



# MumAE Toolkit



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Museums

Meet

Adult

Educators

2010



"With the support of the Grundtvig lifelong learning programme of the European Union"



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Graphic design: Manuela Pereira

## Welcome to the MumAE Toolkit!

Museums are ideal places to provide settings, resources and inspirations for a wide reaching and diverse range of both informal and formal learning activities addressing adults of various kinds and with different needs. Museums promote creativity by allowing people to engage with collections, artefacts and artworks. They are well-placed to offer adults a variety of learning opportunities, from subject learning to more imaginative and creative ones.

Some activities carried out by museums in Europe and addressed to adults also aim at combating social exclusion, educating to active citizenship, sustaining intercultural dialogue and contributing to personal development.

The "MumAE – Museums Meet Adult Educators" project funded by the Lifelong Learning Grundtvig Programme (2009-2010) has had the objective of sustaining the development of innovative practices and creative partnerships which can offer routes to reach new users, enhance learning provisions and increase the number of these opportunities for adult learners all over Europe.

The main aim of the project has been to support European museums in developing their potential as places for lifelong learning and make adult educators aware of the learning opportunities museums offer to adults, by creating the conditions for a constant and permanent contact and sharing of information between the two fields.

The MumAE Toolkit has been designed to support museum professionals and adult educators who want to work together and develop joint projects.

## UNDERSTANDING LIFELONG LEARNING

Lifelong learning has become a significant topic of policy debate in Europe over the last ten years. 1996 was the Year for Lifelong Learning. Ever since, public authorities, public and private education institutions, secondary and higher education, the social partners, enterprises, non-profit organisations or various associations and, of course, individuals have reflected about its meanings and the changes necessary to build its future.



In 1996, most of the large international organisations presented their own analysis: the European Commission published the White Paper on *Teaching and Learning: towards the learning society*, UNESCO made a contribution with *L'éducation: un trésor est caché dedans*, and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development held a ministerial meeting on "Lifelong Learning for All". But the first proposals on recurrent education (OECD, 1977, [www.oecd.org](http://www.oecd.org)), second chance education or *éducation permanente* were published already a quarter of a century ago. In 1996, the UNESCO-sponsored Delors Report (*The Treasure Within*) identified four pillars enabling individual development:

1. Learning to do
2. Learning to be
3. Learning to understand
4. Learning to live together

Since 1996, programmes have promoted new partnerships, new curricula and new assessment methods. Enterprises have had to face the challenges of globalisation and the increasing speed of technological change. Public authorities are looking at ways of modernising their education systems; questions are raised about learning outside educational settings; more and more individuals reach higher levels of education than previous generations ever hoped for, but at the same time, our learning societies have discovered widespread illiteracy.

What sort of agenda has emerged through all these debates led to since 1996? The purpose of this section is not to give a comprehensive overview of lifelong learning, even over the recent years. It is to survey the emergent terms, themes or discourses that seem to possess sustained or recent resonance with those responsible for lifelong learning.



## Key strands

### 1. The individual as learner

Ideas about lifelong learning emphasise the individual and this can empower learners, providing more choice and flexibility of opportunity. Employees increasingly have the responsibility for managing their own learning and skill development. However, there are questions about how well an individual-centred approach will meet national education and training needs. Further, some writers stress the importance of group/collective loyalties and social networks in facilitating learning.

*In the individualised society the individual must therefore learn, on pain of permanent disadvantage, to conceive of him or herself as the centre of action. ...under these conditions of a reflexive biography 'society' must be individually manipulated as a 'variable'*

Ulrich Beck, *Risk Society*, 1992

Adults are subject to an explosion of information and knowledge, thereby placing greater emphasis on the process of learning which is ongoing rather than the content of learning, which is likely to go out of date. As individuals take increasing responsibility for their own decisions about lifestyle and identity, life planning and guidance also become increasingly important.

The role of education and training in developing learner autonomy is justified by reference to the uncertain economic, technological and social environment that learners will encounter. The demise of traditional bureaucratic career tracks and uncertainties around what people will need to know in ten years time means that simply loading up the 'front end' of education is not an adequate response. For instance, we can anticipate a higher proportion of students studying intermittently, with more short programmes and more people returning repeatedly to update skills and knowledge, or to change career direction. Learners will be following increasingly individual learning pathways, requiring greater flexibility and diversity from institutional providers, particularly in relation to guidance services.



### 2. Lifelong learning and networks

If learning is seen as a function of social relationships rather than an essentially individual activity, then the concept of lifelong learning is extended beyond the acquisition by individuals of formal qualifications. Learning then ties in with a set of other relationships within organisations, families, communities and the economy.

A number of recent research studies have highlighted the significant role which learning networks can play in support of lifelong learning. Learning networks can include family and peers, community groups, voluntary organisations, social movements, and youth organisations. They can connect individuals to the wider community and facilitate learning in many different ways.

Some writers have claimed that social partnerships are a 'space for learning' with the potential to enhance capacity for action and responsibility and build collective, even democratic, understanding by enhancing the individual's cognitive and affective competences.

Some research raises questions about the nature and purpose of provider partnerships. In these studies, partnerships are seen as policy-led set by policy makers, where community consultation has not always been either extensive or effective.

Some critics of lifelong learning partnerships claim that they tend to be inspired by broad public policy goals that have little or no connection to the worlds in which learners are living their learning lives. The challenge for partnerships and network approaches is to find common ground on which to meet people and engage with their learning aspirations.

### 3. Lifecycle, Lifecourse or Lifewide approaches

A recent focus of lifelong learning discourse has been on the interrelationships between learning, identity and agency in the lifecourse. On the one hand, this exploration seeks to understand how identity (including one's identity as a learner) and agency (the ability to exert control over one's life) impact upon learning dispositions, practices and achievements. On the other hand, it seeks to understand how different forms and practices of learning and different learning achievements impact upon individual identities (including learner identities), on individuals' senses of agency, and on their actual capacity to exert control over their lives. This is done against the background of their unfolding lives, aiming to understand, in other words, the *transformations* in learning dispositions, practices and achievements that have been triggered by *changes* in the lifecourse.

*As I see it, what is needed is critical social lifelong and lifewide learning that can cut across barriers such as those associated with class, ethnocultural difference, illiteracy, age, gender, the lack of education, the lack of quality work, and geographic isolation.*

*André Grace, University of Alberta, Canada Intersecting instrumental, social, and cultural education to build and sustain inclusive lifelong-learning communities, 2002*

Some commentators are particularly interested in the ways in which adults respond to events in their lives and in the processes of learning involved in such responses. Such events may be *structured transitions* or they may be changes of a more *incidental* nature, including critical incidents, such as redeployment or illness. Many such events stimulate encounters with new formal and informal learning opportunities. They can also result in forms of tacit learning of which individuals sometimes only become aware (long) after the event. Learning also occurs, it is often claimed, in relation to the routines of everyday life, where 'turning points' are not immediately discernible.

### 4. Participation and equity

Studies of participation in adult education reveal a complex picture that does not lend itself to simple solutions, and initiatives aimed at widening participation have not always had their intended effect. Debates about participation and non-participation have been framed largely within an instrumental and technical form of rationality focusing on institutional and systemic issues, rather than positioning them in the wider socio-economic and political context.

*...neglect may be the major contribution of the new lifelong learning movement.*

*Canadian academic and adult educator Alan Thomas*

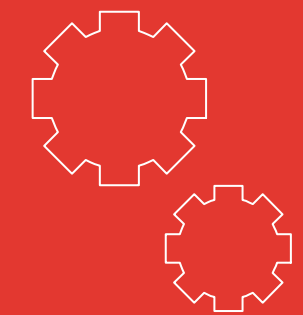
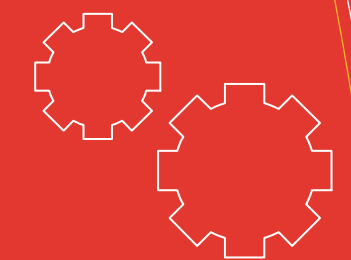
The literature reveals that neither public welfare nor market-based models of provision have been entirely successful in countering established patterns of inclusion and exclusion. A number of studies show that those with minimum initial education, manual workers, adults from lower socio-economic groups and older people are consistently under-represented in the take-up of learning opportunities.

