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Museums as Community & Learning Centres

Vicky Malotidi

Education & Awareness Raising Projects MIO-ECSDE

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I. Museums as community centres

- The role of museums in cultural and educational development though traditionally well recognized, is now includes **community building** aspect i.e. activities of lifelong learning, regular participation instead of 1-off actions, etc.
- Museums as community centres = spaces where community is built and lived; Learning happens *via* the **exchanges** people have with their peers
- Cooperation with **stakeholders**: schools, technical and vocational and education training providers, universities, employment services.
- Access to, and participation in, museums' activities facilitates the creation of one's own **sense of identity** and belonging; this promotes social inclusion processes and lifelong learning.

I. Museums as community centres



I. Museums as community centres

A. The School Partnership for Art and Civic Engagement (SPACE) Museum of Chicago SPACE

The Museum of Contemporary Art Chicago's is in a multiyear partnership with Chicago public high schools. The goal is to empower the teens to create positive change in their communities using contemporary art strategies.

SPACE invites artists who address social issues to transform space(s) in the school into creative hubs for artistic and civic exchange. Artists relocate their studio practice to the school for a long term residency in partnership with the art and social studies teachers and co-design and co-teach an interdisciplinary curriculum.

Students investigate local issues, identifying those that they are passionate about and impact their lives. Their results are presented in student-created artistic projects and civic-action plans that address the pressing needs of their community mcachicago.org/Learn/Schools/SPACE



I. Museums as community centres

B. Manifesto for a Humanistic Fine Arts

Museum, the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts

Strong vision of its social role and numerous actions aimed at promoting inclusion, health and well-being.

Art therapy programme with innovative approach for persons experiencing mental health disorders, autism, eating disorders, and learning and behavioural difficulties, as well as socially-excluded and marginalised individuals.

Diverse actions: using art to improve self-image, arts workshops to assist those with speech and sensory disorders and helping immigrants to settle by illustrating their own life stories through art.

mbam.qc.ca/en/education-and-art-therapy/art-therapy/



I. Museums as community centres

C. Migration:Cities is an ICOM project led by the Collections and Activities of Museums of Cities (CAMOC) in partnership with the Commonwealth Association of Museums (CAM) and the International Committee for Regional Museums (ICR). Various cases included

The *Travelling with Art Program* at the Louisiana Museum in Denmark invites refugee children to the museum to exchange views on art and work creatively.

The Rotterdam Museum engages diverse community groups including marginalised people in the *production of museum's expositions*.

The Immigration Museum of the State of São Paulo in Brazil and a non-profit association share a building complex of the 19th cent. to host immigrants arriving from various countries. Helped more than 36.000 people in need, offering not only a shelter to refugees and marginalised, but also organising rehabilitation workshops and developing cultural programmes.

<http://migrationcities.net>

II. Museums as learning centres



Botanic Museum & Garden of Kroussia, Greece

II. Museums as learning centres

Pedagogy principles

- Pedagogical principle behind the **shift** in the function/role of the museums exhibits from passive/static forms of media (text, images) to interactive forms, allowing for an **active process of knowledge-creation** is based on constructionist learning theories (J.Piaget, S. Papert)
- Learners and particularly, young ones, construct knowledge through their interaction with the world.
- In many modern museums, these principles now drive the way exhibits are organised, and the way the educational programmes in the museums are designed
- **Children Museums** case within an 'regular' Museum

II. Museums as learning centres

Objectives/learning outcomes for visitors

- ✓ To have access to learning opportunities
- ✓ To use services / facilities to develop **understanding** & skills
- ✓ To feel welcomed, respected and supported in their learning
- ✓ To become more self-confident, questioning, motivated and open to others' perspectives, critical thinkers
- ✓ To enjoy themselves and get inspired and enriched by the experience

II. Museums as learning centres

Objectives/outcomes for the museum

- ✓ A broader range of people use the museum
- ✓ New learning opportunities are created as a result of partnerships
- ✓ Staff, volunteers and members of governing bodies are effective advocates for learning
- ✓ People who work in and for the organisation are continuously learning and developing their practice

Education programmes in Museums

A process-oriented approach

Initiation

Definition

Design

Implementation

Evaluation



Education programmes in museums

1. Initiation

Take into consideration the context in which the museum operates (policies, etc). Target group + objectives + proposed partners to be identified.

