



CREACTIVE 2.1: A VIRTUAL MUSEUM AS A TOOL FOR CREATIVE
ADVOCACY FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION
2020-3-IT03-KA205-019732

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Analysis of European Virtual Museums

Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union





INTRODUCTION TO THE PROJECT

Context

The pandemic has highlighted the necessity to digitalise not only the learning processes and youth work of young people, but also the work of social organisations, such as NGOs, social enterprises, and associations. The digital advocacy can be an instrument to promote social inclusion among youth, and the creative nature of this methodology can encourage the development of artistic/creative and digital competencies useful for active citizenship and the professional development of youth. Taking into consideration social obstacles (people subject to discrimination because of their gender, age, ethnical belonging, religion, sexual orientation, disability etc., people with limited social skills, antisocial behaviours or at risk, people in precarious situations, ex criminal, ex addict, young parents or single parents, orphans), the project focuses on the promotion of a change to make the society more inclusive through a virtual museum, where European youth will be able to exhibit their art and participate in a European contest.

Objectives

- 1) Create a virtual museum that can engage, connect and empower youth through art and creativity
- 2) Create sustainable connections between youth workers, schools and social organisations on an European level
- 3) Promote art and creativity as tools for learning and the development of digital competences

Profile of the participants

European young people between 13 and 25 years old. The project is directed to European young people, belonging to the countries partner of CreActive 2.1 and others. Given the big age gap, the activities will be developed for two subcategories (13-17 and 18-25). Particular





attention will be given to at least 30 youth with fewer opportunities, especially with social obstacles.

Other target groups will be:

Art teachers

Art teachers at secondary schools will be included in the project as key actors for the implementation of the project itself. Art teachers will involve the subcategory of young people aged 13-17, will promote the work of their students, and incentivise the use of art as tool for digital advocacy for social inclusion.

Social organisations

The inclusion of social organisations, which includes NFPs, social enterprises, foundations, and associations, will allow to amplify the aim of the project, reaching youth with social

obstacles, and support the awareness raising of young people regarding the topics of their work.

During the project, the target groups will be involved in the creation of a cross-sectoral network between schools, social organisations, and informal young people.

Methodology

The methodology of the project forecasts a phase of preparation of the virtual museum, through the online learning of website building competences of the informal groups of young people, the research and exchange of ideas regarding virtual museums and the preparation of the content. Successively, through the network of 4 different countries, will be organised the art contest for the young people, focussed on two subcategories, depending on age. The





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contest will include the creation of art pieces around the topic of social inclusion and will be focussed on the promotion of change and the advocacy for social inclusion. Besides the art pieces, the young people will write a text in English, supported by the informal groups of young people, explaining the social problem identified and what action - at political or other level - their art piece aims to encourage to make society more inclusive. Finally, the works will be voted through a peer review, which will allow the youth to have an active role in the evaluation of their works, as to vote they will have to give an artistic motivation (why do they like the work) and a social inclusion motivation (what change does it inspire? How does it tackle the problem?). The winners will be announced during a final online conference, and all youth will receive a Youthpass certificate.

Results and impact

The results at the end of the project will be a virtual museum for youth that tackle the topic of social inclusion and a network of youth, social organisations, and art teachers in the framework of art and creativity as tools for digital advocacy for the promotion of social inclusion. The young people who will participate in the contest will develop digital competences, active citizenship competences, they will connect with young people of other EU countries to discuss topics of social and European relevance, and will use their creativity as instrument for active citizenship.





THE ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME

Erasmus+ is the EU's programme to support education, training, youth and sport in Europe.

Erasmus+ offers mobility and cooperation opportunities in:

- higher education
- vocational education and training
- school education (including early childhood education and care)
- adult education
- youth
- and sport

To discover the opportunities of the Erasmus+ programme visit the European Commission page dedicated to the programme [HERE](#).

ABOUT THIS REPORT

This report is the result of the research phase of the partners of the project. It includes a brief description and summary of virtual museums and galleries across Europe, and particularly in the participating countries (Italy, Greece, Turkey). The report is a first analysis aimed at gathering ideas and experiences to brainstorm a virtual museum regarding art for social inclusion. Each virtual museum information sheet reflects the perceptions of the virtual museums by the young members and participants of the project and include a general analysis of the main features, as well as elements of innovation.

