caused controversy and even caught the attention of the

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mainstream media. Cases such as sponsorship of the Science Museum in London by fossil fuel companies Shell or British Petrol (BP), the British Museum and BP were prominently debated in *The Guardian, The New York Times* and other mass media outlets. So, too, were actions of an activist group called PAIN, initiated by the American artist Nan Goldin against ties between several museums and the Sackler Trust (members of the family-run trust own Purdue Pharma, a company selling the prescription strongly addictive painkiller Oxycontin, which has been accused of fuelling the opioid addiction crisis in the United States). Nan Goldin, who herself developed an addiction to Oxycontin, in 2019 claimed that she would decline to plan her retrospective show at the National Portrait Gallery in London if the museum accepted a gift of £1 million from the Sackler family. As a result of this claim, The National Portrait Gallery became the first significant art organisation to reject a grant from the Sackler family. As a result, a lot of other organisations have decided to stop accepting gifts from the Sackler family and have taken the Sackler name off of their walls.

The issue of ethics in fundraising, partnerships and corporate sponsorships has been present in museums for many years, but the last few years have been especially rich for scandals and controversy and showed unprecedented interest by public media in ethical issues and museums. One of the reasons encouraging such discussions might be the growing awareness of climate change and increasing scrutiny of the impact of the activities of fossil fuel companies.

Museum fundraisers and directors have had to face difficult ethical questions, and their decision-making process is influenced by many factors. Do we accept funds from a company that does not share the same values as our museum? The easy answer would be no, of course not. But these funds might be used to develop a new educational programme, or allow new acquisitions, the extension of an exhibition space, development of a research project, or a new exhibition. There is, accordingly, no uniform answer to this question. Each contribution requires careful consideration. The boundary between what is ethical and what is not is so thin that many people within the sector are not able to come to a consensus. Almost all sponsorships can evoke controversy. Public investment can also put museums in difficult decision-making positions.

The Gdańsk Museum of the Second World War, opened in Poland in 2017, offers an example of the tensions that may arise between museums' own ethical standards and governments who exercise full control over the cultural sector in certain countries. The political party Law and Justice (PiS) became interested in the way the museum presents the history of the Second World War. Developing the permanent exhibition was a long project, and the museum was considered to be one of the most ambitious devoted to the Second World War. But PiS decided to use the exhibition as an occasion to glorify the nation, offering a biased, highly nationalist account of its history in the process. As a result, the museum director was dismissed and a new director was appointed, who changed the exhibition's content to glorify Polish military actions and cast Poland as a righteous nation. The former director and other historians involved in the initial exhibition sued the new director over the infringement of their copyright for the exhibition's content (Flieger 2019), and in October 2020, they won the lawsuit in question.

Other museums have learned that accepting money from a company or an individual whose business is perceived as controversial or unethical can cause irreversible damage to a reputation that took decades to establish. Examples such as the fossil fuel company BP's sponsorship of certain British cultural organisations, protests at the Louvre Museum against sponsorship by the French oil company Total, London's Natural History Museum being rented to host an event in honour of the Saudi Arabian embassy, and a third of the artists featured in the exhibition *Hope to Nope* in the Design Museum in London pulling their work from display after learning that the museum had hosted an event for an arms company, all show that such partnerships can create public-relations nightmares for museums, as well as significantly damaging their reputations.

The title of this chapter is 'Ethical Fundraising in Museums'. But what does it take for fundraising to be ethical? In practising ethical fundraising, fundraisers need to be aware of the museum's vision, mission and values and seek partners sharing these values.

What Is Ethical?

Defining ethics is complicated since it is not an exact science. There have been attempts by several philosophers to make ethics objective and universal, but opponents of this stance argue that a moral decision is not mechanical; rather, it is an intuitive, individual process of making choices. In the non-profit sector, in which museums are situated, ethics play a crucial role. Museums are recognised as having ethical responsibilities, both internal and external (Weinstein and Barden 2017). Internal responsibilities are connected with museum staff, their health and safety, equal opportunities, and fostering a common sense of values within the museum. External responsibilities, on the other hand, are linked to external stakeholders and include stating the truth in fundraising, marketing and public relations, protecting the environment and meeting promised obligations to donors.

Museum ethics are not a universal set of values that can be applied to every museum in the same way. We must distinguish ethical principles that represent ideals and values that we hold dear from applied ethics, which is the application of these principles and values to a specific area of activities such as museum work (Marstine 2012).

Ethics are a reflection of our museum institutions and values and are also connected to our vision. To recognise what is ethical and what is not when it comes to funding is a difficult proposition, however, and the line between these two can be thin. It is and always will be the ultimate responsibility of fundraisers, museum directors and museum board members; they have to make the final decisions and consider the consequences of these actions. First of all, the decision in question should be aligned with the museum's mission and values: museums should never compromise their values. Professional codes of ethics can provide guidance, but museums should also have a written policy for such cases.

Ethics have always played a crucial role in museum activities, but in recent decades, we have witnessed an even stronger need for establishing ethical standards around sponsorship and fundraising for museums. It is important that executive teams be aware of, and clear on, what they will and will not do regarding fundraising and sponsorship. The key principle for ethical fundraising is that the museum's values should always remain front of mind when decisions are made. Other principles that are eligible to form part of ethical fundraising are demonstrations of respect for public opinion. Last, but not least, it is imperative to communicate with donors and corporate sponsors in an attempt to obtain as much information and feedback as possible about their backgrounds, activities, values and key stakeholders. Nevertheless, there may yet be situations in which a museum conducts a deep investigation about a potential contributor and does not find any reason that they should not accept money. However, information later comes out that reveals unethical business activities that are not in alignment with museum values.

One situation that is of major concern in the museum sector is one in which an individual donor or corporate sponsor has a say in the development of museum programmes. Such a case occurred in 1999 when the Brooklyn Museum of Art hosted an exhibition entitled *Sensation: Young British Art from the Saatchi Collection*. The exhibition was first presented in 1997 at the Royal Academy of Arts in London. Charles Saatchi, the owner of the artworks, turned out to also be a significant sponsor of the exhibition. In the beginning, the museum tried to hide this crucial fact, which made the situation even worse. Moreover, later on, an information leak revealed that the famous collector had also been involved in curating the exhibition (Barstow 1999).

Another alarming case appeared when the Science Museum in London came under scrutiny over its partnerships with fossil fuel companies. In 2015, email leaks revealed that Shell, one of the Science Museum's sponsors, had attempted to influence the climate science exhibition, *Atmosphere*, at the museum. It stirred significant controversy, and a group of 30 scientists including James Hansen, a former NASA climate scientist and naturalist Chris Packham claimed that partnership with Shell, BP and Statoil undermined the museum's credibility as a scientific institution (Vaughan 2018). Such incidents have an irreversible impact on museums' reputations and can cause a decline in the trust of professionals, peers and the general public. These sorts of partnerships can also cause other sponsors, some less controversial, to terminate their support of a given museum.

Current Museum Fundraising Practices

Current declines in cultural funding have changed the fundraising environment. We have witnessed a downwards trend in public investment and have also seen that private companies and donors are more cautious and strategic in their support. Moreover, funders are demanding more accountability and transparency. These changes make fundraising in museums more competitive and challenging.

Museums need to raise funds to cover operational costs and capital costs to extend or redevelop buildings, as well as project funding for temporary exhibitions, new educational or accompanying programmes, publications, research, etc. Fundraising strategies and activities differ from museum to museum. Generally speaking, it is easier to raise money for one-off projects than for everyday museum operations. There are different types of funding for museums that can be broadly divided into three groups: earned income, public contributions, and private contributions (Lindqvist 2012).

Historically, fundraising has always played a crucial role in American museums since most cultural organisations in North America are non-profit, non-governmental institutions. Without fundraising, museums would not be able to operate. But in recent decades, museums in Europe that have traditionally been mostly government-funded have had to adopt fundraising as an integral part of their survival strategy. The ratio between private and public contributions in museum budgets varies in each country and each museum; some museums are able to cover 50 per cent of their budget from funds realised from non-governmental sources, while others rely solely on public subsidies.

In order to thrive in the current social, political, technical and economic environment, museums have had to become more entrepreneurial, diversifying their income sources and finding creative new solutions. These pressures have made fundraising for museums even more competitive and have required a professional approach. But this difficult financial situation does not give museums what Gardner (2012) calls *carte blanche* to do whatever they feel necessary. Museums operate in the public trust and unethical behaviour is never acceptable. But the line between ethical and unethical behaviour is fine, and even though it may be unintentional, it is relatively easy to slip into unethical behaviour and compromise a museum's values and mission.

Ethical Dilemmas in Fundraising

Fundraisers, museum directors and museum boards face ethical dilemmas on an everyday basis. On the one hand, museums suffer from a decline in public investment and, on the other hand, are asked to remain ethical and faithful to their values. Imagine a situation where a museum is offered a sponsorship from an oil company or an alcoholic beverage manufacturing company. A museum director knows that this sponsorship deal would help to develop a new educational programme, but is also aware of the reputation of the company that offers the sponsorship. What should he/she do? Recent cases from the museum world speak for themselves. In certain cases in which museums agreed to accept sponsorship from such companies, they had to deal with harmful consequences. They faced criticism of some of their key stakeholders and negative media exposure. Sometimes, moreover, the costs of carrying out 'damage control' following such decisions exceeded the original financial contribution from the sponsorship deal.

When an ethical dilemma appears, former Chair of the ICOM's Standing Committee on Ethics, Sally Yerkovich (2016), proposes to think about the dilemma in two phases. The first phase, which consists of six steps, is about analysing the situation and problem formulation:

1 Collect all the information and facts about the situation.
2 Identify all stakeholders and other parties that might be affected.
3 Remove all superfluous information and select the most important pieces of data.
4 Consider whether there is a conflict of interest between the fundraiser as an individual and as a museum staff member.
5 Formulate the problem based on the relevant facts, perspectives and values.
6 Determine the potential ethical issue(s) (p. xii).

When the first phase is accomplished, then the second phase, Formulating Solutions, comes into play. The second phase consists of the five following steps, according to Yerkovich:

1 Consider potential outcomes.
2 Propose possible solutions to achieve the desired outcomes.
3 Refer to relevant codes of ethics.
4 Consider possible internal and external reactions to the proposed solution.
5 Invent an alternate solution in order to be prepared for a worst-case scenario (p. xii).

Ethical Decision-Making

Decisions are easier to make when they involve a choice between an obviously correct option and an obviously wrong one. Some decisions can be navigated through museum policy, codes of ethics, other guidance, or previous experiences. But unprecedented situations can and do appear. Some decisions might be right for one person and not right for another. Some decisions can compromise one ethical value for another ethical value. Let us consider the situation mentioned above: a museum is offered funding from a controversial sponsor to develop a new educational programme. How do we navigate decision-making in such a situation? How do we stay true to our values? Which value is more important: to develop a new education programme, or not to accept funding from a controversial company? There are several different frameworks for decision-making. Marilyn Fischer (2000, p. 21) highlights a hierarchy of three basic value commitments for fundraisers:

1 Organisational mission,
2 Relationship,
3 Sense of personal integrity.

Fischer claims that there is no single magical formula that could be applied and would lead to an ethically correct decision (pp. 25–26). Alternatively, ethical decision-making represents a process of interconnection of concerns with facts and considerations of a particular situation. Fischer proposes to use an ethical decision-making chart using the key values of organisation mission, relationships and personal integrity in a matrix that requires describing alternatives (p. 24).

The final decision is the responsibility of a museum director or a museum board, but it is always helpful to discuss decisions with other museum staff and the governing body. Try to get many points of view and consider all the consequences of the decision.

Sponsorship and Donation Rejection

It is not easy for a museum to refuse funds. Whether an offer should be accepted or not requires deep research, ideally with the guidance of internal documents such as a sponsorship and donation acceptance policy, and a strong decision-making process. Cases in the museum sector have shown that accepting funds or donations from certain industries, such as fossil fuel, can put a museum in an unwelcome spotlight. Some sponsors and donors may be very generous, but in certain cases, their business may be associated with practices generally not seen as ethical. Accepting a gift from them or renting them a museum property could possibly damage a museum's reputation. And if a museum and a sponsor or donor decide not to reveal information about the deal, it might cause even greater damage. Museums need to be transparent about their partnerships and sponsors and all sources of funding.

In such cases, museums should not be afraid to reject an offer when it is not aligned with their ethical values. The Victoria and Albert Museum in Dundee made such a decision in 2018, turning down a funding offer of £10,000 from a local businessman who happened to be the owner of 14 nightclubs, including strip clubs. The director of philanthropy and partnerships at the museum replied to the offer stating that the museum could not accept the money owing to the nature of the business interests of the contributor being contradictory to the museum's core aims and values (Steel 2018). Museums need to preserve public trust in each individual museum as well as the museum sector as a whole.

