

## How to connect heritage and public through digital storytelling

### Workshop

The workshop aims to introduce forms, languages and functions of digital storytelling applied both to the communication and enhancement of tangible and intangible cultural heritage. It addresses the meaning and role that storytelling has today in cultural and tourism marketing as a tool for dissemination, enhancement, and promotion of cultural heritage, also for tourism purposes. In particular, the 14 "forms" with which digital storytelling can be produced and used today, from podcasts to transmedia storytelling, will be explored.

In a museum approach profoundly changed and oriented towards a modernization of languages and contents, digital storytelling also appears to be an excellent tool to engage the public, with an attention in participation of communities to co-production and co-creation of content. In fact, we will focus on the use of participatory digital storytelling in cultural and museum education, highlighting on one hand the bidirectional relationship that heritage communities can carry out by supporting the institutions in co-creation processes, on the other one the benefits that participatory storytelling projects can produce in the involved heritage communities.

A practical, replicable, and scalable workflow will be presented, thanks to which institutions can implement these forms of co-creative engagement.

### Motivation

In his masterpiece *Convergence Culture*, Henry Jenkins summarized the characteristics of the contemporary media landscape: *innovative, convergent, quotidian, interactive, participatory, global, generational* and, finally *unequal* (due to the digital divide). According to the scholar, a new era full of "promises" (such as *active citizenship, conscious consumption, widespread creativity, collective intelligences, shared knowledge and free exchange of knowledge*) was inaugurated, which he defined as the *Participatory Age*. Many years on, these promises can be considered kept, at least in part: the activated participatory processes are by now difficult to reverse. According to the framework described by Jenkins' *Convergence Culture* and the Nina Simon's *Participatory museum* model, a new suggested model of museums, the *museum of connection*, has been created as a consequent of the COVI-19 pandemic. Both large and small museums had launched into a frantic search for narrativity and connection, for a narrative that allows them to create new connection or reaffirm and consolidate existing ones.

Physical, emotional, cognitive, cultural and digital connection between the institution and its people (understood as individuals and as a community), conveyed through stories (intended as a connective *fil rouge*, substantial content, as a means of expression of knowledge, identity, memory, values, etc.) and digital infrastructures (as a vehicle for content) through which, today, stories can travel, spread, and distribute themselves beyond physical and geographical barriers: only in this way is it possible

to really put into practice what was indicated by the Faro Convention, creating new connections between material and immaterial, visible and invisible, accessible and inaccessible, science and knowledge on the one hand, memory and narration on the other.

Museums and cultural institutions need to reconfigure themselves as socio-cultural hubs, identifying the best participatory strategies for involving their audiences: one of these strategies is digital storytelling, through which to transform their audiences into "digital Cicerones of their common heritage".

### **Target Audience**

The workshop is aimed above all at staff inside or outside the museums directly involved in educational projects with school and university students, but also at local cultural associations interested in implementing forms of involvement with local communities, with a view to bottom up participatory promotion of their territories and their tangible and intangible heritage.

### **Keywords**

#digitalstorytelling #participation #inclusion #heritagecommunities