Estimates of participation levels depend heavily on the definition of 'learning' that is used. Formal episodes of learning such as degree courses, attendance at training colleges, formal training courses organised by the employer at work and so on tend to be immediately identified by survey respondents as learning activities, but they are less clear about including informal, unstructured types of learning. This is particularly true of some learning at work that is seen as 'just part of the job'. It is also true of some types of non-vocational learning because the purpose of the activity is seen as fun rather than learning. This raises the fundamental question of what constitutes learning and whether it can be clearly differentiated from such things as experience and leisure.



Key Questions around the life-course debate include:

- What does education bring to people's social competences?
- What skills and knowledge do people develop through their social and civic engagement?
- Are these transferable to, and valued in, other life spheres – especially working life?
- Are transformations of learning dispositions triggered by changes in the life course?





Many of the contributions to policy debates challenge us to remember those disenfranchised when lifelong learning is often cast as more education for the already educated. Some commentators emphasise the centrality of access and equity in policy work and practice of lifelong learning. They demand that we grapple with issues of access, accommodation, and equity as we engage questions of purpose, content, process, and audience in our interactions with lifelong learners. Two multi-focused questions guided such analysis:

- Who says what lifelong learning is, what it is for, and for whom?
- What are the key ideas behind access and how do they interact – with each other, and with provision?

## 5. Learning and working

In many workplaces learning is used as a key strategy for managing the change and uncertainty faced by individual workers and their employing organisations. The workplace itself becomes a powerful learning environment informed by the concept of the 'learning organisation', in which employers, workers, educators and trainers engage in new forms of relationships, with important implications for industrial relations.

Within the literature on lifelong learning there is an emphasis on developing people's skills and competencies, and their capacity for further learning. In the economic sphere, the notion of employability has moved to the fore, placing emphasis on individual skill development and preparedness for employment, with less concern for the availability of employment and appropriate opportunity structures.

Thus, a notion of a learning society that sees inclusion mediated through participation in employment – although valuable to many – can itself produce other exclusions.

Informal learning in the workplace constitutes a large and increasing part of provision for lifelong learning. Factors impinging on this development are the increase in job turnover rates and the insecurity associated with flexible work contracts and new forms of organising employment. The building of knowledge networks and the changing nature of work in learning organisations are additional factors.

Some contributors to workplace learning discourse have explored how worker identities are shaped and reshaped through the interconnected experiences of assessment, work and learning. Another key aspect of the discourse in this area is the exploration of the concept of Communities of Practice (CoP), which examines how groups of people in organisations can – through joint enterprises, mutual engagement and shared repertoire – share knowledge to learn from one another regarding some aspects of their work and to provide a social context for that practice. Some writers argue that there is a clear move from simple disciplined fordist approaches to more flexible forms, others that there is no single trajectory for workplace learning and that pedagogic practices are embedded in the specific networks of workplaces.

One key strand of the discourse around learning and work looks at economic globalisation. From this point of view, lifelong learning is a key instrument in developing a competitive, multi-skilled workforce. Other commentators address the ways in which globalisation affects our social, political and cultural lives, and our educational responses to these issues. From this standpoint, lifelong learning can be a tool for combating social exclusion.



## Lifelong Museum Learning. A European Handbook

**LLML (Lifelong Museum Learning)** was a Multilateral Grundtvig Project (2004-2006) which aimed to develop training courses for museum professionals working with adults. It mapped training needs of museum educators working with adults and produced three training events, plus a publication "Lifelong Learning in Museums. A European Handbook"

The Handbook is available on-line in several European languages:

**English** [www.ibr.regione.emilia-romagna.it/wcm/ibr/menu/attivita/07formaz/formdidat1/didamus/par1/materiali/par1/llml\\_en.pdf](http://www.ibr.regione.emilia-romagna.it/wcm/ibr/menu/attivita/07formaz/formdidat1/didamus/par1/materiali/par1/llml_en.pdf)

**German** [www.ne-mo.org/fileadmin/Dateien/public/MumAE/reserved\\_area/LLML\\_Handbook-final.pdf](http://www.ne-mo.org/fileadmin/Dateien/public/MumAE/reserved_area/LLML_Handbook-final.pdf)

**Italian** [www.ibr.regione.emilia-romagna.it/wcm/ibr/menu/attivita/07formaz/formdidat1/didamus/par1/materiali/par1/llml\\_ita.pdf](http://www.ibr.regione.emilia-romagna.it/wcm/ibr/menu/attivita/07formaz/formdidat1/didamus/par1/materiali/par1/llml_ita.pdf)

**Russian** [www.amr-museum.ru](http://www.amr-museum.ru)



## Adult learning and European policies

[http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc58\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-policy/doc58_en.htm)

## LIFELONG LEARNING, MUSEUMS AND THE EUROPEAN AGENDA

Today's society is called the learning society, a knowledge based society. What does it mean?

If we look at EU policy documents<sup>1</sup> developed in the last decade or so, we find a great emphasis on the word "learning" and especially on the concept of "lifelong learning", whose definition reads:

"All learning activity undertaken throughout life with the aim of improving knowledge, skills, and competences within a personal, civic and/or employment-related perspective".<sup>2</sup>

It is therefore learning which happens in various contexts, in response to formal instruction, but more often informally and in a variety of ways and settings, including everyday life, interaction with people, and cultural opportunities. Lifelong learning aims not only to transfer knowledge, but also to give individuals a chance to grow and develop by increasing their skills, values, feelings and attitudes.

One recognises three different ways of learning throughout life:

- **Formal learning:** learning that takes place in a formal education or training setting, normally leading to a qualification. In a museum this can be learning that happens as part of a structured course (university, vocational, etc.).
- **Non-formal learning:** learning that is structured and organised but is not measured or accredited and does not lead to a qualification. In a museum this can mean attending a gallery talk, a lecture.
- **Informal learning:** learning that occurs through family, social or civic life, not necessarily intentionally. In a museum this kind of learning can happen just by entering the door. Since many adults visit museums individually, it is therefore very important to pay attention to the museum environment, in order to create a context which is conducive to learning.

According to European policies, lifelong learning is no longer considered just one aspect of education and training, but must become the guiding principle for provision and participation across the full continuum of learning contexts.<sup>3</sup>

From EU documents, it emerges that the achievement of a genuine European Knowledge Area will depend on social cohesion, innovation, creativity, the rethinking of education systems, an increased access to cultural life, the circulation of people, the flexibility of labour markets supported by a more accessible and effective lifelong learning infrastructure. In this perspective, museums must develop a response which takes into account the need of economic growth and of linking to the labour market, the importance of delivering basic skills, as well as key competences, the need to involve learners and citizens in their planning process, the challenges posed by intercultural issues.

Museums are asked to integrate their collections, spaces and learning programmes into a new joined up framework that connects formal and informal learning providers, in other words, they are asked to play a role in the learning society.

Museums have been educational places since their inception, with their mission encompassing two sometimes competing remits: caring for collections and providing access and learning opportunities for visitors. In addition to being places which conserve and present the traces of the past, they may also now be seen as the centrepiece of community development or regeneration projects. There is no question that the role of museums has changed significantly in recent years.

When carrying out their educational and didactic tasks, European museums have often aimed their educational programmes at schoolchildren, seeing them as the most easy to reach group, and the one for which most is known about learning methodologies. Adult learning, where it has been identified as such, has seldom strayed from the guided visit, the expert lecture or formal evening class. In the last decade, however, more and more museums in the different European countries have chosen to consider the needs of and engage with new and or different audiences: migrants, people with disabilities, socially excluded people, and also adult lifelong learners, who see a museum visit as an opportunity to build understanding, gain an insight, be inspired, or simply to enjoy.