To be fair, we also need to state the arguments of opponents, those who do not see museum sponsorships by companies such as BP, Total, Sackler Trust, etc., as problematic or controversial. In January 2019 *Financial Times* published an article entitled 'Corporate Arts Patrons Deserve Praise Not Blame'. The Editorial Board of *Financial Times* (2019) claims that artists have benefited, directly or indirectly, from wealthy capitalists' patronage prior even to the royal patronage of the Medicis; even though times have changed, corporate benefactors remain a key part of art funding. But their main argument is that companies such as BP and Total are overseen by shareholders and regulators, and therefore, their sources of funding are clear. We can agree on the fact that these companies are not doing anything illegal. Their funding sources might be clear, but the core of their business activities might be seen as unethical or in contravention of current societal values, such as combating climate change.

Leadership in Ethical Fundraising: Codes of Ethics

Codes of ethics play a crucial role in many areas of our society and professional practices. They are not universally applicable and, of course, do not provide the answer to every difficult question. Their aim is mainly to guide behaviour and to promote professional standards. The museum sector has many codes of ethics developed by museum associations and organisations and museums themselves. Codes of ethics are constantly evolving and need to be updated. Museums are not obliged to follow them, but their adoption demonstrates their commitment to ethical behaviour. Codes of ethics, standards of professional practice, and best practices encourage professionalism in museum fundraising.

One of the most important codes of ethics in the museum sector is that of ICOM. This organisation's code was first adopted by the 15th General Assembly in Buenos Aires on 4 November 1986 and last revised in 2004 by the 21st General Assembly in Seoul. After the 2019 25th ICOM General Conference held in Kyoto, the organisation decided to review and, if necessary, revise the code. At the time of writing this chapter, the review and revision are still in the process. The Standing Committee on Ethics (ETHCOM) plans to create a draft of the Code of Ethics which will be subject to a consultation in 2024. ETHCOM expects to have the revised Code of Ethics ready for approval by the triennial meeting in 2025 (ICOM 2023).

The code provides a general statement of professional ethics, respect for which is regarded as a minimum requirement to practise as a member of the museum profession. Only a small section is dedicated to fundraising. It states that 'the governing body should ensure that there are sufficient funds to carry out and develop the activities of the museums and that all funds must be accounted for in a professional manner' (ICOM 2017, p. 4). The codes of European associations are closely related to the ICOM code: for example, the Museums Association in the UK prevents museums from disposal of collections in order to increase earned revenue (Schmidt 1992), but fundraising and sponsorship are also given scant attention in this code as well. It states that museums are 'in an important position of trust in relationship to their audience, local communities, donors, source communities, partner organisations, sponsors and funders' (Museums Association UK 2016, p. 2) and that due diligence ensures 'that all reasonable measures are taken to establish the facts of a case before deciding a course of action, particularly in identifying the source and history of an item offered for acquisition or use before acquiring it, or in understanding the full background of a sponsor, lender or funder' (Museums Association UK 2016, p. 23).

These codes of ethics provide rather broad, and not especially concrete, statements regarding fundraising. Codes of ethics are built on commitments to public service and personal accountability. They have no enforcement mechanism, instead expecting self-motivation and peer pressure to be effective (Malaro 1994). Museum codes of ethics offer museums a variety of recommendations; however, they do not substantially narrow their range of action. Rather, the codes represent a balance between the realities of daily operations and ethical duties. Besides codes of ethics in the museum sector, which sometimes lack emphasis on fundraising issues, fundraisers can use codes of ethics developed by associations dealing with fundraising in the non-profit sector, such as the Code of Ethical Standards by The Association of Fundraising Professionals. These are often more applicable to museums' fundraising activities.

Sponsorship and Donation Acceptance Policy and Ethical Guidelines

Every museum that raises funds should create a sponsorship and donation acceptance policy in order to avoid ethical conflicts and improve decision-making processes as well as enhance transparency and credibility. This written statement should outline what kind of sources the museum is willing and unwilling to accept. Acceptance policies should describe potential relationships between a museum and a corporate sponsor as well as an individual donor. According to Rich Cohen (2002, pp. 12–13), an acceptance policy should address these three main questions:

- What kind of corporations and industries will a museum solicit for funding, and what kinds will it avoid or reject?
- What, if any, conditions or restrictions imposed by the potential sponsor or donor will the museum accept?
- How will the museum evaluate corporate sponsors and individual donors?

As in the case of codes of ethics, the basis for acceptance policies is again museums' stated mission and values. There are several reasons why every museum should have an acceptance policy. First of all, such a document encourages museum staff and reminds them of the organisation's values and beliefs; museum staff should accordingly also be involved in creating the policy. Secondly, it promotes museum transparency and accountability towards all stakeholders, such as government, corporate sponsors, individual donors, peers, museum associations, and the general public.

In several countries, for example, France, cooperation between public cultural and other institutions and tobacco or alcohol companies is illegal. Nevertheless, such companies might create foundations funded from company revenues but not directly associated with the nature of business activities; in these cases, the foundation in question may provide funding.

Acceptance policies can take different forms and names depending on the mission and values of a museum, its size and fundraising objectives and needs. The Louvre Museum in Paris has two documents that have been established as ethical guidelines for the museum's relations with individual donors and corporate sponsors. One is called 'Musée du Louvre Ethics Charter on Relations with Individual Donors' and the other 'Musée du Louvre Ethics Charter on Patronage, Sponsorship, and Other Relations with Companies and Foundations'. The document dealing with individual donors is divided into six main sections:

- General Principles Regarding Public Institutions
- General Principles Regarding the Individual Donor

- General Principles Regarding Donations
- The Granting of Special Benefits and the Naming of Rooms
- Artistic Independence
- Communication Concerning Donations (Musée du Louvre n.d., pp. 1–4)

The preamble of the document assures potential donors that their donations will be used in compliance with principles regarding the gathering and use of personal information, rigorous management of funds raised, ethical operations and financial transparency regarding donors. The first part of the charter details legal issues and laws regarding donations that the museum has to follow as a public institution founded by the French Ministry of Culture and Communication. The second part deals with principles regarding individual donors. It states that the museum has the option to refuse certain individuals' donations or membership in the museum's patronage programmes if there is a current or future risk of harm to the museum's image, its operations, or the fulfilment of its missions, with an emphasis on persons whose donations are potentially connected in a visible manner to political or religious causes. Moreover, the museum claims that it reserves the option to refuse donations from individuals whose business is harmful to the objectivity of the Louvre's decision-making process or donors where there is doubt as to the legality of their business or their situation with the tax authorities. This section is followed by one dealing with donations and bequests themselves, and their restriction also including bequests of artworks.

The other document focusing on sponsorship and the museum's support from corporations and foundations is of similar scope to the previous one. Besides other issues, the charter states that the museum is committed to not accepting any intervention on the artistic content of a project by a company or individual that has provided financial support. The sixth part of the charter claims that the museum will ensure that any use of the Louvre name by its partners as part of their communications policy is respectful of its image and the reputation of its employees.

Both documents are well structured and developed and cover broad areas of sponsorship and donations, even though the Louvre Museum has not entirely avoided controversy regarding its sponsorship. The Louvre's long-term partnership with the company Total, respectively its foundation, spurred protests by environmental activists associated with the campaign launched in January 2017 by the group 'Libérons le Louvre' (Liberate the Louvre) led by the NGO 350.org. The campaign called for the museum to bring an end to its sponsorship from oil giant Total. Libérons le Louvre was inspired by the successful resolution, in March 2016, of the concerns raised by Liberate Tate, which was the long-standing campaign to end the 26-year sponsorship deal between British Petrol and Tate Gallery in London. In January 2017, Jean-Luc Martinez, the president of the Louvre, reacted to the campaign and sent a letter to 350.org France stating the importance of the financial support that Total provides and that it allows the museum to fund exhibitions, renovations, cultural education, and social action (Muñoz-Alonso 2017).

CultureHive, a free online resource library for cultural professionals run by the Arts Marketing Association, launched a guide written by fundraising consultant

Sarah Winchester (2015) and entitled *Creating Ethical Guidelines for Fundraising*. The goal of this guide is to provide advice to non-profit organisations on how to set up ethical guidelines to ensure all stakeholders including trustees, staff and potential sponsors, share the same understanding of an organisation's ethical values. The guide summarises a number of advantages to setting up ethical guidelines, which are seen to accomplish the following:

- serve as a risk management tool for leadership and potential partners
- be used as useful material for fundraisers during negotiations
- help to cement an organisation's sense of identity and purpose
- provide guidelines to an organisation to keep its values and philosophy front of mind and its reputation safe

Furthermore, the guide provides information on how to set up ethical standards, which areas should be included in ethical guidelines, with whom an organisation should consult on the creation of the guidelines, etc.

Each organisation has its own vision, mission, needs and goals. Therefore, it should establish its own specific code of ethical practice. However, merely replicating the guidelines of other museums would not likely create the desired impacts. Moreover, developing such a document might strengthen the museums' integrity and the sharing of common values. Of course, inspiration and examples of best practices can help your organisation while developing your own guidelines. Finally, every museum should carefully and independently scrutinise each potential source of income.

Fundraising vs. Marketing

Fundraising activities in museums go hand-in-hand with marketing and public relations. Fundraisers, therefore, need to develop close cooperation with PR managers and marketing managers. In order to create a strong and successful fundraising campaign, a museum needs to implement robust marketing strategies. A discredited museum will hardly be able to develop new partnerships and raise funds. Moreover, solid marketing activities can help a museum to effectively communicate a fundraising campaign to targeted donors (Jung 2015; Weinstein and Barden 2017). Naturally, donors tend to give to museums that are both trusted and have a good reputation. Therefore, it is crucial for museums to uphold their stated values and maintain a strong reputation in order to retain trustworthy and loyal donors.

Ethical Questions of Online Fundraising

The questions of ethics in museum fundraising and sponsorship have received increased attention in recent years, and museums have been pressured towards more transparency, but with economic, political, social and technical changes, the ethical fundraising environment constantly faces new challenges. Therefore, ethical fundraising needs to continuously adapt. New and emerging challenges for museums come with the rise of digital funding methods. Online fundraising is more and more popular among museums, spurred on by the pandemic, which, of course, raises new ethical and legal questions and challenges. Museums raise funds and use crowdfunding strategies through their websites. On one hand, this approach has several advantages, notably that it is not as expensive as traditional fundraising campaigns. On the other hand, museums continue to have ethical responsibilities.

This recent trend has completely changed the relationship between museums and donors in that museums have less control over the acceptance of donations. They do not have enough information about who has donated through their websites, and there is no direct communication and negotiation. Therefore, the risk of unethical behaviour may occur since museums do not have control over the origin of donations. On the other hand, the amount of funds raised via crowdfunding is usually smaller than via traditional fundraising activities.

Fundraising Costs and Compensation

Fundraising activities can be expensive, and museums must ensure that resources are used in an efficient manner. The risk of not investing enough money in a fundraising campaign might end with failure, with institutions not achieving the maximum possible return and therefore wasting resources. Of course, a sufficient amount of funds are not the only aspect of a successful fundraising campaign, but museums need to carefully consider the expenditures associated with fundraising activities and set a target for each action. Naturally, museums also need to evaluate the efficiency of fundraising activities and measure costs against return on investments. Moreover, museums need to be strictly transparent when it comes to fundraising activities including related expenditures. Transparency increases the trust of potential donors and other stakeholders.

While museums need to keep their fundraising costs low and use their resources efficiently, fundraisers, of course, should be properly compensated. It is not legally possible in many countries, but museum fundraisers should never be paid on commission as a general principle. To practice ethical fundraising, museums need trustworthy fundraisers. Fundraisers also need to be motivated and feel that their work contributes to museum development and their work should be treated with respect by other museum staff. Fundraisers do not necessarily need to have experience in the museum sector, but they need to be aware of and support the museum's mission—and, of course, they need to be familiar with all applicable laws.

Conclusion

Ethical aspects of fundraising have become a focal point in the museum sector. Cases that are often reflected in mass media concern funding by companies operating within three main industries: fossil fuels, pharmaceuticals and arms. But there are many other areas of business that might pose problems, such as, for example, the funding of exhibitions in public museums by art dealers and auction houses.

Museums find themselves in a difficult position in the present day: the majority struggle with declining public funds, a more competitive environment for fundraising, and increasing scrutiny of their activities. Therefore, there is a need for more research and discussion dedicated to this pressing issue.