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VIRTUAL MUSEUMS ANALYSED

1. CA' PESARO - GALLERIA INTERNAZIONALE D'ARTE MODERNA – ITALY
2. MUSEO DIOCESIANO - ITALY
3. LA GALLERIA DEGLI UFFIZI – ITALY
4. THE BRITISH MUSEUM – UNITED KINGDOM
5. LOUVRE MUSEUM – FRANCE
6. VAN GOGH MUSEUM – NETHERLANDS
7. NAVAL MUSEUM COMMAND – TURKEY
8. ACROPOLIS DIGITAL MUSEUM – GREECE
9. HOUSE OF EUROPEAN HISTORY – BELGIUM
10. UNDERWATER MALTA VIRTUAL MUSEUM - MALTA





CA' PESARO - GALLERIA INTERNAZIONALE D'ARTE MODERNA



Venice, Italy



The International Gallery of Modern Art in Venice has a digital gallery created through Google Arts and Culture. The core of the collection is made up of award-winning works exhibited or purchased at the Venice Biennale in the early decades of 20th century. Along the itinerary are displayed important 19th and 20th century paintings and sculptures, including masterpieces by Klimt, Chagall, Kandinsky, as well as a rich selection of works by Italian artists and an important section of graphic art. The online gallery is created through Google Arts and Culture. The collection includes modern art, oil painting, sculpture and much more. The virtual gallery is organised in one page, where first it is possible to browse the art piece by category, and secondly, it is possible to filter and organise them by: popularity, period of time, and colour. The museum is free and there is a search system, powered by Google, that allows to search by author and name of the painting. Social media links are present at the beginning of the page and when it is opened an artwork, it is also possible to share that particular art on social media as well. Art pieces are presented as simple pictures that can become larger when clicking on them. The information is limited to name of the work, author, period, techniques and the





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rights. No further information is given but it is possible to share it through different medias.



The simple presentation and the user-friendly elements make the virtual gallery very easy and intuitive to use.



<https://artsandculture.google.com/partner/ca-pesaro-galleria-internazionale-d-arte-moderna>



MUSEO DIOCESIANO



Milan, Italy



The website was created with Google Arts and Culture, which is a resourceful tool for virtual museum walkthroughs. The art pieces date from the 4th to the 21st century and the museum is situated in the cloisters of Sant'Eustorgio. Being a religion-themed museum, the target seem to be set to older generations for leisure, and for youngsters passionate about traditional art. Google Arts and Culture offers different approaches to the virtual tour. The first, which is also the most obvious, is a virtual walkthrough of a 3D-reconstruction of the actual museum, made of collages of pictures taken inside the facility and put together with the same technology and principles of Google Maps. By clicking on a painting, visitors can see the title of the piece, and by clicking again

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on the title it opens its detailed record card; The second, which is more intuitive, works like a photo album, in which the operas are catalogued under different folders (author, era, style, etc). Each picture is followed by a detailed description of the piece. The homepage contains a brief intro of the museum, the most viewed pieces, the categories/folders, the virtual tour, and the address information. The entire experience is free of charges. The art pieces are photographed in high quality for the viewers to enjoy. No sound is implemented in this specific virtual museum. The information given for the pictures are as follow: Title, Date, Provenance, Author, Size, Description of the scene, Type of Art (painting, sculpture, ecc.), Materials, Credits.



The cleanliness and the intuitiveness of the layout allow the virtual visitor to enjoy and navigate through the art pieces without getting lost. Although there is not a “search” option for the art pieces, they can be easily organised by most viewed, period, and colours.



<https://artsandculture.google.com/partner/museo-diocesano-milano>



LE GALLERIE DEGLI UFFIZI





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Florence, Italy



The official site of the Uffizi galleries holds a vast collection of artworks of famous artists of various historical periods such as Raffaello, Botticelli, Giotto, Leonardo da Vinci and many more.

The museum is an ensemble of different sections that can be visited all at once or separately, which are: the galleries, Corridoio Vasariano, Palazzo Pitti and Giardino di Boboli. Each of the segments has its own dedicated part on the website. There can be found all needed information of ongoing activities both online and on site, for school projects, private and group visits, special events, viewing of museum related videos and archives, tickets purchase, etc. There is a dedicated side just for the artworks. It presents with a search bar and the possibility to use filters that allow a quick search for a specific artwork or artist. With a simple click on any of the images the site will take you to a page dedicated to the artwork in question, with the pieces of information about it. The site is very user friendly and accessible; it is available in Italian and in English, with easy access to all the social media pages correlated to the Uffizi galleries. There are guided virtual tours and free navigation options. Furthermore, it provides audio options and video options in sign language, making it very accessible for disabled people. Each artwork is presented with its own dedicated page that shows pictures of the art itself. Underneath the pictures there can be found the pieces of information about the artwork, such as dates,





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name of the artist, technique, dimensions, and description. It also includes the location of the artwork in the museum itself.