2. Definition.

The plan is elaborated: content, practical matters, feasibility aspects (time, money, space, human resources, expertise, technology).

Based on the target group + content, the first ideas for methods are brought to the table: which ones are most suitable for achieving the desired effects within a particular context?

3. Design

In detail development of the plan, the hands-on / material / means to be produced and the programme is piloted.

4. Implementation

5. Evaluation

Methods of Museum Education

1. Guided tours, with facilitated discussion
2. Scavenger / treasure hunts
3. Tasks from a central distribution point
4. Peer-guiding
5. Learning by doing
6. Object analysis
7. Storytelling
8. AV & digital media
9. Distance learning

*PS. They partially overlap each other and are often used in **combination** together.*

1. Guided tour with facilitated discussion

The oldest didactic method in the museum and still the most popular!

- A guide leads a group around exhibition, sights, objects, buildings or artworks - provides information about them.
- NEW: Interactive guided tours (actively engaging the public with a variety of methods); Stationing guides in one place to offer their explanations to groups in-situ, whilst the public moves around all the different locations; (City) walks; Peer guided tours.
- **Examples:** Visit to a country house, in an open-air (*water*) museum, factory etc.: the guide *literally opens the attraction* to the public but also *figuratively by talking about it*.

Guided tours for specific groups ranging from study purposes to company days out or the celebration a specific day.

Torchlight tour in the dark.

1. Guided tour with facilitated discussion



Guided tour,
Water Museum of Thessaloniki

2. Scavenger / treasure hunts

offering the 'right' amount of structure that visitors discover the museum in a clear and fun way

- Guided tour along various points of interest. A brief explanation is provided per point + questions/assignments
- Focus on the 'search element' e.g. objects-sites-aspects around them; objects that are often overlooked; use of quotations; photo hunt.
- Means: use of **open** questions, drawing, ticking, adding, connecting, circling answers, photographing, etc.
- **Examples:** *Searching for all the X secrets of the old [watermill](#); A thematic hunt around the [water system pathways of city](#); a hunt inspired by all the different kinds of 'taps' or with 2 versions: one for children and another one for adults, allowing for exchanges between the two age-groups ...*

2. Scavenger / treasure hunts



Treasure hunt @ Permanent
Exhibition “Fabrica”
Folklore Local Museum of Leonidio

3. Tasks from a central distribution point

enabling visitors to actively experience the museum & gain knowledge

- Visitors carry out short assignments, individually or in small groups, which they receive from a 'supervisor' at a central point. Whenever an assignment is completed, it is centrally approved and a new assignment is then received.
- **Example:** *Naturalis Biodiversity Center in Leiden starts with a guided tour for orientation, followed by the assignment-competition. Participants (mainly students) receive their questions and hand in their answers every time at the activity table. The museum educator draws attention to what they are doing correctly. Students can choose from 3 levels of questions, allowing them to earn more or less points depending on the level they choose.*

3. Tasks from a central distribution point



Assignments in the Water
Permanent Exhibition,
Children Museum of Athens



4. Peer-guiding

visitors practice presenting , gain insights into a subject/object/part of the exhibit

- Visitors prepare a mini-tour for an object / location individually or in groups. Then, new groups are created with each of the members having prepared another object or location. All of the groups walk around all of the objects / places in this configuration with the 'expert' always leading the others.
- If properly designed, the objects / places have a connection, so the stories of the different 'experts' will **complement** each other.
- *Examples: School groups + museum on the theme of the city's water monuments: The museum selects the sites (fountains, taps, remnants of aqueducts). Students prepare their information on 'their' monument (with the facilitation of teachers, the experts, bibliography, etc). Give their minitours...*