Ethical fundraising is not a one-sided act. All parties should benefit from the cooperation. Donors should be motivated to support a museum because they feel that their contribution is meaningful. Sponsors, in turn, receive marketing benefits or other advantages such as tickets for employees, access to special events and others.

Museum fundraising is gaining importance as museums have been pushed to rely on the contributions of corporate sponsors, private donors, fundraising events, and earned revenues, and we can expect an even stronger emphasis on these sources in the future. Fundraising activities have become both more time-consuming and more challenging, and museums need to adjust to these trends. They must develop strong internal guidance and clearly articulate their own ethical standards; but above all, museums need to stay faithful to their principles and values, even in difficult times.

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16 Perspectives on Cultural Philanthropy in Museums

Geneva's Musée d'Art et d'Histoire and its Philanthropists

Laura Zani

Introduction

In Article 28 of its Recommendation concerning the Protection and Promotion of Museums and Collections, their Diversity and their Role in Society, UNESCO (2015) affirms the key role of governing bodies in providing funding for public museums.[1] However, in some parts of the world, public funding is now largely insufficient, both to sustain museums and to develop a wide range of their activities, above all following the global Covid-19 crisis, when 'the pandemic laid bare the fragility of the museum's business model. (…) While museums demonstrated laudable dexterity in pivoting to remote work and free online programming, none those measures offset the cratering of their finances' (Szánto 2020, pp. 10–11). Governing bodies are, therefore, increasingly encouraging museum professionals to become more financially self-sufficient, both in managing their operating budgets and seeking new income-generating activities. In this context, museums tend to see external financing (partnerships and patronage) as an important source of funding. It is useful to remember that there are many types of external funding and that interaction between partners is becoming more complex. In this article, we will examine the link between public institutions and private entities, whether individual or corporate philanthropists, in funding a non-profit project. First, we will examine the experience and practices of the Musée d'art et d'histoire (MAH) in Geneva. We will then analyse the opportunities and limitations of public-private partnerships (PPPs) by referring to the normative frameworks that could define these types of collaborations. Finally, we will attempt to draw conclusions about the outlook for cultural philanthropy in museums in the coming years.

Methodological Note

As regards methodology, it is important to specify that we are using the word 'philanthropy' in the universal sense, 'meaning all assistance freely undertaken by private initiative, whether from an individual, a company, or a group of companies (…), in support of a non-profit activity' (Lamy 1999, pp. 3, 23). We would refer the reader to the *Dictionnaire encyclopédique de muséologie* (2011) for a detailed, theoretical definition of the terms 'philanthropy', 'partnership' and 'sponsoring'

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(Desvallées and Mairesse 2011), as well as to different national tax laws, as the general principles determining these definitions are specific to each country.

How to Fund over 1,000 Museums for almost 9 Million People?

In order to better understand the organisation and goals of philanthropy at the MAH, one must first examine the distinct characteristics of philanthropy in Switzerland, 'where individual participation and inclinations are combined with a feeling of responsibility for systematic encouragement (…) to which our country owes a great deal'.[2]

Counting more than 1,000 museums,[3] 'Switzerland has the largest number of museums per capita in the world. … Their creation reflects a very strong popular commitment …' (Griener 2010, p. 89), and this tradition lives on today. In Switzerland, cultural funding is provided by four main partners: the federal government, cantons, cities, and the private sector. Lotteries also play an important role by covering nearly 10 per cent of the country's cultural budget, in which companies invest an estimated 350 million to 1 billion CHF a year.[4]

Switzerland's strong philanthropic tradition makes philanthropists key partners for public cultural institutions. 'Swiss collectors assume their responsibility enthusiastically, in large part as a civic duty. They do not simply donate important archaeological or artistic works but give entire collections… of unique historic or aesthetic interest' (Griener 2011, p. 35). In addition, the number of philanthropic foundations in Switzerland continues to grow. An average of one new foundation is created every day, and Switzerland now has 15.5 foundations for every 10,000 inhabitants, one of the highest rates in the world. These entities manage assets worth over 139,5 billion CHF. Geneva alone has 1,333 philanthropic foundations.[5] Many Swiss banks and companies have also created their own foundations with dedicated funds[6].

Geneva's Musée d'art et d'histoire and Its Philanthropists

The MAH was founded in the early 20th century on the initiative of a number of private philanthropists who continue to support it today. 'One can easily imagine what our museum would be without the contributions of private collectors. Not much, honestly' (Lapaire 1976, p. 59). That was how, in 1976, Claude Lapaire, MAH Director from 1972 to 1994, commended the generosity of native and adopted Genevans who donated major works to the institution or bequeathed some of their wealth to the acquisition, maintenance, and study of its works, which themselves were often housed in buildings donated by philanthropists or built and outfitted with their support. At that time, unlike other Swiss museums, the MAH's philanthropists did not yet include Geneva's largest companies. Philanthropy was then mostly the domain of individuals. The situation has changed considerably since, with the MAH now benefitting not only from the generosity of private donors and foundations but also from banks and companies contributing to the development and diversity of Geneva's cultural life.

Since it was founded, the MAH has taken on a social role in the centre of the city. It was created by the people of Geneva, and most of its founding families are still members of the Society of Friends of the MAH. For example, a private Geneva banker whose ancestor was the treasurer of the association that funded the construction of the Reformation Wall in Geneva in the early 20th century sponsored a museum exhibition tracing the history of the project. The MAH's philanthropists include leaders of private companies who wish to make a contribution in the interest of sharing, reviving, and passing on family values and traditions, a selfless act in favour of the MAH that gives meaning to their philanthropic goals. This philanthropic tradition was not challenged during the pandemic. Through an exceptional outpouring of solidarity, the museum partners once again demonstrated their confidence. The MAH was thus able to maintain its activity while reviewing its cultural programmes, choosing to revisit its exhibition strategy as part of the future MAH. At the same time, the annual international ICEE conference held virtually at the MAH in 2021 explored new forms of collaborations that originated during the health crisis and influenced the post-pandemic museum life, rethinking the way audiences engage with exhibition content, examining opportunities and challenges brought about by technology, discussing more sustainable exhibitions and reimagining new strategies for exhibition exchange.

In its partnerships with private entities, the MAH seeks a true, long-term commitment, dialogue, increased visibility, expertise in different areas, the exposure of its collections to new audiences, and above all, the possibility of offering more services to the public. Exhibitions, room renovations, acquisitions, and the development of collections, restorations, multimedia projects, publications, artistic productions, cultural events and educational programmes providing greater access for different types of audiences, for example, differently abled persons or those living with mental health issues. All of these activities, which are directly linked to the museum's mission, are supported on local, national and international bases.

The MAH has devised a new cultural programme, in constant evolution, based on multifrequency experiences, as a way to increase the number and diversify the profile of the museum's visitors, and support and encourage artistic creation. Every year, the MAH hosts approximately ten exhibitions of various sizes as well as many artistic events, trying to anticipate social transformations and needs and explore new cultural practices. The most important project takes place during the first half of the year when major international curators (artists, art historians, philosophers…) receive carte blanche to curate original displays that both bring their individual visions and create an ongoing dialogue with the museum collections.

Furthermore, in the perspective of renovation and extension projects for the museum, which have been envisioned as an original laboratory of ideas to rethink the way the museum engages its audience through the creation of unique experiences, the MAH is reinforcing its spheres of influence in order to increase the support of private donors through the organisation of strategic events.

In addition, different forms of support supplement financial philanthropy: in-kind sponsorship and skills-based sponsorship. The development of multi-faceted philanthropy makes it possible to address all dimensions of a project through complementary components, such as its cultural, social or environmental aspects. For example, following the restoration of a major piece in our painting collection, *The Entombment,* by Paolo Cagliari, known as Veronese, a series of visits and 2D and 3D reproductions of the work for the blind and visually impaired were also developed with support from a bank's foundation.

Philanthropy is also a way to promote the activities and actions of Geneva's companies abroad, alongside the museum's activities with its international partners. Following the tradition of international cultural relations, museums continue to loan and share their collections and regularly organise international exhibitions. Such exhibitions can also be used as tools for brand diplomacy, a strategy that helps a country form alliances and expand its influence by promoting a positive image to international audiences. The MAH's international activities are, therefore, clearly beneficial to private partners. For example, with the support of individuals and companies that are based either in Lebanon or that are based in Geneva but that have important ties to Lebanon, a selection of over 350 archaeological objects and works of art belonging to the National Museum of Beirut was placed on display as part of the Fascination du Liban exhibition (2012). In addition, another exhibition was devised to celebrate the bicentennial anniversary of Greek Independence, and organised in partnership with Greek and Geneva philanthropists (2021). Furthermore, the MAH reaffirmed its important mission as an institution of refuge to underscore that art is a universal heritage,[7] inviting the Kyiv National Art Gallery to present the exhibition *From Dusk to Dawn* (2022). Organised against the backdrop of war between Russia and Ukraine, this exhibition brought together some 50 major artworks from the Ukrainian museum's collection on the theme of the night. The project was developed with the Kunstmuseum Basel and counted on the collaboration of Ukrainian partners and community.

Abroad, among the museum's different international projects based on private supports, we can mention at the Capital Museum in Beijing, the *Geneva at the Heart of Time* exhibition (2015), which was jointly organised by the MAH through the presentation of the museum's rich variety of watchmaking, enamelware jewellery and miniatures collections, and a watch manufacturer was also a partner in the event. *Geneva at the Heart of Time* was the first watch exhibition organised at the Capital Museum and the largest watch exhibition ever hosted in China, allowing 500,000 visitors to trace the origins of Swiss timekeeping. The project also coincided with the 65th anniversary of Swiss-Chinese diplomatic relations and was part of a diverse cultural programme coordinated by the Swiss Embassy in Beijing. The public particularly enjoyed the workshops and presentations by Swiss master watchmakers, which were organised by the watch manufacturer from Geneva, and provided real added value. The renown of the MAH has also been reinforced through the partnership with the private Foundation La Caixa: a touring exhibition on the MAH Flemish and Dutch painting collections which was presented in the Caixa Forum of Girona, Tarragona and Lleida (2017-2019).

These examples of successful partnerships are an important starting point when considering new possibilities for public-private collaborations. At the same time, at the Musée Rath, the MAH also presents renowned private art collections (such as *Marisa and Mario Merz* and *Loving – Collection Hugh Nini et Neal Treadwell*, among others) as well as projects related to the Swiss watchmaking sector, such as the Grand Prix de l'Horlogerie, highlighting Geneva's watchmaking tradition.

Philanthropy and the ICOM Code of Ethics

Government bodies have required the heads of main cultural institutions to secure the funding essential to maintaining a very significant portion of their activities. How has this change influenced and challenged museum practices and policies? Private sources of funding vary: private companies managing private collections, renting out of works or travelling exhibitions, and museums franchising their brands, posting advertisements on their façades, privatising rooms, and so on are the order of the day.[8] Controversial examples of PPPs highlighted in the news also show that the rules for collaborations between museums and private actors sometimes lack clarity and transparency in the eyes of the public. For example, it is not uncommon to see partners attempt to interfere in a museum's operations. In this context, should a cultural institution have to choose between accepting all of a partner's demands, finding a compromise, and completely disassociating itself? The latter option has become increasingly difficult in the current economic climate, not only owing to budget cuts but also due to competition with other non-profit entities.

Some private entities are able to influence the organisation of exhibitions, while others prefer to disassociate themselves from institutions to create their own cultural foundations – creating permanent spaces and public exhibitions that can sometimes rival museums given their extensive resources. Another risk is the loss of independence related to a partner's excessive demands, such as requesting certain benefits, but also the damage to a museum's credibility and image if the partner's values do not align with the institution's missions or are otherwise considered morally questionable.

In 1970, Hugues de Varine-Bohan stated in *ICOM News*: 'The laws of the market cannot become the laws which govern museums'(de Varine-Bohan 1970, p. 49). Museums are meant to benefit society and its development, so any message they convey or express must be in line with the main missions of their community's public policies. To define solutions and a corpus of reference, institutions and municipalities examine and publish ethical policies. As part of its approach to promoting transparency and exemplarity in public policy, the City of Geneva developed a code of ethics for PPPs, the first of its kind in Switzerland. Such documents are essential tools for managing and regulating any alliance between a public authority and a private entity.