The museum public has widened to include both younger and older adults, who pose new challenges to museum educators used to working with groups of pupils or students in formal education. Adult learners are autonomous and self-directed – able to contribute actively to the learning experience and take part in the meaning-making process which all learning entails; they have also accumulated life experience and knowledge that new learning should build upon.

Lifelong learning therefore opens up a new era for museums: that of questioning assumptions, of experimenting, of building up partnerships, and of being challenged by encounters with different publics, new audiences, new citizens, and trying to make a positive difference to their lives.

Challenges come from European authorities and institutions which try to orientate policies in members States, but they come also from the public and from the ongoing trend to democratize museums and make them more accessible to wider audiences, socially relevant, and responsive to their publics' changing needs and interests.

1. Lisbon Strategy ; Key Competences for Lifelong Learning 2004; New Skills for New Jobs 2008; the two Communications from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions: "Progress towards the Lisbon objectives in education and training" and "Key competences for a changing world" (2009).

2. COM, *Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality*.

3. *A Memorandum on Lifelong Learning, Commission Staff Working Paper, 2000.*



### Museums and Adult Learning

Many museums offer activities addressed to adults. Below are just some examples:

**The National Gallery of Ireland** offers adults the possibility of engaging with art in a variety of ways: drawing courses, gallery talks, research days, public lectures:

[www.nationalgallery.ie/en/Learning/Lifelong%20Learning%20and%20Courses.aspx](http://www.nationalgallery.ie/en/Learning/Lifelong%20Learning%20and%20Courses.aspx)

**The York Museums Trust** offers a variety of activities for adults: art, craft and writing workshops, curators' talks, guided tours and hands-on sessions examining museum artefacts and specimens.

[www.yorkmuseumstrust.org.uk/Page/AdultLearning.aspx](http://www.yorkmuseumstrust.org.uk/Page/AdultLearning.aspx)

**The Victoria and Albert Museum** (London) makes available resources for adults, such as:

- "Creative Spaces", a social networking application that allows users to search across nine museum and gallery collections and discover their own tastes and inspirations:

[vna.nmolp.org/creativespaces/](http://vna.nmolp.org/creativespaces/)  
<http://vna.nmolp.org/creativespaces/>

- Trails and Kits for adults, including a creative writing kit and a drawing kit

- Memory Maps

[www.vam.ac.uk/activ\\_events/adult\\_resources/creative\\_writing/index.html](http://www.vam.ac.uk/activ_events/adult_resources/creative_writing/index.html)

# The EU Lifelong Learning Programme - Grundtvig

Educational activities with adults in museums can be supported by the Lifelong Learning Programme of the European Union [http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/index\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/index_en.html), and especially by the Grundtvig Programme [http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc86\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc86_en.htm), which aims to provide adults with ways to improve their knowledge and skills, keeping them mentally fit and potentially more employable, more specifically to:

- Increase the number of people in adult education to 25 000 by 2013, and improve the quality of their experience, whether at home or abroad
- Improve conditions for mobility so that at least 7 000 people per year by 2013 can benefit from adult education abroad
- Improve the quality and amount of co-operation between adult education organisations
- Develop innovative adult education and management practices, and encourage widespread application
- Ensure that people on the margins of society have access to adult education, especially older people and those who left education without basic qualifications
- Support innovative ICT-based educational content, services and practices

The Grundtvig Programme gives financial support to different kinds of projects, among others:

- **Network Projects** (3 years, min. 10 partners, 10 countries) [http://ec.europa.eu/education/grundtvig/doc882\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/grundtvig/doc882_en.htm)
- **Multilateral Projects** (2 years, min. 3 countries) [http://ec.europa.eu/education/grundtvig/doc880\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/grundtvig/doc880_en.htm)
- **Learning Partnerships** (2 years, min. 3 countries, funded by the National Agencies). For a list of all LLP National Agencies [http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/national\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/national_en.html)
- **Individual Mobility Grants**. For these, one should refer to the LLP National Agencies: [http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/national\\_en.html](http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/national_en.html)

For more information on all Grundtvig actions:  
[http://ec.europa.eu/education/grundtvig/doc872\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/grundtvig/doc872_en.htm)

## **EACEA- the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency**

Some actions of the Grundtvig Programme are managed by EACEA, the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency  
[http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/about/about\\_eacea\\_en.php](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/about/about_eacea_en.php)

Information on funding opportunities and Calls for proposals for projects are published on their website:  
[http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/funding/2010/index\\_en.php](http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/funding/2010/index_en.php)

## ACCESS AND OUTREACH

### Access

In Adult Education, the term "access" generally refers to a right to approach, enter, exit, communicate with, or make use of educational opportunity. Museums can offer a unique informal learning opportunity and have an important role to play in providing a setting for adult learning. Research shows that museums are important sites for programmes that seek to increase educational opportunities for minority groups or adults who fail to participate in lifelong learning due to low educational attainment. Additionally, there is evidence to suggest that learning programmes are effective ways for museums to broaden their audience base.

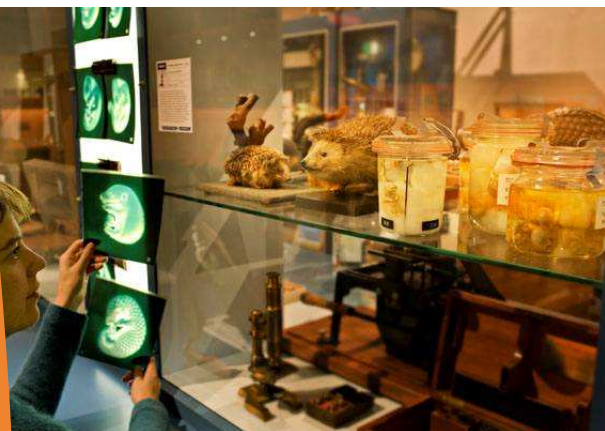
For adults who have returned to learning for pleasure, many of them will point to the fact that it gave them a 'kick start' in changing their lives. For example, it's often been the gateway for people who may have been homeless, those who have just come out of prison or young offenders' institutes, or have been suffering from drug and alcohol misuse. It's also a popular choice for retirees or for people who may have become widowed but it's by no means restricted to just these groups of people in society. In fact, people who learn for pleasure span the entire social spectrum in terms of age and their social, economic and cultural background.

### Outreach

Outreach is the way that many museums and galleries work with groups and individuals that would not normally visit the museum site. Outreach work is often done through creating partnerships with community groups and other institutions. Often the museum is looking to develop a new audience and work with adults that are hard-to-reach. If there is not a culture of museum visiting among some communities they could benefit from a visit by museum staff to introduce the objects and collections. Outreach sessions can involve handling real museum objects and other hands-on activities. They can be delivered in a variety of venues and tailor made to suit the group of learners.

Outreach does not always mean working outside of the museums, although initial taster sessions are often run in a group's own space, or a venue familiar to them, to prepare them for their visit to a museum site. The collections and sites can be the basis for projects as they are what make museums unique and they are an excellent way of stimulating discussion, debate, and involvement. Groups may participate in projects over a number of weeks or months, which sometimes leads to them creating images, sculptures or words for temporary exhibitions.

Outreach is often targeted at groups with a high social need, aiming to develop a closer relationship with local communities. By developing the participants skills and confidence it is hoped they become independent users of the museum.



## LEARNING STYLES

Engaging different sectors of society and marginalized communities means having to communicate to a range of learning styles.

An adult who has been to university and come from a culture of museum and gallery learning will learn in a very different way to an adult who has spent the last ten years excluded from school and in and out of prison. Broadly speaking adult learning styles can be divided into three ways of learning to be considered in a museum environment:

### Visual Learning

Visual learners are those who prefer to process information and work with it presented visually. They are often good at creating a mental picture of things they have seen and enjoy the use of colours, charts, diagrams and visual aids.