Furthermore, there are correlated videos (also in LIS for non-hearing people) regarding the specific artwork and its association to other works or analyses. 3D models are available for the showcased sculptures. There is the option to share the artworks on other social media platforms, promoting the museum itself and widening it to the public's knowledge.



As aforementioned, the site is very innovative, inclusive and interactive, it offers many options for the visitors. Particularly interesting are the audio options and video options in sign language that make the virtual museum very accessible for disabled people.

<https://www.uffizi.it/mostre-virtuali>



THE BRITISH MUSEUM



London, United Kingdom



The British Museum gathers human artifacts across time and cultures. There are 6 topics on the website; visit, exhibitions and events, collection, learn, membership and support. The visiting section helps viewers plan their visit. It gives information about the





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location of the museum, its accessibility, food and beverage and visiting opportunities. The exhibition and events section provides information about ongoing exhibitions and their times. Also allows viewers to book exhibitions. The collection section shows off the collections the museum includes. Also, there are audio features such as podcasts and audio tours. Besides, there is a subsection gallery that includes virtual tour on specific parts of the museum. The learn section provides classes on culture for all ages and levels. There are many online courses and projects for audiences. Membership section informs people about membership opportunities and how people becoming a member helps to museum. Finally, the support section reports about donation and support cases for the museum. The web site addresses to nearly all age groups, but it focuses mainly on 18+ age group. There are various ways of presenting the artworks on the website. There is a virtual tour opportunity for galleries. One can take a look at the artworks and walk around them. There is not an information feature on the visual tour. In collection part, there is a chance to see some collections via pictures. Moreover, the information about artworks is represented below the photos. In information part, topics like when the artwork is found, what age it belongs to, who are the people in the artwork, are mentioned. There is also another presentation method of artworks, audios. In those, artworks are described in detail. Features of them like material, culture, age, myths are explained in these audio tours.





Audio tour is an innovative element. Although visual elements are widely adapted, it is not the same for auditory elements. Additionally, podcasts are catching the trends. People can make advises on the topics that they wanted to be talked.



<https://www.britishmuseum.org/>



LOUVRE MUSEUM



Paris, France



The Louvre holds many of Western Civilization's most famous masterpieces. There are three main headlines on the website; visit, explore, and what's on. In the visit section, all information needed before the visit is provided. Detailed info about accessing the museum, opening hours, tickets, family or group tours, restaurants and cafes is included. In explore section, the audience is encouraged to explore the artworks in the museum such as the palace, gardens, and collections. Pictures of these artworks and stories behind them are served to visitors. In what's on section, exhibitions on the agenda are announced. Additionally, life at the museum is introduced to visitors. There is also an online boutique





link on the website that transfers you to a website where louvre-themed items are sold. There is no section for the virtual tour. Users can reach it by searching in the searching section. pictures of artworks are presented and in virtual tour again it is possible to see artworks through visual elements. In picturing, the pieces of information about artworks are represented below the photos. In virtual tour, users can reach the information about artworks through clicking the question mark sign near to artwork. In information part, topics like when the artwork is found, what age it belongs to, who are the people in the artwork, are mentioned.



Being the Louvre a huge museum, the online experience has been divided into virtual tours for visitors to enjoy topic-specific galleries and sections.