In 2014, ICOM Switzerland outlined practical solutions by developing an ethics 'kit' that included recent examples of PPPs and how they were managed by Swiss museums. It also provided guidance on ways of approaching partnerships and interesting avenues for reflection. The ICOM Practical Handbook also warns of the complex nature of such partnerships, highlighting that the funds to carry out and develop the activities of the museum may be from the public sector, from private sources or generated through the museum's own activities. As Geoffrey Lewis, Chair of the ICOM Ethics Committee from 1997 to 2004 affirms, 'there should be a written policy of acceptable practice for all funding sources and all funds must be accounted for in a professional manner' (Lewis 2004, p. 6). In this respect, the museums should be vigilant and attentive to the content and integrity of their programmes and should not let them be influenced by the partners' imperatives. Thus, the constant evolution in philanthropic practices raises a number of challenges and questions. How can we ensure that PPPs do not affect the diversity of cultural offerings? What kind of balance should be achieved in terms of benefits? What instruments can museums use to research a philanthropist's background? What terms can a museum accept without risking changing its identity?

Looking at the ICOM Code of Ethics (ICOM 2006), one may wonder if, in its current state, the text provides a sufficiently comprehensive model that covers all kinds of PPPs and answers all of the questions museum professionals are faced with in the quotidian. What exactly does the Code say on the subject? Chapter 8 of the Code discusses conflicts of interest but never mentions PPPs. The information on external funding in Articles 1.10[9] and 6.6[10] is vague and general. It reflects the state and perception of philanthropy when the Code was last revised in 2004. Incidentally, the 1986 Code (ICOM 1986) explicitly mentioned sponsorship and stated that it must be clearly defined.[11] In 2004, that idea had disappeared: at that time, the influence of the private sector was not as much significant as today, and it was not considered necessary to develop this point. As mentioned, the situation has deeply changed. The ICOM Code of Ethics offers a general reference framework, but in its current form, museums must make do with an abstract principle for implementing the professional management of any funds they receive. In this context, it seems necessary to develop a report on sponsorship and expand the glossary by adding terms defining any new activity developed by museums (Schärer 2016, p. 15).[12] Thus, referring to the ICOM Code of Ethics, ETHCOM published guidelines on this topic, approved by the Executive Board on September 2020[13]. Following the 25th General Conference of ICOM, held in Kyoto in 2019, ICOM decided that the Code should be revised. Sharing and publishing best PPP practices could help develop new guidelines, resulting in a series of annexes delineating and defining these challenging interactions.

Conclusions and Outlook

Museum partners do not fund institutional operating expenses. They cannot, should not, and do not wish to replace governing bodies, but they do allow museums, during times of budgetary restrictions, to continue to organise large exhibitions, enhance their collections through donations, develop educational projects, undertake renovations, and build new structures. They want to be engaged, contribute their expertise, and bring in new audiences and networks.

In recent years in Switzerland, and particularly in Geneva, we have witnessed the emergence of a new form of philanthropy that can play a large role in promoting culture. These new philanthropists can become key partners for museums. They want to take more pragmatic action that gives meaning to their personal engagement. They also demand transparency, professionalism, consistency and concrete action. They often want to invest by using the same methods as the private sector, and they expect tangible results. Today, a process of ongoing evaluation guides decisions and, when needed, changes in direction. The new generation of philanthropists gets involved early on and wants to tackle problems at their source, to change the world here and now (Besson 2017).

Corporate philanthropy is now part of companies' strategic management. Companies invest in museum projects because culture allows them to link themselves to initiatives based in a specific geographic area. As a local marketing instrument, cultural partnerships allow a company to set itself apart from its competitors and counter the mistrust the public often has in the corporate sector. To communities, museums represent universal values. By helping to protect and disseminate cultural heritage, philanthropists are showing an awareness of their social responsibility.

It is up to museums to engage in a constant dialogue with philanthropists while maintaining their independence and staying true to their original scientific and social missions, since in 'the heritage field, the cultural professionals are the real creators for the ethical norm' (Goffaux-Callebaut 2016, p. 12) Collaboration between a museum and its partners should be based on mutual trust and respect, with the main objectives being the carrying out a public service mission and serving the public good, above all. A balanced relationship is essential for successfully undertaking a joint venture – if possible in the long-term – in order to work together to take innovative and creative steps towards provide greater access to culture for the public of the future.

Notes

1 'The effective functioning of museums is directly influenced by public and private funding and appropriate partnerships. Member States should strive to ensure a clear vision, adequate planning and funding for museums, and a harmonious balance among the different funding mechanisms to enable them to carry out their mission to the benefit of society with full respect for their primary functions'. (UNESCO Recommendation concerning the Protection and Promotion of Museums and Collections, their Diversity and their Role in Society, adopted by the General Conference at its 38th Session, Paris, 17 November 2015, p. 20.) On the same subject: 'The governing body should ensure that there are sufficient funds to carry out and develop the activities of the museum. All funds must be accounted for in a professional manner' (Article 1.9 of the ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums, 2006).

2 Message of the Swiss Federal Council regarding the initiative 'in favour of culture', art 661, https://www.fedlex.admin.ch/eli/fga/1984/2_501_521_441/fr

3 According to the Federal Statistical Office, in 2021, there were 1,081 museums in Switzerland: https://www.bfs.admin.ch/bfs/fr/home/statistiques/culture-medias-societe-information-sport/culture/musees.html
4 In Switzerland, culture is the responsibility of cantonal governments, according to Article 69 of the Swiss Federal Constitution. Each year, public authorities invest nearly 3 billion CHF in culture (in 2021), 50 per cent of which comes from local governments, 40 per cent from cantonal governments, and 10 per cent from the federal government (Jauslin 2010, p. 13).
5 Rapport sur les Fondations Suisses 2023, Ceps (Centre d'etudes de la philanthropie en Suisse) Forschung and Praxis Band 30, Université de Bâle p.7.
6 'A (corporate) foundation has an independent identity, with its own operating rules, is not subjected to the same accounting and financial restrictions of the company' (Vescia 1996, p. 27)
7 Already in the past, the MAH was known for its efforts in protecting cultural heritage in armed conflicts. In 1939, during the Spanish Civil War, the MAH contributed to save the Prado Museum's master pieces hosting an exhibition visited by more of 400,000 people. In 2007, the MAH presented the archaeological remarkable artefacts of the Gaza Strip in the *Gaza à la croisée des civilisations*. Furthermore, in 2017, nine confiscated archaeological works from Syria, Yemen and Libya were shown to MAH visitors for both educational and dissuasive purposes to raise awareness of the damage caused by the looting of cultural heritage.
8 The *Dictionnaire Encyclopédique de Muséologie* (2011) examines the consequences of the growth of commercialisation in museum life and operations in the article on 'Management'.
9 'The governing body should have a written policy regarding sources of income that it may generate through its activities or accept from outside sources. Regardless of funding source, museums should maintain control of the content and integrity of their programmes, exhibitions and activities. Income-generating activities should not compromise the standards of the institution or its public' (Article 1.10 of the ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums, 2006).
10 'When seeking funds for activities involving contemporary communities, their interests should not be compromised'(Article 6.6 of the ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums, 2006).
11 'Where it is the policy of the museum to seek and accept financial or other support from commercial or industrial organisations, or from other outside sources, great care is needed to define clearly the agreed relationship between the museum and the sponsor. Commercial support and sponsorship may involve ethical problems and the museum must ensure that the standards and objectives of the museum are not compromised by such a relationship' (Article 2.9, Commercial Support and Sponsorship, ICOM Code of Professional Ethics, 1986).
12 These proposals are those of Martin Schärer, President of the ICOM Ethics Committee from 2012 to 2018.
13 Fundraising is increasingly a part of many museums' activities. At the same time, the environment for raising funds is becoming more challenging and competitive. These standards are intended as guidance for museums so that they may maintain professional standards and the confidence of the public they serve. (Standards of Fundraising of the International Council of Museums: https://icom.museum/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Fundraising-Standards_EN.pdf)

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Part V

Sustainability and Risk Management

17 Museums and Sustainable Development

A Case Study of the First 'Green' Museum in South Africa

Beverley Thomas

Introduction

The new Amazwi South African Museum of Literature (Amazwi) building is the first museum, indeed the first Public and Education Building, to achieve a five-star rating from the Green Building Council of South Africa (GBCSA). The idea to construct a 'green' building came from the Department of Public Works (DPW) and was welcomed by the museum. The project was initiated in 2010 and the museum's first task was to specify its needs in detail. Over the next few years, staff gathered all the information that was available at the time on 'green' and 'sustainable' museums, principally those published by the Museums Association (UK), the Canadian Museums Association, Museums Australia, and the American Alliance of Museums.

South Africa's reintegration onto the world stage after 1994 heralded a new era of participation in matters of global concern. In 2002, South Africa hosted the World Summit on Sustainable Development, where strategies to address poverty, unsustainable patterns of consumption, energy efficiency, the management of natural resources, and climate change were discussed (United Nations 2002). South Africa was also represented at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development held in Rio de Janeiro in 2012 (Rio+20). South Africa's commitment to sustainable development is articulated in the 2008 National Framework on Sustainable Development and the 2011 National Strategy and Action Plan. This had the effect, in theory, of mainstreaming sustainability in all spheres of government (Department of Environment and Tourism 2008, p. 7).

Sustainable Development

Concern for the environment as a political strategy emerged in the 1960s, but its urgency only surfaced with the publication of the Brundtland Report in 1987 (Brundtland 1987, p. 8). Brundtland emphasised the connection between economic development (poverty in developing countries) and environmental issues; hence the widely accepted definition being 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs' (Brundtland 1987, p. 16). Acknowledging this definition,

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South Africa's National Strategy for Sustainable Development 'regards sustainable development as a long-term commitment, which combines environmental protection, social equity and economic efficiency with the vision and values of the country' (Department of Environmental Affairs 2011, p. 5). The country also links national, regional and global collaboration to sustainable development and considers it a factor in safeguarding democracy (Department of Environment and Tourism 2008, p. 8). Rio+20 used the term 'green economy' in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication (United Nations Division for Sustainable Development 2012, p. 9); the term 'green' is, therefore, sometimes used to imply sustainability or to refer only to the environmental aspect of sustainable development.

While the Brundtland definition advocates three pillars of sustainable development – economic development, social equity and environmental protection – the Hangzhou Declaration affirms that culture should be considered a 'fundamental enabler of sustainability, being a source of meaning and energy, a wellspring of creativity and innovation, and a resource to address challenges and find appropriate solutions' (UNESCO 2013, p. 5). In the museum context, we accept this, either by including a fourth pillar (Hawkes 2013, p. 2) or, in developing countries, by ensuring that the first three pillars succeed in order for culture to thrive. We also use the term 'sustainable' in museums to indicate that funding sources are reliable and that the museum and its programmes can be considered permanent.

Museums and Sustainability

When embarking on a new museum building project, there is every reason to aspire to the very best standards of environmental control, but controlling temperature, relative humidity and light and air pollution consumes a vast amount of energy. Public spaces like galleries, auditoriums, conference rooms, shops and restaurants may have different comfort levels. In its *ESD* (Ecologically Sustainable Development) *Design Guide for Office and Public Buildings*, the Australian Government Department of the Environment and Water Resources notes:

> Galleries, libraries and museums are special spaces with particular requirements, such as high levels of lighting and strict temperature and humidity control. This constrains the possibilities for use of some sustainable building practices and requires greater innovation to incorporate sustainable measures.
>
> (Australian Government Department of the Environment and Water Resources 2006, p. 58)

In an article in *Museum Practice* in 2006, David Martin questions 'whether the energy and other resources used in building new or expanded storage facilities, and in maintaining the environmental conditions needed to preserve and display their collections, are environmentally (and financially) sustainable' (2006, p. 61). This has not gone unnoticed by conservation scientists; Dardes and Staniforth reassure us that 'conservators have acknowledged the need to reconsider environmental policies and practices for collections as part of the museum world's commitment to sustainable practices' (2015, p. 21).

Not forgetting the other pillars of sustainability, in 2018, ICOM established a Working Group on Sustainability to investigate how museums could incorporate the UN Resolution, *Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* (2015b), and the *Paris Agreement* (2015a), which is part of the UN Convention on Climate Change, into their work. The Working Group's achievement was the adoption, at ICOM's 34th General Assembly, of the resolution *On sustainability and the implementation of Agenda 2030, Transforming our World* (ICOM 2019, p. 2).

The New Amazwi South African Museum of Literature

Amazwi is situated in Makhanda (formerly known as Grahamstown), a small university city in the Eastern Cape province. Although culturally rich – it is home to the National Arts Festival, many museums and excellent private schools – it is socially and financially challenged, with high rates of unemployment and poorly performing public schools. The multi-million rand investment by the government required a substantive socio-economic return and assurance that the new museum would contribute, as Sandell puts it, to 'the amelioration of the symptoms of social inequality' (2007, p. 96). Before planning was completed, the Department of Arts and Culture, the funders of the museum, decided to expand the mandate of the museum to include the literatures of the Indigenous languages of South Africa. Revised plans took the additional facilities required into account.