### Auditory Learning

Auditory learners are those who work best when they hear information. For some learners the visual element can be a distraction and they focus more when it is purely auditory, such as an audio-guide in a museum. Particular sounds of words and word association is also helpful to them and discussing the ideas with others is, for them, the best way of cementing their learning experience in their minds. Auditory learners tend to be active participants in debates and seminars and if they don't understand a particular concept, they find it easier if it's explained to them verbally as opposed to using drawings or diagrams.

### Kinaesthetic Learning

Kinaesthetic learners are 'doers'. In other words, they learn more effectively when concepts or ideas can be assimilated and then they can put these into practice for themselves. They need to be able to do this so that the information presented to them appears 'real' and is of relevance to them.

Good examples include those who enjoy role play exercises or like to go out on field trips where they can learn from demonstrations or, similarly, in a laboratory setting. Effectively, they need to really 'feel' that the learning experience is 'real'. They'll want to roll up their sleeves and do something practical to reinforce their learning experience so they'll adopt a tactile approach using all of their senses - touch, smell, hearing and seeing. This type of learning is especially relevant to museums and their collections. Adults can interact with museum objects in a 'hands-on' way that is not possible by reading books or looking on the internet.

It's not always the case that an individual will only adopt only one specific learning style. In fact, it's more likely that certain projects will involve a combination of more than just one style of learning. However, if asked, most people will tell you that, if put on the spot, they are able to identify and relate to one of these particular styles of learning more than the other two. A project run by the museum may call on a number of learning styles to engage the learners, or learners may naturally use the style that suits them best.

### Using Learning Theories and Learning Styles in Museums

David Kolb's learning theory<sup>1</sup>, for example, has been widely employed in museums in the Netherlands<sup>2</sup> for the planning and staging of exhibitions and the creation of interpretative materials and education programmes.

Kolb suggests that everyone has a preferred learning style, or sometimes a combination of more than one learning styles, out of a possible total of four: dreamer, deliberator, decider, doer.

*Dreamers* tend to make use of concrete experience and reflective observation. Their greatest strength lies in their imaginative ability and their awareness of meaning and values. They derive understanding through observation rather than action, are interested in people, imaginative and in touch with their feelings.



*Deliberators* make use of abstract conceptualisation and reflective observation. They are less focused on people and more concerned with ideas and abstract concepts, which are judged less by their practical value and more by whether they are logically sound and precise.

*Deciders* tend to make use of abstract conceptualisation and active experimentation. They are good in problem solving, decision-making and in the practical application of ideas. Deciders often do best in contexts where there is a single correct answer to be found or a solution to a question or problem.

1. D A Kolb, *Learning Style Inventory Version 3-1*, Hay Group, Boston, 2005.

2. E Hoogstraal, A Vels Heijn, *De leertheorie van Kolb in het museum*. Dromer, Denker, Beslisser, Doener, Amsterdam, Museum Vereniging, 2006.







Doers use concrete experience and active experimentation. Their greatest strength lies in doing things, in carrying out plans and tasks and getting involved in new experiences. Problem solving becomes more of an intuitive, trial-and-error process, and relies heavily on other people for information, rather than on their own analytic ability.

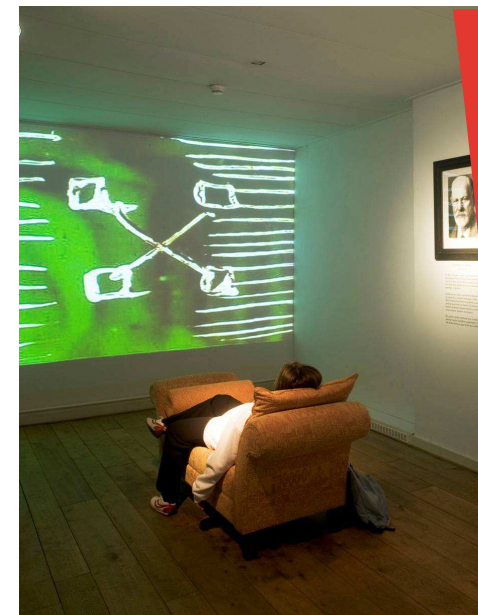
**The University Museum in Utrecht has embraced Kolb's theory to such an extent to present its visitors at the entrance with a test written on the wall, in order to establish their prevalent learning style and offer them a coherent path through the exhibitions.**

The Gallo Romein Museum in Tongeren also applied Kolb's learning theory in studying the redisplay of the museum's exhibits, which followed a three years major redevelopment of the museum, including a new building and an extensive research on actual and potential publics and their learning needs. Of course the value of Kolb's, as of any other learning theory applied to museums, lies in their supporting a more rounded approach to displays and education, one that takes into account the learning diversity of potential visitors.

## PARTNERSHIP

### Partnership Working

Any one who organises, funds, delivers or takes part in projects, which aim to have learning outcomes, are partners. One way for a museum to engage groups of adults is through partnerships that bring adults to the museum or reach out to them in their community.



Many adults pass through the museum on informal visits, but many more come to work with a particular collection or for many different reasons.

Partnership is critical to all aspects of a museum's work and is especially important for museum educators trying to make contact with a wide cross section of people.

A museum might be addressing adult learners, cultural minorities, teachers, community groups, pensioners, teenagers, refugees, people with disabilities or mental health difficulties, and so on. No single education department can employ enough experienced staff to develop and run the range and type of programmes all these different groups need. This is where partnerships come in, by offering specialist knowledge and contact with potential audiences.

Formal education partnerships can be with:

- Higher education providers; universities, colleges, etc.
- Formal accreditation boards
- Lecturers and teachers
- Other museums and galleries
- Libraries and archives

Informal education partnerships can be with:

- Faith community groups
- Care homes
- Reading groups
- Arts groups
- Leisure groups
- Special interest group (i.e. historical society)
- Voluntary groups
- Family centres

### Case studies: Museums Working in Partnership with other Institutions

There are many examples of well functioning and innovative partnerships that museums have established with other actors:

The MAP for ID pilot project "Choose the piece", where the Archaeological and Ethnographic Museum in Modena (Italy) working with the local institutions involved in the development of immigration and integration policies and with cultural mediators, developed a programme to foster intercultural dialogue by promoting in participants a greater knowledge of local history and heritage through the "adoption" of museum objects. [www.mapforid.it/23\\_IT\\_Choose\\_the\\_Piece\\_FINAL\\_30-8-09.pdf](http://www.mapforid.it/23_IT_Choose_the_Piece_FINAL_30-8-09.pdf)

"Choose the piece" is one of the thirty pilots addressed to young adult learners within the framework of the Grundtvig funded project MAP for ID – Museums as Places for Intercultural. Following an overview of the city's key historical events each participant was invited to "adopt" one of the 30 objects symbolising the city's history from the Palaeolithic to the Middle Ages. Their choice was guided by their teachers and the museum staff by playing on personal tastes, memories, specific interests and affinities with objects connected with the different countries of origin. In receiving a certificate finalising the symbolic adoption of an object, each participant committed him or herself to preserve it and to spread its knowledge. See also S Bodo, K Gibbs, M Sani (eds.), *Museums as Places for Intercultural Dialogue. Selected practices from Europe*, Dublin 2009 and [www.mapforid.it](http://www.mapforid.it)



Working in partnership can be a key way to access groups of adult learners. Partners should believe in the principle of *shared learning outcomes*. When we look to make a partnership work we have to be clear about what the partners expect from the programme or project. Successful partnerships have at their heart:

- *Shared Goals*: Understanding what outcomes are expected if any and what everyone hopes to achieve
- *Shared Culture*: Agreed values that brought the partnership together
- *Shared Learning*: Continuously improving the partnership and responding to evaluation
- *Shared Effort*: Both sides of the partnership need to work on the project
- *Shared Information*: Keep communication effective

Museum or arts-led education projects can be part of a formal curriculum or part of informal activity. They can take place in many different contexts, for example at a college, a community centre, a prison or a hospital, or they may be part of the education and access programme of an arts organisation. Concepts and ideas can be explored through courses, lectures, study days, film seasons, workshops, panel discussions and tours.