<https://www.louvre.fr/en/online-tours>



THE VAN GOGH MUSEUM



Amsterdam, Netherlands



Website is based on discovering the life and work of Vincent Van Gogh. Mainly, there are 4 sections: tickets& visit, art& stories, about. Ticket & visit section provides information about location of the museum, opening hours, agenda of exhibitions, museum shops





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and cafes, and school groups. In the art & stories section, the collection of Van Gogh is displayed and the life and stories of him are told. In about section, organisation of museum is introduced. Ongoing research and projects presented and news about the museum are shared. There is also a webstore link on the website that transfers you to a website where Van Gogh-themed items are sold. The target audience is not specified on the website, but it appeals to visitors in all age groups especially children, as there are school projects for children. There are two ways of accessing the artworks. One is examining the artwork through collection in art & stories section. In this part, user can look at the pictures of artworks, read the information below the picture. Also, there are informative videos for some artworks. Visitor can look at the artworks in the collection is one by one or filter the artwork according to categories such as artist, location, year and genre. Second way of interacting with artworks is unravel Van Gogh part. Visitor should follow the path home > enjoy the museum from home > apps and more > unravel Van Gogh. This part tells about the hidden stories in Vincent's paintings and reveals what you cannot see with naked eye. There is a list of artworks on the right-hand side. Users can pick the artwork that s/he wants to reveal the mystery behind it. S/he can click to the bar to navigate through painting and see the hidden mysteries of it. There is also information for visitors to read. Additionally, quotations from the letters between Van Gogh and his brother Theo attached to the





artworks both written and audio. Experiencing all of these are free. There is also a search system on the website which users can reach what they are looking for rapidly.



Unravel Van Gogh part is very innovative. There is not a concept similar to this in other museums' websites. tells about the hidden stories in Vincent's paintings and reveals what you cannot see with naked eye. User can see what is behind the painting by clicking to navigation bar. Then, it is understood that how Van Gogh saw his environment and how made his paintings accordingly. Moreover, there is an interactive element for children. There are unpainted drawings of Van Gogh's paintings. Children can paint them according to their imagination and interact with Van Gogh's paintings.

<https://www.vangoghmuseum.nl/en>



NAVAL MUSEUM COMMAND



Istanbul, Turkey



The Naval Museum Command is the national naval museum, which contains important maritime and military artifacts. There are six conspicuous sections on the website. 3D virtual tour, about us,





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collection, digital library, facilities & events and visiting. The visiting section gives information about the location of the museum, its accessibility, opening hours, fees, and food & drink. The facilities & events section reports about past and present exhibitions.

The digital library section provides history about the museum and includes books and journals related to navy. In the collection part, artworks in different categories are presented. About us section introduces the administration of the museum and defines the administrative issues like mission and vision. 3D virtual tour section enables visitors to travel in the museum online. Artworks are completely presented virtually. In collection section, photos of the artworks are served and informative passages about them are written. Information mostly consists of description of the artworks and historical period of them. In 3D virtual tour section, unfortunately there is not a special information part. However, information plates that stand by the artworks physically in the museum can be read clearly in the 3D visual tour too.



The 3D virtual tour is the innovative feature of this museum. Although it is a feature already present in several virtual museums, its simplicity and cleanliness of the pictures and the design result in a high-quality experience.



<https://denizmuzesi.dzkk.tsk.tr/en>





ACROPOLIS DIGITAL MUSEUM



Athens, Greece



The museum houses the findings of the Athenian Acropolis, and it is one of the most important museums regarding Greek history and culture in the world. The museum website has a dedicated digital museum part: “the Acropolis Digital Museum”. There are various set up options, like font size and six different languages you can choose from (Greek, English, German, Italian, French and Spanish). There is no specific target audience as it renders all its collections open and accessible to the international community. Although it is mentioned that there are some tasks designed especially for children (a website especially for its little friends - «Acropolis Museum Kids»). It brings before the public all the necessary information on the museum, access to it, temporary exhibitions, activities, events, school and family programmes as well as its research and conservation projects. Worth mentioning that virtual museum is adaptable to all devices and ensures access to colour-blind people and visually impaired visitors. Each artwork is unique and have its own details and information. Depending on the art and the knowledge of the museum regarding it, information or presentation means may vary. For example, if you choose to





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learn about the sanctuaries, you'll find a 16min video, but the only thing provided for ancient coins are just pictures. However, for each one of them crucial information is given. These are: inventory number (obviously helpful for the museum), artist (if known), category (e.g. sculpture or coin), period (i.e. archaic period), date, dimensions, material and finally location (i.e First floor Case 38). It should be mentioned that some of the artwork may not have description in English, since they have not translated the Greek one yet.



The digital museum includes a specifically designed platform for the kids where they can have fun and learn at the same time. It includes interactive experiences like cooking class or handcrafts, which are enjoyable and attractive for this age group. Interactivity occurs the best way when kids are uploading their drawings in museums platform.