The museum was established in 1980 from a collection of South African literary manuscripts assembled by Professor Guy Butler of Rhodes University. Amazwi is a small museum, even by South African standards, with a collection of 150,000 items. There are two satellite museums: The Eastern Star Gallery, a printing and press museum in Makhanda, and Schreiner House, a house museum dedicated to the author Olive Schreiner. Schreiner House is situated in Cradock, 150 km further inland. Prior to the construction of the new building, the museum was housed in three separate buildings with the collections on the upper floor of a former school dormitory. The only exhibition space was a 25 square metre room in between offices. The only space for education programmes and functions was a hall at the Eastern Star Gallery with a seating capacity of 50 people.

The climate in Makhanda is unpredictable. In theory, it is warm and temperate (Cfb on the Köppen system). The average high in February, the hottest month of the year, is 27°C and the average low in July, the coldest month, is 5°C. Rainfall occurs year-round; March is the wettest month with over 80 mm of precipitation, and June is the driest with less than 40 mm (https://en.climate-data.org). Although this may seem ideal, the reality is that in one day, during a violent thunderstorm, the temperature and humidity can fall from 35°C with a relative humidity of 30 per cent to 18°C with high humidity for several days.

Needs Assessment

At the start of the design process, the DPW undertook an assessment of the needs of the museum based on its functions and operations. These needs included adequate and secure accommodation for the safe storage and retrieval of the museum's collections, exhibition galleries and spaces for performances, events, learning and research. These needs and future development plans, the features of the site chosen for the building, along with DPW building standards and the need to 'go green', formed the brief for the professional team led by the architect. The museum also wanted a building that was prominent, contemporary and accessible. The professional team was not appointed through a design competition process, as is often the case, but through standard government procurement systems aimed at achieving the lowest price.

The planning phase took two years and involved lengthy, and regular, meetings with the DPW project manager, the architect, engineers of all disciplines, an exhibition designer, a quantity surveyor, a landscape designer and sustainable building consultants. At this stage museum needs, for example, dehumidification, were debated in terms of their energy use. At the time, the GBCSA had not yet developed a rating tool for Public and Education Buildings, so the Amazwi building became the pilot. The plans were submitted to the GBCSA and, based on the nine environmental impact categories (below), achieved a five-star rating (SA excellence) for design.

Management

- The appointment of a Green Star professional on the design team
- Implementation of an environmental management plan for the entire duration of the project
- A waste management plan, i.e., construction would reuse or recycle at least 70 per cent of waste, by mass, on site
- Building management system that monitors and records power and water consumption

Indoor Environmental Quality

- Adequate daylight and glare control
- Exclusive use of low volatile compounds (paints, varnishes, adhesives, flooring)
- No or low-formaldehyde content in composite wood materials

Energy Efficiency

- Energy efficient heating, ventilation and air conditioning with occupancy sensors installed in offices
- Low-voltage lighting with occupancy sensors
- Heat pumps for hot water in bathrooms and kitchen

Transport

- Bicycle parking and showers to encourage staff to cycle rather than drive to work
- Bus parking on site
- Priority parking reserved for hybrid vehicles and motorcycles

Water Use

- Stormwater detention from higher ground
- Rainwater harvesting
- Water-efficient plumbing fixtures

Materials

- Recycled materials, e.g., flooring made from old tyres, soundproofing from coconut shells
- Use of PVC minimised, if not entirely eliminated
- Steel with a recycled content of more than 90 per cent
- Reduction in Portland cement mix
- 95 per cent of timber by cost Forest Stewardship Council certified or reused or recycled
- Clay bricks with a 30 per cent weight-reduction factor were used

Land Use and Ecology

- Topsoil removed during earthmoving protected from degradation and reused
- Landscaping to avoid urban heat island effect with hardscaping less than 10 per cent of landscape
- Roofing with specified reflectance index

Emissions

- Gaseous ozone depletion potential of insulating materials, refrigerants and fire suppression systems specified

Innovation

- Balance between functionality (a museum) and stringent demands of green rating tools
- Pilot for the GBCSA

The design of the building is based on freeform curves, which are echoed in the landscaping and the exhibitions. On completion, the building was re-assessed and again received a five-star rating from the GBCSA. The multi-storey design minimises the ecological footprint of the building: 5,000 square metres of occupied space on a footprint of 4,000 square metres on a site of 2.7 hectares. The architect's design maintains a visual connection to the existing built environment. The locally quarried stone cladding and gabions on the building functionally represent a passive design strategy to regulate indoor temperature, but aesthetically, they draw cues from local historical buildings.

The collections' storage facilities are underground. The subsurface basement is constructed as a continuous concrete slide to ensure absolute water-tightness. It has a 'green' roof, minimising natural fluctuations in temperature, which reduces energy use in controlling humidity. This section of the building is an isolated zone with a nitrogen and argon fire suppression system. Temperature and humidity control are powered by a generator during power outages. Drains below ground channel any residual moisture beneath the building into the storm water system. In the old building, the collections' storage areas were routinely fumigated. When the collections were moved they were professionally fumigated off-site with the goal of never having to fumigate indiscriminately again. Equipment for low-temperature treatment has been installed and an integrated pest management strategy based on prevention was implemented.

In the main exhibition gallery, an open grid carries lighting and audio-visual services to various parts of the exhibitions, above which are clerestory windows. Large windows in the children's area provide natural light but are filtered by a 90 per cent solar shield to reduce glare, heat gain and prevent ultraviolet light from reaching the exhibitions. The exhibitions are lit with LED lights. A smaller gallery in the centre of the building with no natural light and LED lighting controlled to 40 lux is used for displaying fragile paper artefacts. The materials used for the construction of exhibition furniture and accessories are to the same standard of materials as the building. Office furniture was sourced from a supplier registered as a member of the GBCSA.

Another important feature of the building is the garden. Makhanda is situated at the convergence of four biomes: Albany Thicket, Fynbos, Savanna Grassland and Nama Karoo. Applying the principles of xeriscape landscaping, the garden is planted to show the different biomes and growing conditions. Educational programmes on landscaping have been developed that teach about water conservation, medicinal plants and plants in folklore. This has allowed Indigenous knowledge systems and intangible cultural heritage to be merged into literary museum programmes.

The permanent exhibitions in the museum focus on the literary representation of the South African landscape from early colonial times to the present day. Through literary imaginings, the landscape is presented as a physical place with its long history of ownership conflicts, and as an aesthetic symbol of cultural identity. A section of the exhibition entitled 'Nightmares Revisited' describes the fear of global contagion that has emerged as a theme in post-apocalyptic literary fiction. It is a critique of consumerist capitalism and the fear by the privileged that they will be overrun by the masses of unemployed citizens. This section was included in the exhibition to challenge visitors to think about the consequences of a society that fails to consider sustainable development.

A temporary exhibition called 'Humanature' explores the ways in which South African literature expresses the complex relationship between humanity and nature. In this time of ecological crisis, many writers represent humanity within the natural systems in which all life is entangled, and consider human responsibilities towards those systems:

> He told me of the despair of the people who had once lived here, and of the slow rise of the water when it was too late to do anything.
>
> 'They knew,' he said softly. 'The governments all over the world – they knew a hundred years before, they knew that change was already happening. They knew that the way of their world was wrong, and yet they chose to do nothing. And when the change came, it came quickly, because the harm was already done.
>
> (From *Remembering Green* by Lesley Beake 2009, p. 33)

The exhibition includes contributions from young people and a programme of interdisciplinary activities aimed at encouraging positive social-ecological change to continue.

Impact of the New Building

Job creation and the alleviation of poverty is one of the South African government's key priorities, and public works are a key contributor to job creation. In addition to this, the Expanded Public Works Programme 'has successfully made a significant socio-economic impact to the communities through the creation and maintenance of community assets' (Department of Public Works 2016). At the opening of the South African Museums Association Conference hosted by Amazwi in 2018, the Executive Mayor of Makana, Cllr Nomhle Gaga, remarked that the new Amazwi was a welcome and unique addition to the city's cultural assets. The construction of Amazwi's building created 205 local job opportunities: there were National Youth Service Programme beneficiaries and nine small, medium and micro-enterprises were sub-contracted, creating 135 jobs. The DPW project manager who oversaw the new Amazwi building described its value as follows:

> With this building, attributes beyond cost, time and quality became key measures, such as the achievement of social objectives through job creation, local SMMEs [small, medium and macro enterprises] and suppliers' involvement, and the project being accepted by the broader community.
>
> (PropertyWheel_GLP 2017)

The response of visitors to the new museum has been overwhelmingly positive compared to the old premises, which were poorly resourced to receive museum visitors. A 2012 review on Tripadvisor condemns the old museum as 'Not worth visiting …. Luckily there was no entrance fee'. In 2018, by contrast, the museum was described as a ‘Complete surprise – the new complex is superb and certainly worthy of its status as a national facility …’.

The museum site was previously used by people walking their dogs and a decision was made not to fence the front of the property so that the local community could retain a connection with the site. The landscaping extends to the street which allows for integration of the building into a park setting and the streetscape. A safe pedestrian environment is created by centralising all the parking in one distinct vehicle zone. Walkways and public open spaces lead towards the building entrance. The public’s response to the open space has been very positive. People still walk their dogs on the premises, which in addition provide a safe space for students to skateboard or hang out in the outdoor amphitheatre, and the museum building has become a popular site for wedding photography. Although it cannot be ascertained whether these users visit the museum, the museum is still fulfilling a recreational and community function.

Reaction from staff working in the building has been mixed. In 2018, Kenneth Rampou undertook a post-occupancy evaluation of the museum using the Building Use Studies Methodology. Assessing satisfaction with the overall performance of the building based on design, health, needs and productivity, Rampou’s results indicate that:

- the building performs better than the benchmark for overall performance (2018, p. 58);
- overall comfort outperformed other comfort factors as well as the benchmark, but
- control of lighting and noise levels in the building was a concern to many (2018, p. 62).

Control of glare on the north-western side of the building has been problematic. This is either due to the eaves not being deep enough or the low-emissivity glass not performing as expected. Tolerance of noise is subjective.

Perhaps the most interesting question posed by the survey was ‘To what extent do users tolerate the green building’s environment?’ (2018, p. 62). The result is shown as a ‘forgiveness factor’. Rampou informs us that the typical value of the forgiveness factor ranges from 0.80 to 1.20; Amazwi’s score of 1.05 indicates that ‘the occupants may be more tolerant of the environmental conditions of the building’ (2018, p. 63). This, he concludes, ‘may be attributable to pro-environmental behaviours’ (2018, p. 63).

Conclusion

In 2019 the museum’s mandate was officially expanded to include the literatures of the Indigenous languages of South Africa. This is reflected in the museum’s new name, ‘Amazwi’, which means ‘voices’ in isiXhosa, the dominant language of the Eastern Cape province. This makes the museum more inclusive and addresses issues of social equity in cultural preservation and promotion. In many ways, an entirely new museum has been created. The scale of the change from the museum's old premises – and the vastly different working conditions that the new building provides – has at times challenged comfort zones.

The most important lesson learnt is that even change for the better requires a carefully managed change process. In the post-handover stage, inadequate demonstration of complicated systems, like the building management system, has had a negative impact. However, the new building's shortcomings don't necessarily relate to it being a 'green' building. Rampou notes that problems can occur because of the lack of experience of 'first-time clients in building projects … timing, financial pressure and the practice of hastening design solutions' (2018, p. 20), which can compromise the ultimate functionality of the building.

Amazwi will expand its facilities and services at Schreiner House in Cradock, and with a firm commitment to build 'green'. The climate in Cradock is more extreme than in Makhanda, and the project will require an appropriate integration between the historical house and new buildings on the site – offices, a shop, café and additional exhibition space. A landscaped garden is also planned, but unlike Makhanda, Cradock has plentiful access to water.

Integrating sustainability into the daily activities of the museum has not been difficult. In 2011, the governing body adopted an environmental policy ensuring that the museum operates in a sustainable manner in all its operations. This includes reducing waste, recycling and reusing, using non-toxic cleaning materials and taking suppliers' sustainability credentials into account when making purchasing decisions. An environmental champion on the staff ensures that this ethos continues. The Canadian Museums Association, in its Sustainable Development Guide, asks, and answers, the following question: 'Why integrate sustainable development into museum operations? In short, to serve as a model to society, economic efficiency and viability, social responsibility and an attractive marketing image' (n.d, p. 17).