When all partners meet to decide on aims and objectives, they are likely to have many different agendas. It can be very difficult to get all partners to agree a set of aims, with objectives that can be realistically achieved through one project. It may well be that some aims and objectives will not be shared by all partners.

Compromise is nearly always necessary. Try to:

- Discuss all partners' agendas openly
- Make sure you understand each other – you may think you are speaking the same language, but specialist terminology can be confusing
- Focus on one or two overarching aims for the project, and encourage partners to express their different agendas through specific objectives
- Focus on one or two overarching aims for the project, and encourage partners to express their different agendas through specific objectives
- Agree objectives and measures of success which are *acceptable* to all, even if, they are not *shared* by all partners
- Be realistic about what can be achieved
- Be as specific as possible - what exactly are you trying to achieve?
- Wherever possible, include participants in initial planning

## PROGRAMME DESIGN

Adult Education as is evident from the 'Adult Education and Lifelong Learning Agendas' section, implies a very large agenda. It raises many issues about the institutional relationships between the formal education sector and the more diffuse provisions of continuing education.

Designing a coherent programme of lifelong learning in partnership immediately begs difficult questions about the investment risks and costs, and implications for financing strategies. As the strategic roles of institutions and their partners are reviewed, traditional roles of delivering adult education are also being called into question.

You might find the following questions useful as a basis for programme design:

- What are the 'typical characteristics' you want to embed in your adult education programmes?
- Are your programmes adaptive, flexible and able to respond to the needs of various adult learners?
- What are the impacts of institutional styles and conditions of the programmes offer upon access and the motivation of potential adult learners?
- Are there specific patterns of social exclusion that might be addressed by your programme?
- What are the cost implications of various approaches under consideration?



### Case studies: Museums Working in Partnership with other Institutions

There are many examples of well functioning and innovative partnerships that museums have established with other actors:

The art education programme for retired people developed by the **Irish Museum of Modern Art in Dublin** in collaboration with the St. Michael's Parish Active Retirement Association, which resulted in the older learners curating an exhibition and mediating its content with the public. Interviewed about what they had gotten out of the programme, which had extended over a number of years, participants declared that the most valuable outcome for them was a sense of identity and connectedness, of well being and possibly a longer life expectancy.<sup>1</sup>

[www.imma.ie/en/nav\\_10.htm](http://www.imma.ie/en/nav_10.htm)

### The British Museum

(London) works in partnership with universities to offer credited and non-accredited higher education courses, as well as ESOL courses (English for Students of Other Languages)

[www.britishmuseum.org/learning/adult\\_learning/esol\\_programmes.aspx](http://www.britishmuseum.org/learning/adult_learning/esol_programmes.aspx)

<sup>1</sup> T Fleming, A Gallagher, *Toward Connected Self Reliance at the Irish Museum of Modern Art. Even her nudes were lovely. A Research Report on the Museum's Programme for Older Adults*, Dublin, Irish Museum of Modern Art, 2000.



Designing a project for adult learners can be responding to a need from the community. A needs assessment could be carried out. A community needs assessment is a way of gathering information about a community's opinions, needs, challenges, and assets used to determine which project (s) will meet the real needs of the community. The following are some needs assessment tools:

- *Interviews* – Collect information from community members who are in a position to know community needs. These people might be community leaders, professionals, or other individuals who have affiliations with particular organizations or agencies.
- *Public forum* – Bring a wide range of community members together at public meetings to gather information via group discussions.
- *Focus group* – Obtain opinions and ideas from a small, targeted group of community members.
- *Survey* – Use a formal survey or questionnaire to collect information from a wide range of community members.
- *Secondary data analysis* – Review and analyze data that has already been collected regarding community issues and needs.
- *Asset mapping* – Gather information about existing assets and resources.

Some factors that might influence the type of assessment selected include time, cost, target audience, and available manpower. Ideally a needs assessment should include a combination of tools.

### Developing objectives

Over the course of the project the adult learner will be on a learning journey and generic learning outcomes can be applied to most projects. The objectives will often be an increase in one or more of the following:

1. Skills
2. Knowledge and understanding
3. Activity behaviour and progression
4. Attitudes and values
5. Enjoyment, inspiration and creativity



Activities will be built around what you want to achieve and what you can offer the learners. Think about whether, how and what learning occurs. What the outcome of this learning is and what the broad impact might be.

### Advice and support services

It is often asserted that it is through guidance and counselling that individuals construct themselves and their decisions as lifelong learners. As the structures that govern the front-end model of education and training become part of the wider resources for lifelong learning, so decisions about learning opportunities become more individualised. Guidance is frequently seen as playing a more central role for the individual in negotiating their situations and there is a need for innovation concerning both the forms of guidance on offer and the contexts in which they are available.

Advice and support services are a way of helping adult learners finding the education they need. It can be single courses or a complete training package. Other words used are guidance and counselling. Advice/Support services are there to help (Adult) Educational institutions and organizations with issues concerning financing, policy making, networking and training methods amongst others.

Think about what opportunities there are in your museum or gallery for projects. What can you offer in terms of staff, time, objects or resources?





## EVALUATING LEARNING

Accreditation is one way of measuring success in learning. If a course is accredited it is easy to evaluate the learning that has been achieved. But not all learners want accreditation. Some learners, for example, may be starting out on their learning journey and find qualifications too daunting. Others want to learn for pleasure and at their own pace. It is important that learning providers have the tools to give feedback on a wide range of learning aims and outcomes, not only to give quality support to learners, but also to provide evidence that learning has indeed taken place.

### Generic learning Outcomes

Compared with formal educational institutions, museums have more difficulties in making judgements about how much their visitors have learned, or how much progress they have made. Useful guidelines and frameworks have been devised for assessing learning, including *Partnerships for Learning: a guide to evaluating arts education projects*, by Felicity Woolf (1999 Arts Council England) and the *Inspiring Learning for All* framework, described below. We should not forget, however, that learners themselves are perfectly capable of making judgements about their own learning. Collecting evidence of learning outcomes in museums, therefore, should be concerned with asking learners about their experience and about what they have learned.

In an attempt to describe and then record the impact of all the different types of learning experiences that take place in a museum, the UK Museums Libraries and Archives Council has developed a set of learning outcomes, which should cover all the learning that happens during museum visits.

According to this research, what people learn in museums can be categorised within one of five headings:

- Knowledge and Understanding
- Skills
- Attitudes and Values
- Enjoyment, Inspiration and Creativity
- Activity, behaviour and progression

These are called **Generic Learning Outcomes (GLOs)**, and can be used both to identify the expected learning outcomes of an educational activity, therefore establishing the ensuing research questions, and to provide the evaluation framework for analysing visitors' responses.

But GLOs only capture people's perceptions of learning. They do not "prove" that that learning has taken place. To do this would mean testing people to see if they really have acquired the knowledge or skills they say they have acquired and museums are never going to be in the business of setting exams to see what their visitors have "learnt", therefore the information available is always going to be highly subjective.



However, what people think they have learnt from a museum visit, and what their teachers or parents or group leaders observe about the changes which have taken place as a result of that visit, when collected carefully, analysed systematically, and reported accurately, do enable us to make important observations about the power museums have to inspire and support learning.