4. Peer-guiding



Preparation in the class
before the peer-guiding on
the old water cisterns the
island of Santorini

<←

Guiding about the water
cisterns of Santorini

->



5. Learning by doing

in-depth experiences and insights

- Hands-on activities (experiments, labs, art activities, workshops) can be tried out within a guided tour, allowing participants to touch or experiment with something.
- A huge variety of things to do: models to make (e.g clay, plasticine or 'lego' material), crafts, puzzles, simple experiments, funny worksheets to fill in, art activities -drawing, photos/film making- a co-creation of a joint artwork even with all visitors for a given time period, etc.
- *Examples: participants act as journalists gathering information for their own 'News', which they then film with smartphones, and in the end, groups view each other's news stories.*

Hands-on activities @ the
Children Museum of
Heraklion Crete



5. Learning by doing (hands-on activities)



Hands-on activities @ the
Children Museum of
Heraklion Crete

6. Object analysis

stimulates research skills & fosters curiosity about other objects

- Carefully studying of an object by means of an observation activity, e.g in the style of object registration
- *Examples: Completion of an inventory form; Create your own questions about the object (who has the most questions)? Write down 10 things that you see or notice; In pairs, described one object to your pair and let him/her guess it, make its sketch & let the others detect it in the museum, etc.*

6. Object analysis



Object analysis activity (water jars) @ the Folklore Museum of Kos Island

REGISTRATION CARD LEARNING FROM OBJECTS

OWNED BY _____

HOW LONG HAVE YOU OWNED THE OBJECT?