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18 Creating Disaster Resilient Museums

Corine Wegener

Museums that integrate disaster resilience thinking into everyday operations are better able to protect people and collections as well as to be available to help their own communities during disaster response and recovery. A resilient museum has a disaster plan that is updated and exercised regularly. At a higher level, preserving and sharing collections with the public is part of the basic museum mission and so constitutes a professional and legal obligation. You cannot share collections if they are destroyed. Protection of staff, volunteers and visitors also carries legal obligations and reduces liability. Good disaster planning also supports business continuity models, ensuring minimal disruption to operations and loss of income after disasters.

Fires at Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris in 2019 and the National Museum of Brazil in Rio de Janeiro in 2018 captured the world's attention and caused an outpouring of disbelief and mourning. How could established institutions suffer such terrible losses in a commonplace disaster such as fire? The Brazil fire, sparked by an improperly installed air conditioning unit, quickly burned out of control due to a lack of fire suppression systems in a historic building with wooden floors. The result was the catastrophic loss of nearly 90 per cent of its 20 million scientific and historic collections (Phillips 2018). This loss might have been avoided with the installation of modern sprinkler systems and routine maintenance. But these types of measures require funding and support from leadership.

The cause of the Notre Dame Cathedral fire has been ruled accidental, with investigators initially focusing on possible electrical faults in construction equipment and on-the-job smoking by construction workers. More recent investigations focus on potentially faulty wiring (Thompson 2021). Fires caused during construction and repair work are a common cause of damage to collecting institutions and are preventable with appropriate supervision of outside contractors (Marrion 2015).

Post-disaster investigations will undoubtedly show that a combination of several factors led to these disasters and that at least some of them were human-caused and thus preventable. How can museum leaders ensure that their institutions are doing all they can to prevent and mitigate the most common hazards that threaten their facilities and collections? By practising risk management thinking.

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Response Thinking vs Disaster Risk Management Thinking

Disaster planning has historically focused effort and money on disaster response rather than on preparedness and mitigation. The result of this reactive versus proactive approach is an endless cycle of loss. To break this cycle, those responsible for disaster planning are increasingly focusing more funding and effort on preventing and mitigating the impacts of hazards, saving lives and property as well as reducing costs.

Investing in disaster preparation and mitigation can indeed result in significant cost savings, particularly when preventing or limiting damage to irreplaceable collections. Small investments in mitigation, particularly basic preventive conservation like improved collections shelving that is secured against earthquakes and raised in case of flooding, can have a high payoff if earthquakes or floods are a potential recurring hazard at your museum (Kelman 2014).

Understanding Basic Disaster Terminology

To practise disaster risk thinking and communicate it to others, we need a common vocabulary. Disaster risk management professionals from different countries may use somewhat different terminology, so it is useful to begin with the standard international definitions created by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction listed below.[1] Local and national emergency management and civil defence personnel may use variations on these terms.

- Exposure: 'The situation of people, infrastructure, housing, production capacities and other tangible human assets located in hazard-prone areas'.[2] The exposure may be unavoidable or there may have been opportunities to limit exposure.
- Hazard: 'A process, phenomenon or human activity that may cause loss of life, injury or other health impacts, property damage, social and economic disruption or environmental degradation'.[3] Hazard events may be naturally occurring or caused by humans, but decisions or inaction by humans are usually a contributing factor to the hazard event resulting in disaster. Hazards may be rapid onset, such as an earthquake, or slow onset, like a slow-moving hurricane. Hazards often considered to be naturally caused include the following: earthquakes, landslides, tsunamis, volcanic activity, avalanches, floods, wildfires, tornados, typhoons/hurricanes, storm/wave surges, extreme temperatures, drought, diseases/epidemics and insect/animal plagues. It is easy to see that many of these disasters are exacerbated by human decisions or inaction, such as people living near active volcanos or in flood zones. Hazards related to human activity include the following: armed conflicts, political instability, famine, industrial accidents, transport accidents, fires, nuclear meltdown, unplanned urbanisation, economic instability, extreme poverty and construction/renovation accidents.
- Disaster: 'A serious disruption of the functioning of a community or a society at any scale due to hazardous events interacting with conditions of exposure, vulnerability and capacity, leading to one or more of the following: human,

material, economic and environmental losses and impacts'.[4] A disaster is an emergency event that exceeds local capacity to respond and resolve.

- Emergency: A hazard event response using local resources and without external assistance. An emergency rises to the level of a disaster when there is not enough capacity to deal with the emergency on a local level, whether due to a lack of resources and/or lack of knowledge of how to respond appropriately. UNDRR does not define 'emergency' in its terminology but notes that the term '… is sometimes used interchangeably with the term disaster, as, for example, in the context of biological and technological hazards or health emergencies, which, however, can also relate to hazardous events that do not result in the serious disruption of the functioning of a community or society'.[5]
- Resilience: 'The ability of a system, community or society exposed to hazards to resist, absorb, accommodate, adapt to, transform and recover from the effects of a hazard in a timely and efficient manner, including through the preservation and restoration of its essential basic structures and functions through risk management'.[6]
- Vulnerability: 'The conditions determined by physical, social, economic and environmental factors or processes which increase the susceptibility of an individual, a community, assets or systems to the impacts of hazards'.[7]

Understanding the Disaster Cycle

Understanding the disaster cycle is the key to avoiding the tendency to focus resources on response and to adopt disaster risk management thinking. There are various disaster cycle models, but in this case, we will consider the four-phase model of mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. The model below (Figure 18.1) illustrates disasters as a cycle:

- Mitigation: 'The lessening or minimising of the adverse impacts of a hazardous event'.[8]

Figure 18.1 Disaster management cycle. © Smithsonian Cultural Rescue Initiative.

- Preparedness: 'The knowledge and capacities developed by governments, response and recovery organisations, communities and individuals to effectively anticipate, respond to and recover from the impacts of likely, imminent or current disasters'.[9]
- Response: 'Actions taken directly before, during or immediately after a disaster in order to save lives, reduce health impacts, ensure public safety and meet the basic subsistence needs of the people affected'.[10] Though cultural heritage is not part of the UN definition, measures may also be taken to save cultural heritage and other property during the response phase.
- Recovery: 'The restoring or improving of livelihoods and health, as well as economic, physical, social, cultural and environmental assets, systems and activities, of a disaster-affected community or society, aligning with the principles of sustainable development and "build back better", to avoid or reduce future disaster risk'.[11]

Creating a Museum Disaster Plan

The process of creating a disaster plan is a team effort. There are certain elements every plan should include, but the plan should be tailored to the institution.

Suggested steps to create a disaster plan are defined by the Commonwealth of Australia (2000):

1 Assess risks and threats (What could go wrong?)
2 Mitigate or remove risks and threats (How can we prevent them or reduce the damage?)
3 Prioritise your collections (What should we save first?)
4 Establish a disaster response team (Who are we going to call?)
5 Establish support networks (Who else can help us?)
6 Prepare the disaster response plan (What do we do?)
7 Prepare the disaster recovery plan (How do we cope with this?)
8 Train staff, board, and volunteers (Do we all know what to do?)
9 Review and exercise the plan (What worked? What did not work?)

Who Should Be on A Disaster Planning Team and Why?

Successful museum disaster plans are interdisciplinary, include staff at all levels, and are supported by museum leadership. Consider including various museum departments for the expertise they offer:

- Facilities/building management: knowledge of the building and physical plant
- Security: safety and security of visitors, staff, volunteers, and collections
- Curatorial departments: collections and curatorial records expertise
- Registration/collections management: collection locations, storage, inventories, loans
- Conservation/restoration: Preventive conservation, conservation treatment

- Visitor Services: visitor protection considerations for disaster planning
- Volunteer Management: role of docents and other volunteers in disaster plan
- Museum Education: school and tour groups, post-disaster community outreach programmes
- External Affairs: communication with media, public, and membership throughout the disaster cycle
- Finance and administration: business continuity planning and providing funds throughout the disaster cycle

Step 1. Assess Risks and Threats

Each day we make decisions about reducing our personal risk: where to cross the street, whether to purchase home insurance, or whether to wear seat belts in the car. These are all risk decisions. We consciously make a cost-benefit analysis: how difficult or expensive is the protective measure versus the potential harm if we do not. Similarly, museums should work to integrate disaster risk management thinking into everyday operations. For example, they should consider including a budget line for disaster preparedness just as we do for staff, exhibitions or utilities.

It is important to determine the hazards your museum is exposed to and what harm they may cause. Then you can decide which hazards to eliminate or mitigate *before* they occur. When determining hazards and risk to your collections, think holistically. Think of your museum location, building envelope, and indoor protective measures as an integrated whole.

Bring your disaster planning team together for a risk brainstorming session. Research your museum's location and the types of disasters, both natural and human-caused that may have occurred in the past. Has your museum or the surrounding area experienced past flooding, hurricanes or earthquakes? List the types of hazards in your area, the likelihood your museum would be exposed to them, and the vulnerability of your museum to a hazard that would result in harm. A mathematical way to think about risk is:

$$\textbf{Risk} = \textbf{Hazard} \times \textbf{Exposure} \times \textbf{Vulnerability}$$

A group risk assessment walkthrough can also be a good tool for spotting hazards, risks and potential vulnerabilities, and even allow you to make on-the-spot preventive corrections. Be sure to tour the exterior as well as the interiors. Once you determine the potential hazards and risks, you can decide together on appropriate mitigation and preparedness actions.

There are several tools available for teams to carry out risk assessment. The chart below illustrates one way to input potential risks and decide on preventive measures. Input a possible hazard or event, the probability from high to low that it will occur, then note the potential impact, high to low. Some hazards may be low probability, such as a tornado, but result in high impact/damage to the collection if they do occur. The efforts allocated to preventive actions depend on the resulting risk category number (see below). Potential risks for:

Risk (event and consequence)	*Probability High–low (5–1)*	*Impact High–low (5–1)*	*Total (number)*	*Category of risk (High 10–8, medium 7–4, low 3–1)*	*Preventive actions*

Source: From *Be Prepared: Guidelines for Small Museums for Writing a Disaster Plan.* A Heritage Collections Council Project (May 2000). Available from: https://blueshieldaustralia.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/CAN-Be-Prepared.pdf

Depending on location, a museum may face dozens of potential hazards. The decision matrix helps focus effort on the most likely hazards that pose the most risk to your institution. For example, museums in a desert environment probably will not waste resources to plan for hurricanes.

The 'all-hazards approach' is another useful idea, encouraging focus on investment in taking measures that will reduce risk to human life and property in the face of nearly any hazard. For example, an updated museum contact list, emergency first-aid training for staff or advance contracts with disaster recovery companies will be useful for all types of hazard events and are relatively inexpensive to carry out.

Step 2. Mitigate or Remove hazards/risks and Threats

The best way to deal with a disaster is to prevent it from happening by removing the hazard. If that is not possible, determine steps you can take to mitigate the damage that might result.

Examples of hazard removal or mitigation include:

- Regular maintenance of roof and building envelope;
- Prohibit smoking throughout the museum;
- Remove dead vegetation and combustible materials from the grounds near the museum;
- Install, maintain, and test smoke alarms, fire extinguishers, sprinkler systems and hydrants;
- Practice good housekeeping, storage of chemicals in approved cabinets and integrated pest management;
- Store collections at least 6 in. (15 cm.) off the floor and in locked cabinets if possible;
- Avoid collections and records storage in basements or attics when possible;

- Secure storage shelves and exhibition cases against earthquake shaking or floating during floods;
- Monitor/inspect construction activity, especially hot works (welding, cutting torches, hot lighting), supervise non-staff workers.

Step 3. Prioritise Your Collections

Creating a priority list of collections may be one of the most difficult steps in creating your disaster plan because it requires group consensus. Registration, conservation and curatorial staff should all be involved. This list should be kept confidential but shared in broad terms with first responders during preparedness meetings. The list will help inform future decisions about what to evacuate first, what to salvage first after a disaster, and set priorities for conservation treatment during recovery. Each department should create a list that contributes to an overall museum list.

Priority considerations should include (in this order):

- Objects on loan;
- Collections that most directly support the institution's mission;
- Significant, unique and/or most valued objects;
- Objects most used and/or most vital for research;
- Objects most representative of subject areas;
- Those prone to damage if untreated;
- Materials most likely to be salvaged successfully when evacuation and salvage plans are in place (for example, very heavy objects that can only be moved by heavy equipment may be unrealistic to prioritise for salvage).