<https://theacropolismuseum.gr/en/digital-museum>



HOUSE OF EUROPEAN HISTORY



Brussels, Belgium



The museum is a project of the European Parliament and it is addressed to everyone interested in understanding the European





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history better. It is a modern exhibition, documentation and information center. It consists of a Permanent exhibition and a Temporary one. The Permanent exhibition, which is the focus of this presentation, concentrates on the historical processes which made Europe what it is today, highlighting key factors of its heritage. The Permanent exhibition page is available under the What to See option of the Museum's Main Page(<https://historia-europa.ep.eu>) Menu and it gives access through links to the following pages : 1) Shaping Europe (Maps, Myths and Stories), 2) Europe: A Global Power (Politics, Science, Markets, Capitalism), 3) Europe in Ruins (Wars and their consequences), 4) Rebuilding a Divided Continent (Rebuilding efforts, the Cold War, Social Integration), 5) Shattering Uncertainties (Energy Crises, Communism, Re-Mapping Europe), 6) Europe Now (Headlines, contemporary views). These pages and the exhibits displayed in them are organized by topic and by period progressing from the ancient to the contemporary.

There is no fee to the virtual museum. There is no search system and the user can freely navigate through the website. The pages structure is extremely user-friendly and organised on the principle of moving from the general to the specific aided by multiple CTAs in the form of buttons and arrows.

Deaf people can enjoy the exhibition since the majority of the material is in visual form. Blind people can also get a fairly good





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idea of what the museum is about as audio material of various sources accompanies every item displayed on the pages.

Story telling elements are evident everywhere. It is, after all, a museum about the histories and the stories of Europe and one can delve into them at whatever depth level he/she wishes.

The Museum Main Page offers a great variety of learning elements like pocket-size guides in PDF available to download, articles of international interest and webinars on different topics for young and older students, for teachers or educators and for the general public.



The museum is innovative in the way it approaches European History as parts that make up a whole. The exhibits are transnational and include snapshots and photographs of various materials and of pieces of art. The users can browse through facts, ideas, movements, objects which have their unique identity but at the same time shaped collective “European phenomena”.



<https://historia-europa.ep.eu/en/permanent-exhibition>



UNDERWATER MALTA VIRTUAL MUSEUM





Malta, Malta



An interactive online platform that brings sunken wrecks of ships, aircrafts, submarines and battleships of the Malta and Gozo depths into the homes of the general public. It is the result of the collaborative effort between Heritage Malta, the University of Malta and the Malta Tourism Authority. The virtual exhibits are vessels from ancient Phoenicia, World War I and World War II covering an approximately 3000-year time period. The platform is a mixture of guided and free navigation options as there is a main museum route to follow through the exhibits but one can freely choose the specific paths to various materials related to them such as photos, short films, info texts and 3D models.

The navigation menu becomes available after one hits the Explore button in the main page of the museum. The same menu can also be displayed when hitting the linear menu button on the top right side in the main page. The structure of the main menu is as follows: The Museum -> The Project -> The Team -> The Islands -> Shipwrecks & The Law -> Support Us -> Get in Touch -> Legal . Choosing each of these steps one has access to additional information about the history of the location and the wrecks and about the people who worked for the project. One could say that an indirect storytelling element lies behind the way the wrecks are presented as the relevant historical backgrounds unfold and linked to the international cultural heritage. There is a thorough





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presentation of every single exhibit which includes a text describing its technical characteristics, the historical period in which it was used and the circumstances related to its discovery in the Malta territory. A short video of the underwater wreck is also available. Each exhibit can also be seen in the form of a 3D model and what is more, models can be rotated 360° with options to zoom in and out so that every detail can be easily observed.



The interactive element of the museum can be enjoyed in the page where one can rotate, zoom in and out, get more information and photographs and inspect the exhibits in their 3D version. This can be done on a laptop, tablet, mobile device, or VR headset. Advanced display options (Rendering, Navigation types, Textures) are also available through an adjustment button. A link to Sketchfab platform offers a more display enhanced experience. The overall impression is close to holding the wreck in one's hand and looking at it from different angles.



<https://underwatermalta.org>





CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of the virtual museums has brought an insight in the partners regarding common trends in virtual experiences (e.g. the 3D virtual tour) as well as how innovative interactive elements are integrated on platforms and website. This report is only a scrap on the surface regarding virtual museum experiences, but it provides a general overview on the different technologies that can be used to enhance the learning experience of visitors.

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