Here are some of the most common indicators to aim for when assessing the impact of learning in museum and galleries:

- Increased knowledge of specific subjects
- Enhanced understanding of specific ideas and concepts
- Improved technical and other skills
- A change in attitudes or values
- Evidence of enjoyment, inspiration and creativity
- Evidence of activity, behaviour, progression
- Social interaction and communication
- Increased self-confidence
- Personal development
- Community empowerment
- The development of identity
- Improved health and well-being

[www.inspiringlearningforall.gov.uk](http://www.inspiringlearningforall.gov.uk)

## Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement

To evaluate learning, NIACE- The National Institute for Adult Continuing Education in the UK has formulated a system called RARPA: Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement.

RARPA is a staged approach to ensure that the learner is at the centre of learning and the learner's goals are recognised and count towards the success of their learning.

- Stage 1: Setting learning aims appropriate to an individual learner or groups of learners
- Stage 2: Initial assessment to establish the learner's starting point
- Stage 3: Identification of appropriately challenging learning objectives
- Stage 4: Formative assessment (i.e. progress during the programme)
- Stage 5: Summative assessment – review of overall progress and achievement. This may include recognition of learning outcomes not specified during the programme and discussion about 'next steps' and pathways for the learner

The implementation of the RARPA process has numerous benefits for learners, staff and providers. RARPA raises learners' awareness of the learning process, builds their confidence and encourages enthusiasm by using a more engaging manner of reaching personal goals.

Paul Hamlyn Evaluation pack formulated with NIACE has many useful evaluation templates and tools:

[www.phf.org.uk/trackdoc.asp?id=243&page=11](http://www.phf.org.uk/trackdoc.asp?id=243&page=11)



## PROMOTING LEARNING

Increasingly, governments and civil society organisations are using campaigns to promote lifelong learning. One such is Adult Learners' Week, which commenced in the United Kingdom in 1992. Australia, along with South Africa and Jamaica, picked up on the success of Adult Learners' Week and the first Australian ALW was organised in 1995 to promote and encourage lifelong learning. Since 1999, there has been an International Adult Learners' Week, which brings a larger dimension and aims to bridge the activities during the national adult learners' weeks, to learn from the experiences of other countries, to share the celebration with people in other contexts and to amplify the cooperation between agencies active in the promotion of adult learning at international level. There are now about 70 countries on every continent organising an Adult Learners' Week and the international community of Adult Learners' Week nations continues to grow.

International Literacy Day and World Book Day are used as mobilisation initiatives in many countries. They become a key element of national adult learning policies, promoting wider access to adult learning by celebrating individual and collective achievements, and using their experiences to stimulate a demand for learning elsewhere.

Many of the most successful events take place during these festivals are in venues that adults find accessible, friendly, and familiar, such as cafes, bars, community centres, on public transport, sports grounds or village halls, and of course museums.

Adult learners need to be told about the opportunities on offer at the museum, especially if they not used to using museums in this way. Advertising is one way to promote your work, even better would be to visit the community you are trying to engage and give a talk or a practical session so they come back for more.

Word of mouth is a great way to promote an activity, if a small group start to talk about what they have seen or done at the museum they can carry the information a long way.



### Campaign for Learning

[www.campaign-for-learning.org.uk/](http://www.campaign-for-learning.org.uk/)

### Learning Festivals around the world

[www.unesco.org/education/uie/InternationalALW/](http://www.unesco.org/education/uie/InternationalALW/)

### Adult Learners Weeks

[www.unesco.org/education/uie/InternationalALW/](http://www.unesco.org/education/uie/InternationalALW/)

### International Adult Learners Weeks in Europe

[www.unesco.org/education/uie/InternationalALW/](http://www.unesco.org/education/uie/InternationalALW/)

### Adult Learners Week in the UK

[www.alw.org.uk/](http://www.alw.org.uk/)

### Adult Learners Week Award in the UK

[www.esf.gov.uk/  
events\\_and\\_awards/  
adult\\_learners\\_week.asp](http://www.esf.gov.uk/events_and_awards/adult_learners_week.asp)

### Learning regions

[learning-regions.net/](http://learning-regions.net/)

### Learning cities, towns and regions

[www.longlearn.org.uk/  
book4.html](http://www.longlearn.org.uk/book4.html)



### Some websites offering practical information on learning cities, towns and regions

[www.appui.esc-toulouse.fr](http://www.appui.esc-toulouse.fr) for learning materials on learning cities and regions developed in the LILLIPUT project

[www.lcc.au](http://www.lcc.au) for details of some of the pioneering work on learning cities being developed in Victoria, Australia

[www.hume.vic.gov.au](http://www.hume.vic.gov.au) for details of the 'Hume Global Learning Village', one of the world's most advanced learning city projects

[www.tels.euproject.org](http://www.tels.euproject.org) for details of the pioneering TELS (Towards a European Learning Society) project (1998-2000) including the first prototype of a 'Learning Cities Audit Tool' tested on 80 European Cities and Regions

[www.edcities.bcn.es](http://www.edcities.bcn.es) for details of the 'Educating Cities' network

[www.eurocities.org](http://www.eurocities.org) for the eurocities network of the largest European cities

[www.edinburghlearning.com](http://www.edinburghlearning.com) for examples of a city that is carrying out lifelong learning projects

[www.dublin.ie](http://www.dublin.ie) for examples of a city that is in advance of others in implementing learning city concepts

[www.obs-pascal.com](http://www.obs-pascal.com) for a forward-looking world-wide observatory organisation on learning cities and regions, social capital and place management

[www.newhorizons.org](http://www.newhorizons.org) for a set of excellent papers on the theory and practice of lifelong learning

[www.lilaraproject.com](http://www.lilaraproject.com) for a description of the learning needs in Local Authorities project

[www.penr31.feek.pt](http://www.penr31.feek.pt) for the website of the PASCAL European Network

<http://www.pascal2007conf.pt> for details of the PASCAL conference on Learning Cities and Regions September 2007

<http://www.cultureunlimited.org> Culture:Unlimited is the think-tank for and of the cultural sector, a place to pioneer new ideas

<http://shop.niace.org.uk/first-steps-community.html> a unique resource provides ideas and methods for recognising learning that occurs when people are engaged in community development activity

## VOLUNTEERS IN MUSEUMS AS ADULT LEARNERS

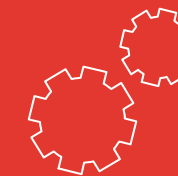
The conservation and valorisation of cultural assets require more resources – both financial and human – than the public sector can provide. In some European countries these roles are equally shared between the public and the private sector, often on a voluntary basis, to ensure that places, monuments, sites, and objects of cultural and historical value are passed on unharmed and, where possible, enhanced, to future generations, contributing to the understanding of a shared past and the strengthening of ties among European citizens. Cultural institutions involving volunteers must offer adequate training, not only to provide skills necessary to carry out what may be very specialised tasks, but also to contribute to the volunteers' growth as individuals, as members of a community, and as European citizens. In this respect, volunteers should themselves be regarded as adult learners.

Many museums have established successful volunteer programmes that add to the work force and enable people to gain valuable professional and life skills. The museum space can be a successful placement for targeted work training or as a general learning environment for a variety of skills. A number of museums have also used a volunteer programme as a tool for social inclusion.

Volunteers are a vital resource for many museums; a recent comprehensive audit in Britain noted that museums cannot operate without staff *and* volunteers. Research shows that involving volunteers allows museums to extend the services they offer and helps them to do things they would not normally do; it also promotes user involvement and gives added value to the work of museums.

For institutions that are so heavily reliant on volunteers, the extent to which volunteering is supported in museums is variable. Literature reviewed suggests that this variation centres around three issues:

- the extent to which volunteer development and management is part of the museum
- the position of volunteers in relation to paid staff
- the way in which wider social policy issues such as community involvement and social inclusion impact on museums.



### Volunteers in Museums and Cultural Heritage in Europe

A Grundtvig funded Project, VoCH - Volunteers in Museums and Cultural Heritage (2007-2009) explored the phenomenon at European level, identifying different types of voluntary work and the areas of activity in which cultural volunteers are engaged. Among other activities, the VoCH Project carried out an extensive research, which gives an insight into cultural volunteering in numerous European countries, looking at background information (legislative context, organisational models, volunteering infrastructure) and analysing case studies.