Step 4: Engage in Preparedness Measures

Examples of disaster preparedness measures:

- Create and regularly exercise an institutional disaster plan;
- Maintain copies of collections documentation and inventories offsite and in the cloud;
- Plan for offsite storage in case of emergency evacuation or salvage of collections;
- Secure storage shelving in case of earthquakes;
- Prioritise collections to be evacuated or moved in an emergency;
- Ensure key staff are familiar with locations of water and electrical shutoffs;
- Store emergency salvage supplies in multiple locations, including personal protective equipment;
- Assign emergency roles to staff, regularly update emergency contact list;
- Plan for both short and long-term power outages, including budget for generators and fuel;
- Emergency first-aid training for staff;
- Create evacuation and salvage plans using museum floor plans and train staff on their roles;

- Develop advance contracts with vendors to provide emergency stabilisation and repairs to the building, salvage and treatment of collections, or temporary storage;
- Evacuate collections inland or to higher ground in case of flooding or hurricanes.

Step 5. Establish a Disaster Response Team

Even in the best-prepared museums disasters can happen. Working with first responders, a trained and prepared Response Team can help collect documentation of damage for insurance and government assistance purposes, mitigate damage to the building and collections, and provide input for planning recovery. Each museum should develop a Response Team based on its own needs, but some positions to consider include those listed below. Be sure each team member has a designated backup. Some staff may be impacted by a disaster and not be able to reach the museum. Teams should meet regularly to update the emergency plan and rehearse their roles through tabletop and live exercises.

- Disaster team leader;
- Finance/administrative coordinator;
- Materials and supplies coordinator;
- Collections recovery specialist;
- Work crew coordinator;
- Documentation coordinator;
- Technology coordinator;
- Building recovery coordinator;
- Public relations coordinator;
- Security coordinator;
- Safety coordinator.

Step 6. Establish Support Networks

Disaster planners should reach out to local emergency planners, first responders, civil defence personnel, and possibly the military to learn how the museum fits into local and national disaster response and recovery plans. There may be special resources available. Invite the local disaster manager, civil defence, fire department, and other first responders to meet with museum staff and tour the building. Ask if the museum can participate in community-based disaster drills.

Other cultural organisations such as regional and national museum alliances may be helpful. For example, in the U.S., many states have professional associations of museums that work together on disaster response training and provide mutual assistance. Find out what museums are doing to prepare in your area. The International Council of Museums (ICOM) has 125 National Committees that represent museums, and is an excellent place to network.

Step 7. Prepare the Disaster Response Plan

In this era of increasing number and severity of disasters, collecting institutions cannot rely solely on their governments for help, particularly in large-scale disasters. National Disaster Management organisations prioritise saving human life and alleviating human suffering, and saving cultural heritage is not often integrated into the planning. In order to mitigate damage to the building and collections, museums must be prepared with emergency funds, trained staff and volunteers, and stockpiled supplies for disaster response, always keeping good records of efforts and funds spent in case they may be reimbursable.

There are many resources available for preparing disaster response. The International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property (ICCROM) handbook and toolkit for *First Aid to Cultural Heritage in Times of Crisis* (ICCROM 2018) provides step-by-step instructions during disaster response. The American Institute for Conservation website includes how-to videos on salvaging collections during disaster response (American Institute for Conservation n. d).

Examples of actions during disaster response include:

- Identify the emergency;
- Call emergency responders;
- Evacuate staff and visitors or shelter in place during a sudden storm or earthquake;
- Notify staff not already on site if their assistance is required;
- Security manager creates security perimeter and coordinates with the first responders;
- Conduct an initial damage assessment and prepare detailed documentation of damage to building and collections in coordination with emergency first responders; this step may be especially important if there is evidence of criminal activity as the cause of the disaster;
- Salvage, stabilise, and rehouse objects;
- Maintain inventory of rehoused objects in new location;
- Coordinate external communication with press statements and social media.

Step 8. Prepare the Disaster Recovery Plan

The line between disaster response and recovery can be blurred both in terms of tasks and time. Some disaster responses can take as little as a few days to transition into recovery and some can take years. Examples of recovery include:

- Conservation treatment of damaged objects;
- Research into the causes and impact of the disaster;
- Reconstruction/renovation of damaged building, galleries, and storage areas;
- Reopen the institution to the public;

- Help staff and community members recover their personal collections and recover from trauma;
- Establish the 'new normal'.

Step 9. Train Staff, Board and Volunteers

The most successful disaster plans have support and expected outcomes expressed by museum directors and their boards. Museum boards bear a fiduciary responsibility for the collections and should support budgeting for disaster planning and training. Directors should encourage risk management thinking as part of normal museum operations and include disaster risk management responsibilities in individual personnel descriptions and evaluations. All staff, board members and volunteers should be encouraged to participate in training events.

Step 10. Review and Exercise the Plan

A disaster plan that never leaves the shelf does not help reduce risk. Disaster plans must be continually updated and exercised to be effective. Each staff member should know their role.

- Ensure that the Disaster Planning team sets aside time to review and update the plan at least annually, particularly current contact information, collections priorities and any advance vendor contracts;
- Exercise and test the plan at least once a year and require staff participation. Include local first responders when possible;
- Be sure to include collections evacuation and salvage in exercises along with evacuation of staff, visitors and volunteers;
- Take time for careful evaluation of exercise results – what worked and what didn't – and take steps to correct.

Conclusion

Incorporating disaster resilience into regular museum operations provides clear benefits by reducing risk to people and collections in museums. By taking these measures, museum staff fulfil a professional and legal obligation to protect life and cultural property under their care. When museums are resilient and survive large-scale disasters with minimal damage, they are then free to carry out further programmes to help their communities find hope, identity, and meaning during post-disaster recovery.

Notes

1 https://www.undrr.org/terminology
2 https://www.undrr.org/terminology/exposure
3 https://www.undrr.org/terminology/hazard

4 https://www.undrr.org/terminology/disaster
5 https://www.un-spider.org/risks-and-disasters
6 https://www.undrr.org/terminology/resilience
7 https://www.undrr.org/terminology/vulnerability
8 https://www.undrr.org/terminology/mitigation
9 https://www.undrr.org/terminology/preparedness
10 https://www.undrr.org/terminology/response
11 https://www.undrr.org/terminology/recovery

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19 Calculating Museum Carrying Capacity

Background, Goals, Methods

Ivan Grinko and Nikita Luchkov

Introduction

The issue of growing anthropogenic pressures on natural and cultural heritage sites first arose at the end of the last century due to consistently increasing tourism. The myth that maximal attendance is the main indicator of museum effectiveness still exists. But many museums, faced with problems caused by overcrowding changed their point of view. Today, the quality of the museum visit has become the main objective and crowds of visitors will not help us to achieve a quality experience. We should not forget that one of the functions of a museum is to serve as a refuge., It could disappear if we don't optimise attendance. We also need to improve the visitor experience for those with special needs.

The discussion surrounding optimal visitor figures, or carrying capacity, has been increasing in recent years, although, so far, mainly in relation to biosphere reserves, national parks and memorial places (Cifuentes 1992; Cole and Carlson 2010; Nashwa 2015). The topic has acquired even greater relevance with increased concern about sustainable development in the heritage sphere (Hassan 2013; Mowforth, Munt 2003; Nocca 2017) and the ratification by many European countries of the Framework Convention of the Council of Europe on the significance of cultural heritage for human society (Council of Europe 2005).

Russia is no exception in this process. By 2011, a team from the Heritage Institute[1], headed by Yuriy Vedenin had already developed a system for assessing the carrying capacity of open-air museums (Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation, 2013). However, during the re-testing of these guidelines in the framework of our study, certain technical issues arose from within the professional community.

No system had been developed for assessing museum carrying capacity, although attempts to determine the optimal space required for a comfortable visit experience per visitor had been made (Lord, Lord 2001). As a rule, individual museums set limits on attendance figures based on their own data. For example, the Intrepid Sea, Air & Space Museum (New York City) officially informs the public that it can receive no more than 6,000 visitors at a time.

The methods we devised and described below, entitled 'Guidelines for Visitor Attendance Management in Museums of the Russian Federation Based on a Site's

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Ability to Receive Visitors' are based on two main principles: heritage preservation and visitor comfort (Ministry of Culture of the Russian Federation, 2017).[2] In this chapter, we justify the need to calculate museum carrying capacity and propose a system for assessing anthropogenic pressure on museums, providing recommendations for optimising human impact as well as briefly describing the results of their application in museum practice.

Why must a museum determine its capacity to receive visitors? First and foremost, owing to global trends in the museum industry. The relationships between museums and visitors will continue to evolve, with increasing emphasis on the visitor experience (Falk 2009; Van Mensch 2014). A museum's openness towards visitors will be implemented at all levels of its activity, from the introduction of inclusive programmes that extend attendance to previously excluded groups to the revision of the concept of permanent exhibitions.

In this regard, there will be an increasing need to deepen interactions with the visitor not only at the formal level but to develop mutual exchange and visitor participation in programmes which will lead inevitably to an increase in the amount of time visitors spend in museums, and consequently, to an increase in anthropogenic pressure[3] on museums and heritage sites. In addition, an increase in museum visitor numbers was expected. In 2019, visitor numbers for the 20 most-visited museums in the world declined by 2.4 per cent, but 11 of the 20 most-visited museums showed a positive trend, while an unimpressive average percentage was largely triggered by a sharp drop in the number of visitors to Chinese museums (14.2 per cent for the National Museum of China (Beijing) and 11 per cent for China's Science and Technology Museum in Beijing (Rubin, 2020). In 2020, the Covid-19 pandemic resulted in dramatically lower visitor numbers. For example, in the first quarter of 2020, visitor numbers in Great Britain declined by 90 per cent compared to the same period in 2019 (DCMS-Sponsored Museums 2021).

Prior to the pandemic, museums in the Russian Federation showed slight but steady growth in real attendance, with continued uneven attendance due to both seasonal and geographical factors. For example, visitors recorded on weekdays are lower than on weekends by a ratio of 1:3. This trend may at first glance appear insignificant, yet at weekends, the number may greatly exceed maximum human impact levels. According to a study of anthropogenic pressure in museums in Moscow, in a number of cases, the ratio of attendance figures on weekdays compared to free Sundays was as low as 1:10. In addition, inter-museum events, such as Museum Night and Art Night, are gaining popularity; during these events, museums experience peak anthropogenic pressure on their premises. Of course, this scheme is simplified, and there are large differences between museums in cities, towns and rural territories, those on tourist routes and those in economically depressed, single-industry communities.

Likewise, the impact of visitor comfort should not be underestimated since negative visitor experience has a direct impact not only on spending at museums (souvenirs, food, etc.) but also on the likelihood of repeat visits and promotion through word-of-mouth and social media. These factors can seriously affect the museum's revenues and realisation of its main social functions: heritage interpretation, education, social inclusion, community outreach, etc.

In some cases, the museum's reputation depends on accurate calculation of carrying capacity. Case studies with exhibition projects run by the Tretyakov Gallery confirm this. The exhibition of works by famous Russian painter Valentin Serov (October 2015–January 2016) was the most-visited in the history of museum, but also fuelled many media scandals because of enormous queues at the museums. The phrase 'queue to Serov' even became an internet meme. In addition, a comparison between a museum's carrying capacity and real attendance figures is a fairly obvious criterion for measuring museum effectiveness and can be used to illustrate performance. An assessment of maximum anthropogenic pressure for museums in Moscow showed that among leading museums rated in terms of visitor experience, real attendance ranges from 75 to 110 per cent of carrying capacity.

The most important thing to note is that with the help of the measurement system and methods that we describe below, a museum can determine its maximum carrying capacity, which is highly relevant given the impact of state targets on funding. In addition, we list the main managerial elements that may be affected by an analysis and assessment of a museum's carrying capacity as follows:

- design and reconfiguration of exhibitions;
- design and modification of auxiliary areas (entrance area, cloakroom, etc.);
- medium-term (1–2 years) planning of museum activities;
- choice of marketing strategy;
- positioning of a museum within a regional tourism network;
- limiting visitor attendance.

It should be noted that anthropogenic pressure is associated with almost all aspects of a functioning museum, and only systematic measures can ensure that the effects of optimisation are all-encompassing. Standalone decisions made outside the context of a well-thought-out strategy not only fail to reduce human impact; they can also cause damage (reputational losses, negative materials in mass media, etc.).

When devising our methodology, a question arose as to the need to introduce such a system at all, given the fact that similar measures already exist. For example, in the Russian Federation, all museum premises open to visitors are officially managed by regulatory documents applicable to public buildings and structures, such as SNiP 31-06-2009. Public Buildings & Facilities (Construction Norms 2009). However, this document focuses primarily on the safety of the building and does not touch on the specific characteristics of individual museums, visitor comfort, or the preservation of collections susceptible to human impact. Characteristically, a number of museums faced with the need to calculate maximum attendance figures used either similar regulatory documents or fire safety standards, which naturally, took no account of the specific nature of museum exhibitions and buildings.