SINCE _____

artist / maker: _____

material: _____

title: _____

age: _____

size: _____ width: _____

height: _____ depth: _____

description of your object: _____

is there any damage? _____


what makes this object special? _____

acquisition: purchase
gift
loan

sketch of your object

value (in money): _____

REGISTRATION CARD

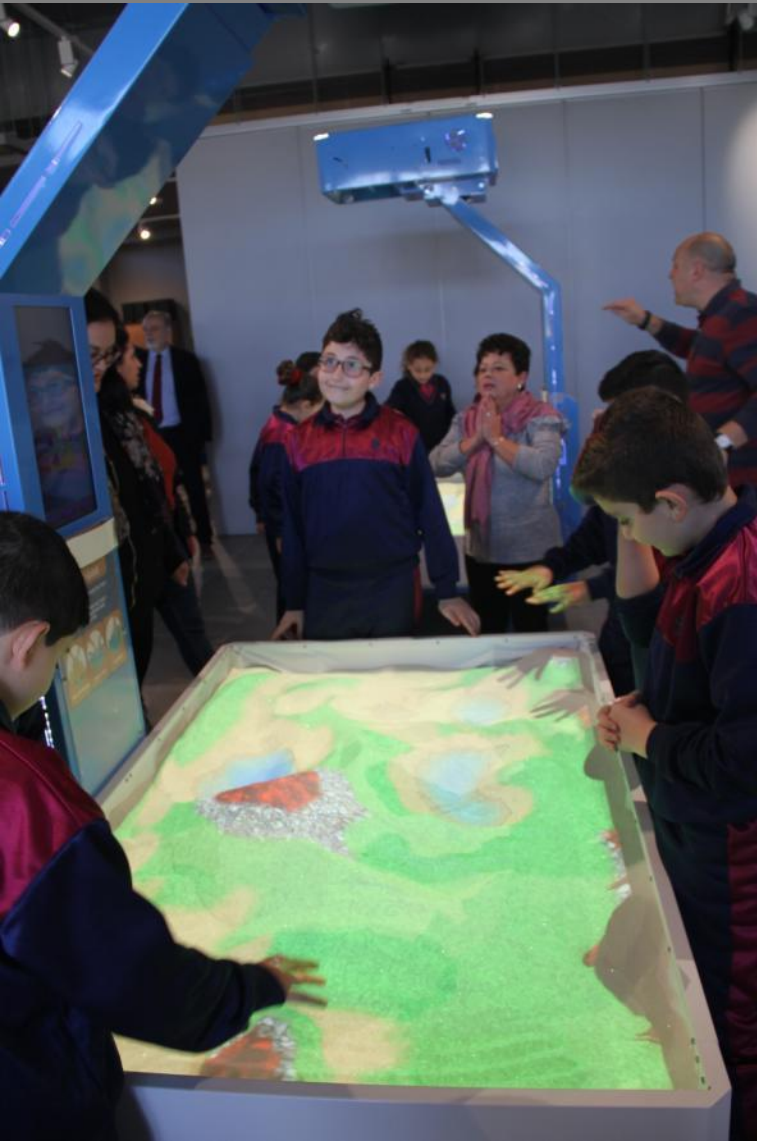


8. AV & digital media

- Insertion of audio, film, digital media or a combination aiming of obtaining information and increasing engagement
- *Examples: audiotours, SMS or text tours, digital tours via smartphone, interactive tours (influencing the course or outcome), online quiz via smartphone, etc.,*
- [Water Conservation Awareness Centre in Malta](#)



8. AV & digital media



Use of interactive screens & projections in the educational activities of the Water Conservation Awareness Centre in Malta



9. Distance learning

practices in which users do not actually have to go to the museum

- The digital environment of the museum - **virtual museum** - in which the user can find additional information, play games, answer quizzes, give feedback etc. Digital environments that work with school smartboards.
- *Examples: EducArt is a digital platform designed in collaboration with high school teachers and the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts. Through a selection of 350 museum works, it enables the exploration of transversal themes in a number of different disciplines and prompts the discussion of contemporary social issues educart.ca/en*

9. Distance learning

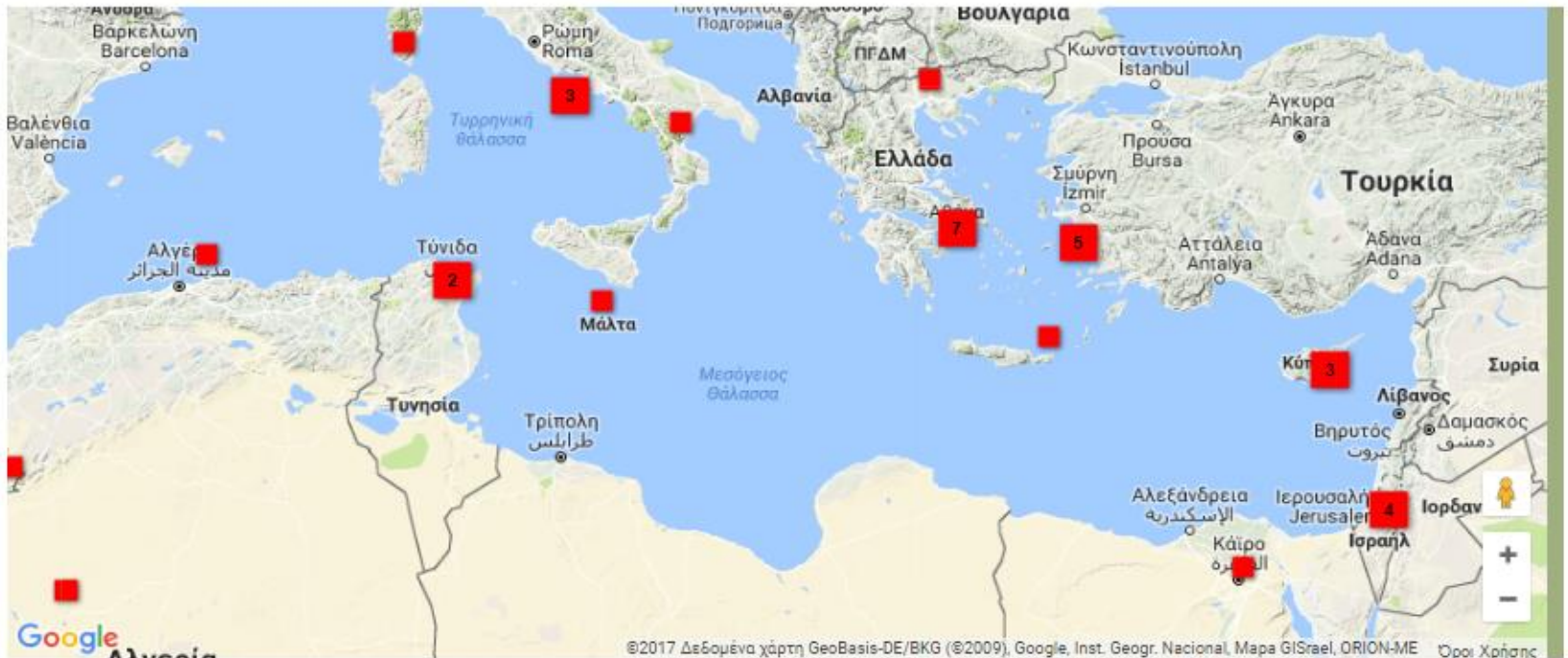
Collection, Storage & Distribution of Water in Antiquity
Linking Ancient Wisdom to Modern Needs