[www.amitie.it/voch/index4.htm](http://www.amitie.it/voch/index4.htm)



#### LINKS

[www.glasgowlife.org.uk/museums/get-involved/volunteering/Documents/VolunteeringPolicy.pdf](http://www.glasgowlife.org.uk/museums/get-involved/volunteering/Documents/VolunteeringPolicy.pdf)

[www.i-volunteer.org.uk/kbowgett/have-you-volunteered-in-a-london-museum/](http://www.i-volunteer.org.uk/kbowgett/have-you-volunteered-in-a-london-museum/)

[www.londonmuseum.on.ca/d.aspx?s=/About\\_Us/Volunteers/Volunteer\\_Policy.htm](http://www.londonmuseum.on.ca/d.aspx?s=/About_Us/Volunteers/Volunteer_Policy.htm)

[www.baringfoundation.org.uk/litreview.pdf](http://www.baringfoundation.org.uk/litreview.pdf)

## Case study:

### The Imperial War Museum North in

Manchester was able to pioneer a volunteer programme that has been described as the most radical staffing scheme of any museum in Britain. The team developed, financed and implemented the social inclusion volunteer programme 'Shape Your Future', hailed by the DCMS as an exemplar project in *A Giving Culture: Getting the best out of the relationship between the voluntary and community sector and DCMS* (2005). The £300,000 pilot programme – funded by ESF and the Learning and Skills Council – involved 250 socially excluded people from the Trafford area, providing training towards a Level 2 NVQ in Cultural Heritage (visitor services) with the aim of building confidence and skills to enter the employment market or further education.

[www.nationalmuseums.org.uk/media/documents/publications/creative\\_engagement.pdf](http://www.nationalmuseums.org.uk/media/documents/publications/creative_engagement.pdf)

## Motivation to Volunteer

Assessing the motivation of volunteers is key in ensuring that volunteers are well matched to tasks – that is, that volunteers are given roles that are stimulating and interesting for them, but also useful for the museum. Identifying motivations is harder, it is often said that there is an endless list of possible motivations to volunteer.

One piece of work by Clary *et al* (1998) has attempted to group motivations. Clary and his colleagues have developed a Volunteers Functions Inventory, which identifies six primary motivations (or functions) for volunteering.

These are:

1. The Values Function: which enables volunteers to act on deeply held beliefs about the importance of helping others – *I am concerned about those less fortunate than myself.*
2. The Understanding Function: which enables volunteers to satisfy a desire to understand beneficiaries, organisations or the volunteer him/herself - *Allows me to gain a new perspective on things.*
3. The Career Function: which enables volunteers to learn new skills – *Will look good on my CV.*
4. The Social Function: which enables volunteers to meet people, make friends.
5. The Esteem Function is the positive aspect of this – *Makes me feel needed.*
6. The Protective Function is the negative aspect – *Helps me work through my own personal problems.*

Such a list can be helpful in outlining the possible reasons for volunteers coming forward. With that understanding a volunteer manager can think through what a volunteer's needs might be – if, for example, a volunteer participates through a desire to be social, giving them a task archiving material in isolation may not be conducive to their needs.

Holmes (1999) suggests that the major motivations behind choosing to volunteer in heritage sector are often different to volunteers working in other capacities. These include:

- A love of objects, history or a historic buildings which is not the same as motivations to help people;
- A need to gain work experience for a career in the heritage industry;
- Social – to fill time and meet people, especially among the retired, who form a large proportion of these volunteers.



The following links are websites or organisations which have a relevance for museum-based adult education projects:

[www.eagle-project.eu/welcome-to-eagle](http://www.eagle-project.eu/welcome-to-eagle)  
**EAGLE** or 'European Approaches to Inter-Generational Lifelong Learning' builds upon different existing aspects in individual lives and in society at large and in learning across age groups and generations, especially in the light of an increasingly aging population, the substantial demographic changes caused hereby and on the constant need for re-qualification and re-generation within the concept of Lifelong Learning (LLL).

[www.eaea.org](http://www.eaea.org)  
**EAEA (European Association for the Education of Adults)** is a European NGO with 131 member organisations from 41 countries working in the field of adult learning and representing more than 60 million women and men learners Europe-wide. The main roles of EAEA include policy advocacy for lifelong learning at a European level; provision of information and services for members; development of practice through projects, publications and training and international co-operation with other stakeholders in the field.

[www.lifelonglearning-observatory.eu](http://www.lifelonglearning-observatory.eu)  
The **EUCEN Observatory on Lifelong Learning** is developed by the European University Continuing Education Network (EUCEN) and supported by the lifelong learning policies unit of the European Commission. It aims at developing Lifelong Learning at European level.

[www.infonet-ae.eu](http://www.infonet-ae.eu)  
The European project "**InfoNet Adult Education**" started in October 2005. It is a large-scale network of editors of journals and publications on Adult Education supported by the EU in the framework of Grundtvig 4. National and international umbrella organisations like the EAEA or UNESCO are also taking part. This way, a European platform is set up which aims at establishing and improving the information flow between different actors of AE/LLL. Information on all relevant aspects of AE/LLL in Europe shall be shared within and by InfoNet (news, scientific articles, book reviews). First and foremost, InfoNet wants to be a partner for disseminating results of other European projects.



## DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY AND ON-LINE LEARNING

Digital technology has a large part to play in the modern museum and for informal adult learners. The last ten years have seen the rise of digital resources and online learning programmes that have revolutionized the way in which we can learn in museums. The accelerating development and influence of ICT has generated within the education community three distinct perspectives on e-learning. One is concerned almost exclusively with technical issues.

The second sees ICT predominantly as a means of delivering conventional content, effectively unchanged, more quickly, more efficiently and to a much wider audience. The third takes a more radical stance and regards advances in ICT – with its powerful potential for democracy and differentiation – as a catalyst for a fundamental reappraisal of the whole enterprise of education.

NIACE- The National Institute for Adult Continuing Education in the UK has been championing digital learning and runs many courses and support networks for adult learning providers. To read more about NIACE's specific advocacy goals and some of the key impacts so far download the 2009 policy impact report: [Making a difference for adult learners \[PDF\]](#). The key part that technology and broadcasting play in enabling informal adult learning was recognised in [The Learning Revolution White Paper](#). NIACE was funded by Becta to develop training materials and has been an active member of the national informal adult learning technology and broadcasting forum.

Objects are the unique attribute of museums and galleries, yet many museums and science centres apparently seek the Holy Grail of interactivity. Most of the learning issues are similar, whether interactives are mechanical or digital, on-site or online. In any case, poor examples, of whatever type, do little to promote the learning potential of interactives.

While some authors question the compatibility of objects and interactives, there are key principles emerging. Beyond the naïve assumption that digital technologies are inevitably interactive, there are strident demands for clear learning objectives, for learner choice and initiative.

DIGITAL TECHNOLOGIES FACILITATE MANY KINDS OF COLLABORATION – BETWEEN MUSEUM AND LEARNER, BETWEEN DIFFERENT INSTITUTIONS AND AMONG LEARNERS THEMSELVES. EXCITING EXAMPLES INCLUDE THOSE BETWEEN REAL AND VIRTUAL LEARNERS AND OF LEARNERS CREATING THEIR OWN ASSOCIATIONS WITHIN AND BETWEEN COLLECTIONS.