Here, we consider the procedure method for calculating carrying capacity, which functions as follows:

1 Identify the basic museum type. Three types were identified in Russia: classical collection/pavilion-type thematic museums; collection/pavilion-type thematic museums with interactive and multi-media zones and art museums and memorial museum complexes (house museums, memorial ships, etc). Each type has its own coefficient, which essentially represents the average area of space required for a comfortable visitor experience:[4]

- Sp1 – contextual exhibition (collection and pavilion-type thematic museums) – 3–4.5
- Sp2 – interactive exhibition (collection and pavilion-type thematic museums with interactive and multi-media zones) – 7–10
- Sp3 – art exhibitions (art museums, memorial museum complexes) – 10–20 [5]

We should mention here that 10 m^2 was found to be an optimal space for social distancing (1.5 metres) during the Covid-19 pandemic, so a museum can use this coefficient to calculate the number of visitors it can receive during periods of similar restrictions.

In hybrid museums, such as a local history museum with art and thematic exhibitions, the carrying capacity is determined for each separate element, after which the median value is taken as the base figure.

2 Determine total exhibition area accessible to visitors. For collection/pavilion-type museums, it is recommended that the ‘clear’ area is calculated, which excludes space taken up by museum equipment.
3 Determine exhibition type and select correcting factors, which depend, among others, on the method of exhibition construction.
4 Determine the ground area of Zone A, areas accessible to visitors but not containing collections (entrance area, cafe, etc.). The area of each section of Zone A should be calculated separately.
5 Determine the visitor movement index[6] and average visit duration. The time spent on individual observation of an object is calculated based on visitor observations of a representative sample of different target audiences (Yalowitz, Bronnenkant, 2009).
6 Calculate one-time exhibition carrying capacity (Zone B) based on museum type, exhibition area, and other characteristics.
7 Calculate one-time carrying capacity of museum Zone A (additional services).
8 Calculate one-time museum carrying capacity, consisting of carrying capacity of Zones A and B.
9 Calculate daily carrying capacity.
10 Determine carrying capacity for specific periods (day, week, month) based on daily carrying capacity.
11 Define maximum peak levels of anthropogenic pressure on the museum.

We suggest using these guidelines in combination with the data from any museum studies you already conducted to get more precise numbers.

Example of Calculation

To showcase how the methods mentioned in this chapter work in practise, let us calculate the capacity of an imaginary museum with the following parameters:

Basic museum type: a collection type, science museum (Sp1 selected 3-4,5) with exhibits of varying levels of popularity (Q = 70% selected).
Total exhibition area: 5,000 m^2.
Total Zone A[7] **area:** (an entrance zone (150 m^2), a cafe (100 m^2) and two recreational areas (total ground area – 100 m^2).
The average visit duration time (tm): 2 hours.
Daily museum opening hours (tp): 8

We should start with the evaluation of the Exhibition area:
Calculation of the maximum one-time capacity of exhibition area ($\sum$emax),

$$\sum \mathrm{e\,max} = (5{,}000 / 3)^{*} 0.7 = 1{,}167(1{,}166{,}9)\ \mathrm{visitors}$$

Calculation of the minimum one-time exhibition capacity of exhibition area ($\sum$emin).

$$\sum \mathrm{e\,min} = (5{,}000 / 4.5)^{*} 0.7 = 778(777{,}8)\ \mathrm{visitors}$$

The optimal one-time pressure on the exhibition area:

$$\sum \mathrm{e} = \mathrm{Me\ \ from}\,(778\ \ \mathrm{and}\ \ 1167) = (778 + 1167) / 2 = 972\ \mathrm{visitors}$$

The calculation of daily carrying capacity of exhibition area:

$$\sum \mathrm{ed} = 972^{*}(8 / 2) = 3{,}888\ \mathrm{visitors}$$

Then we proceed to do the same, but for zone A:
The daily carrying capacity of additional services (calculate the one-time capacity of each element of zone A).
The one-time capacity of the entrance zone ($\sum$iB = S in m^2/1.5 m^2 per visitor

$$\sum \mathrm{iB} = 150 / 1{,}5 = 100\ \mathrm{visitors}$$

The one-time capacity of the cafe ($\sum$iK = S in m^2/1,6 m^2 per visitor)

$$\sum \mathrm{iK} = 100 / 1{,}6 = 62\ \mathrm{visitors}$$

The one-time capacity of the recreational zones ($\sum$iR = S in m²/2 m² per visitor).

$$\sum \mathrm{iR} = 100(\mathrm{M}^2) / 2\mathrm{M}^2 \text{per visitor} = 50 \text{ visitors}$$

The one-time capacity of Zone A, the total one-time capacity is taken to be the median value of these four values.

$$\sum \mathrm{a} = \mathrm{Me} \text{ from}(10, 50, 62, 100) = (50 + 62) / 2 = 56 \text{ visitors}$$

The daily carrying capacity of Zone A ($\sum$ad=$\sum$a* (tp/tm)).

$$\sum \mathrm{ad} = 56^* 4 = 224 \text{ visitors}$$

Now we combine the data from two previous parts to get the total numbers for our showcase museum:

The total one-time museum's capacity ($\sum$em = $\sum$e + $\sum$a).

$$\sum \mathrm{em} = 972 + 56 = 1{,}028$$

The museum's daily visitor carrying capacity ($\sum$emd = $\sum$ed + $\sum$ad).

$$\sum \mathrm{emd} = 3{,}888 + 224 = 4{,}112$$

The peak anthropogenic pressure ($\sum$p = $\sum$em + $\sum$em * 0.1)

$$\sum \mathrm{p} = 1{,}028 + 102 = 1{,}130.$$

And lastly, in case we need to extrapolate resulting numbers to prolonged period of time, we can multiply daily capacity by the number of working days.

In the event that the museum has specialised rooms for events or particular audiences (e.g., theatres; cinema halls), overall museum visitor carrying capacity is calculated. Half of the regulated capacity of such hall should be added to the museum's daily attendance value and included in the calculations as an optional value.

A study of anthropogenic pressure on museums in Moscow conducted by MOSGORTUR in 2017–2018 demonstrated the efficiency of this method and revealed two new aspects associated with its use. First, aside from specific exhibition features, the functional model of the museum is an important factor in assessing carrying capacity and should be taken into account when making relevant calculations. Secondly, it is likely that a separate system for calculating human impact over the long term is required for exhibition halls/galleries because the structure of visits in such institutions differs from a museum's one, and when calculating monthly or annual carrying capacity, it is important to take into account the number of real working days, not including the exhibition assembly/disassembly period.

Every museum is a unique example of historical, cultural or natural heritage; it is, therefore, impossible to develop universal recommendations. Visitation and pressure volume depend on a number of factors, including museum type, location, population density in the surrounding area, tourism intensity, etc. However, since anthropogenic pressure is linked to almost all museum functions, only systematic measures can really produce the effect of optimisation. Standalone decisions made outside a well-thought-out strategy not only fail to reduce human impact, but they may have harmful consequences (e.g., reputational losses, reduced income, conflicts with staff, conflicts with stakeholders).

In the case of the modern museum, a focus on five main factors will help regulate anthropogenic pressure on a given museum space:

Scientific and Analytical

Mandatory scientific studies of real and potential audiences have become standard museum practice. In addition to a general description of visitors, this type of study includes assessing numbers, as well as an approximate number of visits per visitor. Naturally, here, it would be logical to include the practice of calculating total one-time carrying capacity of a museum space. High-quality, long-term planning is key to regulating anthropogenic pressure on museums. When creating a new museum or exhibition, the museum must establish a correlation between its ability to receive visitors and its potential number. This assessment can be made on the basis of the potential audience size, for example, the number of residents in the immediate locality, region, number of visiting tourists, etc. In addition, when assessing potential visitor attendance figures, relevant figures established for museums of a similar type can be used as a guide.

Economic

As a rule, economic measures taken to regulate attendance figures have a long-term effect, and for this reason, should be applied with particular care according to the museum strategy. Increasing ticket cost can directly affect attendance volume causing a reduction in visitor numbers. However, this measure entails a number of problems, primarily concerning reputation, because museums as public institutions should not exclusively concentrate on high-income visitors. This approach also conflicts with the goals and objectives of museums as social and cultural institutions. However, differentiation in ticket pricing is an extremely simple and effective method for reducing pressure at peak intervals and distributing visitor flow more evenly.

Exhibitive

In the case of a museum experiencing high anthropogenic pressure, exhibition spaces should be reconfigured with maximum focus on high visitor movement. This involves ensuring a minimum number of intersections between anthropogenic flows, eliminating dead-end spaces, and removing interactive and multi-media elements from the main exhibition spaces to avoid disrupting the movement of other visitors. All kinds of navigation may be used to make a visitor pathway as clear as possible. Given that museum exhibitions are increasingly saturated with interactive and multi-media elements, it is worth considering how they are used and perceived. Multi-media and interactive exhibit elements should be integrated into the exhibition space as organically as possible to ensure that they do not create crowding or otherwise interfere with visitor paths.

Administrative

Competent management of museum attendance is still underestimated (at least in many Russian institutions); however, attendance management cannot be ignored in optimising factors of anthropogenic pressure. One of the most effective measures that can be taken is to extend opening hours. The extension of opening hours in museums in Moscow has increased attendance and partially relieved the pressure of high weekend attendance. In 2019, the Department for Culture of Moscow introduced Museum Week to disperse museum attendance across the most popular museums. During the third week of each month, visitors may visit museums for free according to a special schedule (certain museums on Mondays, others on Fridays, etc.), rather than on weekends. The latter arrangements had caused greatly increased crowds and unnecessary rivalry between museums, since most visitors don't visit multiple museums on one day. The new system has allowed museums to prepare for increased attendance and provided an opportunity to highlight important projects, programmes and exhibitions while reducing strain on the most popular institutions and spotlighting less popular museums.

Service

Taking into account general trends in the museum sector (Idema 2014; Daskalaki *et al.* 2020), the tendency for increased leisure visitation is expected to continue, accompanied by the growing importance of ancillary areas, and the expansion of **Zone A:** spaces which are accessible to visitors but which do not contain museum collections (Parry *et al.* 2018). Therefore, it is essential that institutions assess the carrying capacity of these spaces. The development of additional infrastructure is especially important for open-air museums since the lack of one will, in most cases, make it impossible to even partially redistribute peak season visitor pressure.

Conclusion

While there are other elements that might be added to the method we describe here, it nonetheless offers, for now, a fairly accurate picture of museums' visitor carrying capacity. Despite all restrictions provoked by the Covid-19 pandemic, the museum space is still the main instrument of museum agency, and we should work to better understand its potential and limits. The procedure method recommended in this chapter should improve the range of museum management tools and lower the impact of anthropogenic pressures on museum buildings and sites of historical and cultural heritage. In 2022, this system was used by the authors to devise a complex attendance forecast for the new building of the museum Perm Museum of Antiquities. It can be used in this way to advocate museum projects and demonstrate the potential of museum spaces to its stakeholders.

Notes

1 The Russian Heritage Institute was a leading research centre for the study of cultural and natural heritage, ongoing cultural processes, the development of methods for heritage conservation and use. In international affairs, the Institute works closely with the National Commission of the Russian Federation for UNESCO, National Committee ICOMOS (Russia) and others.

2 The authors once again wish to express their gratitude to the following individuals for their participation in the creation of *Methodical Recommendations*: T. Mironova, S. Zabolotskikh, Z. Matveyeva, O. Sviridova, V. Dukelskiy, T. Polyakov and A. Klyukina.

3 Under «anthropogenic pressure» we mean the direct or indirect impact of humans and their activities on the surrounding space and its individual elements.

4 Please note that the metric system is used for all calculations in this chapter.

5 Here, we have drawn recommendations for optimal space for one visitor from Lord, B. and Lord, G. D. (2001). *The Manual of Museum Exhibition*. Walnut Creek: Altamira.

6 Or Sweep rating index (SRI) proposed by B. Serell (1998), ‘calculated by dividing the exhibition’s square footage by the average total time spent there for a tracked sample of casual visitors’. Serrell B. *et al.*, 1998. ‘Paying attention: Visitors and museum exhibitions’. American Alliance of Museums.

7 We should mention that this part of the procedure is based on standards for public spaces used in the Russian Federation and should be localised in accordance with relevant local legislation.

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Note: Locators in *italics* represent figures; **bold** indicate tables in the text. Page numbers followed by 'n' denote notes.