www.hydraproject.info (WAMUNET member)

HYDRIA Project

water management and importance about english العربية ελληνικά

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Please update your Flash Player

Many others theatrical games, take-over days/sleepovers, joint thematic days, weeks & campaign with local institutions, family events . . . An endless list



είναι από το ποτάμι που
κεντά για μια πλινθόκτιστη θόλο που περιέβαλλε την κοίτη του πο-

τη δική μας φροντίδα και προστασία, προς την πόλη του μέλλοντός μας.



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Tips – tips –tips !

- Always adapt the techniques
- Variety/combination of methods often works well
- Make choices together with your team members (museum animators, guides, hosts, mediators)
- Pilot –testing is necessary.
- Keep a close eye on the prerequisites: i.e. is there someone available to show groups around, to distribute materials, etc.? Is there any money to repair equipment after the initial purchases? Is there storage space for any materials produced?
- Think **sustainably**: how the programme will perform on the 10th or 100th time? Will the concept still be as challenging and fresh? Are the people running it still just as motivated? *Try to keep this question in mind whilst you are designing . . .*

III. SDGs & Water Museums

- The SDGs serve as both the basis and the benchmark *for “a comprehensive, far-reaching and people-centred set of universal and transformative Goals and targets”* with the aim for them to be achieved globally by 2030.
- For the ‘integration of education into sustainable development’, the value and benefits that education can provide to the achievement of the other SDGs needs to be clearly elaborated and galvanised.
- This effort requires an understanding of education that extends beyond the boundaries of formal education institutions, for life-long learning, and here is one of the main fields where the Museums can **substantially contribute** as Community and Learning Centres.



**SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
GOALS**

References

- EDUCATION toolkit “Methods & techniques from museum and heritage education”, Arja van Veldhuizen, 2017 ([link](#))
- Best practices in educational programmes of museums (ICOM/CECA) ([link](#))
- OECD/ICOM «Culture and local development: maximising the impact» Guide for Local Governments, Communities and Museums 2018 ([link](#))
- Inspiring Learning: Improvement toolkit for Museums, Libraries and Archives ([link](#))

Thank you for your attention!

malotidi@mio-ecsde.org

www.medies.net

www.hydriaprojet.info