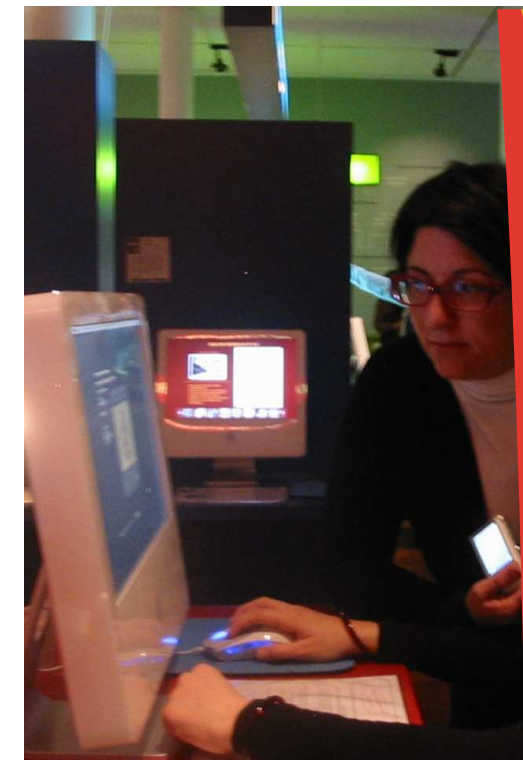
### On-line Learning



Museum websites are possibly even more diverse than museums. Apart from obvious differences of content and design, their underlying philosophies and approaches to learning differ considerably, sometimes (but not consistently) reflecting the views of the museum itself. The extremes are represented by the 'interactive reference' type and by creative applications with learner-created outcomes.

The accounts in the literature, although largely descriptive, do give an indication of the types of learning made possible by the variety of websites already on offer. Examples from the major national museums, heritage organisations and other institutions reflect the diversity of approaches, from encyclopaedias to games, but include innovative and imaginative products driven by underlying theory and some that actively encourage participation in knowledge creation.

Webcasts are seen as a way of introducing the human dimension to the digital, as a bridge between on site and online, and as a step from a deficit model of learning towards greater dialogue.





The online museum offers a tantalising, seductive prospect for learning. Museum learning could become ubiquitous, reaching every home, workplace and educational institution. Learners can choose where and when they learn, both individually and socially. New kinds of learning – not necessarily better or worse, but certainly different, become possible. Moreover, learners can be stimulated to enhance their virtual experiences with a visit to the real thing, to engage directly with authentic objects. But, for all the talk of innovation and excitement, caution is counselled. After all, much digital learning material is impoverished – imaginatively, aesthetically, symbolically and educationally.

[www.museum-id.com/ideas-detail.asp?newsID=129](http://www.museum-id.com/ideas-detail.asp?newsID=129)

### Europeana

EUROPEANA is one of the main focuses of the European cultural agenda and was conceived as a multilingual point of access to Europe's digital cultural heritage, capable of storing data on all types of cultural material (texts, audiovisual media, museum objects, archival records, etc.) and delivering it to users. The aim of this initiative is to enable all Europeans to access Europe's collective memory and use it for education, work, leisure and creativity. It will make a valuable contribution to the protection of cultural objects and to presenting Europe's diverse heritage on-line.

[www.europeana.eu/portal](http://www.europeana.eu/portal)



## ACCREDITATION

### Qualification

A qualification is the award a student gets to state that he she or she has completed a course or circle of studies successfully. A qualification can be awarded in the form of a degree or diploma. The award or grade can be stated by means of a number a percentage or a character of the alphabet (A-E).

### The European Qualification Framework - EQF

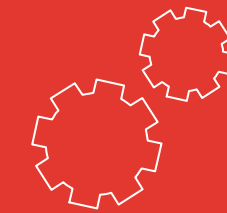
The European Qualifications Framework (EQF) is a common European reference framework which links countries' qualifications systems together, acting as a translation device to make qualifications more readable and understandable across different countries and systems in Europe.

It has two principal purposes:

- 1) to promote mobility between countries;
- 2) to facilitate lifelong learning.

As an instrument for promoting lifelong learning, the EQF encompasses general and adult education, vocational education and training, as well as higher education. The eight EQF levels cover the entire span of qualifications from those achieved at the end of compulsory education, up to those awarded at the highest level of academic and professional or vocational education and training. The Recommendation formally entered into force in April 2008. It sets 2010 as the recommended target date for countries to relate their national qualifications systems to the EQF, and 2012 for countries to ensure that individual qualification certificates bear a reference to the appropriate EQF level.

[http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education\\_culture/publ/pdf/eqf/broch\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/publ/pdf/eqf/broch_en.pdf)



### Accreditation of Lifelong Learning (ALL) Recognising Quality in Non-Formal Education

ALL was a two-year pilot project funded by the European Commission's Leonardo da Vinci programme. The project started in October 2003 and included partners from Iceland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway and the UK. The project was concluded in the beginning of 2006 and the products are currently being used and developed further in all partner countries. The materials produced and the experience gained during the project were used for a follow up project RECALL - Recognition of Quality in Lifelong Learning, which started in October 2006, with partners from Iceland, Norway, Denmark, Lithuania, Slovenia, Italy, Spain, Portugal and the UK. Many museum and gallery projects can take on an element of accreditation; this could be in partnership with a formal education provider such as a university or as a distinct independent course. A programme of work can be divided into training units with a formal assessment as a summary.

[www.all-accreditation.com/](http://www.all-accreditation.com/)

## Museum projects funded by the EU Lifelong Learning Grundtvig Programme

**Collect & Share** was a Grundtvig Network project (2002-2004), the forerunner of many projects on museums and adult education which followed. Its aims were to **Collect** case study examples of good practice and **Share** them via a website with a searchable database. It also intended to identify factors common to good practice, disseminating them via published reports, training seminars and conferences and to make recommendations to policy-makers. The website is still accessible, but the case studies are not updated. [www.collectandshare.eu.com](http://www.collectandshare.eu.com).

**Connection** (Cultural Organisations As Communication and Learning Environments) was a Grundtvig funded project (2007-2009), which involved Bulgaria, Italy, Lithuania, Romania, Turkey and aimed to promote learning as social constructivism and to improve the capacity of cultural institutions to be active players in adult education field. [www.connection.europole.org](http://www.connection.europole.org).

**MAP for ID** "Museums as Places for Intercultural Dialogue" was a Multilateral Grundtvig Project 2007-2009 which aimed to develop the potential and practice of museums as places of intercultural dialogue and to promote a more active engagement with the communities they serve. The project featured a final conference in Madrid 14-16 October 2009 and a publication in Italian and English "Museums as places for intercultural dialogue: selected practices from Europe". [www.mapforid.it](http://www.mapforid.it)



**VoCH** "Volunteers for Cultural Heritage" was also a Multilateral Grundtvig Project 2007-2009 which explored the phenomenon of volunteering in the cultural sector at European level, identifying different types of voluntary work and the areas of activity in which cultural volunteers are engaged, with the objective of designing training addressed both to volunteers themselves and to the people responsible for volunteer programmes within cultural organisations. The final publication "Volunteers in Museums and Cultural Heritage - A European Handbook" is available for download in English, German, Italian and Slovenian on the project website.

[www.amitie.it/voch/index.html](http://www.amitie.it/voch/index.html)

**EVE** is the electronic platform for the dissemination and exploitation of results of projects supported by programmes managed by the European Commission in the fields of Education, Training, Culture, Youth and Citizenship.

More information about relevant previous projects can be found on the EVE website: [ec.europa.eu/dgs/education\\_culture/eve/about\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/eve/about_en.htm)



### Further developments:

**LEM** – The Learning Museum - is a European Project funded by the Lifelong Learning Programme Grundtvig (2010-2013) which aims to create a European network of museums and cultural heritage organisations active in the lifelong learning arena.

In order to face the challenges of the present and of the future decades, museums are not only expected to be learning places, but learning organisations themselves: learning from the communities, from the public, from their stakeholders, and also from other agencies, with whom they have to build alliances to accomplish the ambitious objectives set by policies at national and European level.

LEM wants to support museums in achieving the objectives set by the EU Agenda 2020, by establishing a permanent space for museums and adult educators to learn from each other, develop professionally and contribute to a learning society and a knowledge based Europe.

Soon on [www.lemproject.eu](http://www.lemproject.eu)

