Executive Leadership Development in Heritage Management Workshops

Engaging Communities in Cultural Heritage

19 June - 1 July 2022

Online International Summer School

Course Directors & Instructors

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Guest Lecturers

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Community engagement gradually becomes a mainstay in the public programs of heritage institutions worldwide. A variety of methods and good practices have been developed to successfully engage the bewildering variety of communities and publics that such institutions address. Still, the uncritical application of “toolkits” for effective engagement is perhaps not the ethically appropriate way to incorporate cultural difference in the field. In this online program, we aim to develop a different approach to community engagement, that is based on social and artistic research with community-led initiatives. Research-led practice can lead to exhibition design and collaborative actions that are better suited to the cultural and social particularities of each milieu and each specific group or community and its relation to others. This course draws from our long experience with community engagement through heritage and will discuss several examples from our own and other work.

In this online program we collaborate with a citizen's initiative, the Paros Festival, from the Greek island of Paros. This is an art and heritage festival organized from below, with a remarkable volunteer base and significant impact on the town community. Simultaneously, we are collaborating with the local oral history initiative Ai Mnimai (the memories), again from the island of Paros. Both initiatives will help discuss the ways in which research can lead to collective modes of knowledge creation and preservation of local heritage.

During the course, participants will familiarize themselves with the context of community engagement through heritage, will discuss methodologies based on ethnography and oral history, will engage in practical exercises, and will be called to produce multimedia content, with specific audiences in mind, based on interviews conducted with the guidance of the instructors.

The duration of the online course is two weeks, with five three-hour meetings in total, and enough time to complete assignments in between online meetings.
A. Learning Outcomes

Participants will:

• be introduced to the principles of community engagement, collaborative research, and heritage values

• be presented with a dynamic mode of research, tailored to community needs and community engagement initiatives

• receive training on applied ethnography, oral history interviews and documentation of personal narratives and material objects

• practice the curation of multimedia content and create narratives for online exhibitions and/or podcasts

• ponder on the possibilities of cultural heritage becoming part of online repositories and temporary exhibitions

B. Course outline

Theme 1: Introduction to heritage management and community engagement
(by Aris Anagnostopoulos, Lena Stefanou, Evangelos Kyriakidis)

What is community engagement? How is it different from outreach or public education programs? What is a community and how do we set up collaborative programs of research and presentation? What is the decolonizing potential of community engagement programs?

In this online school, we give an introduction to heritage management and the fact that we are managing values when we manage heritage, rather than just fabric. This comes to explain the primacy of the local communities as important stakeholders for the management of heritage.

We further discuss the developments in community engagement within archaeology and heritage in the last few decades. We look at criticisms, dilemmas and put emphasis on examples of good practice. The instructors present their own work, in comparison with other examples from the world over, and lay out their method of incorporating research and public actions into a complete plan for working with communities.
Theme 2: Ethnographic methods and collaborative research
(by Aris Anagnostopoulos, Lena Stefanou)

What is ethnographic research? Why is it necessary for heritage practitioners? How can we use it to solve issues with heritage spaces? Why is it a strong engagement tool? How do we define our audiences and publics? How does audience segmentation help us through this process to expand our potential to offer tailored projects for the needs of different communities and to produce audience-centred and people-centred approaches and results? Ethnographic research is an indispensable aspect of designing and implementing a community engagement project. It is essential in establishing relations with the communities involved and understanding their values, culture and issues, as well as the differentials in power and access.

Theme 3: Oral history
(by Lena Stefanou)

What is the relationship between oral history and heritage? The collection and uses of oral history in museums and heritage projects has acquired a great importance over the last decade. How do we set up or support projects that focus on collecting personal and communal narratives and on displaying community memory? How do we conduct an interview?

Theme 4: Going digital: producing and displaying local cultural heritage and history
(by Aris Anagnostopoulos, Lena Stefanou)

How can cultural heritage and local history be transformed into multimedia content? What are the specificities of curatorial work and research on the web? In what different ways do communities of users participate in online collections and what role do social media play in creating and sustaining communities? We look into the making of web-based platforms, such as the “Postman’s Road” in Sfakia, Crete, the “Archives and Collections of Paros” online repository, and the digital initiative “The Museum inside Me”. Based on the experience of working both online and offline for creating digital content, we will discuss modes of knowledge production and practices of engaging with communities based on online content.
C. Bibliography


To apply for this workshop please:

1. Fill in and submit the Executive Leadership Program in Heritage Management Application Form.

2. After receiving confirmation of receipt of your application, complete the application process by submitting your CV, a personal statement (describing your current project that will benefit from this training) and a reference letter (which may come in separately by your referee at their earliest convenience). All your application documents may be submitted by email to info@heritagemanagement.org. Personal statements should not exceed 750 words in total.

3. A reasonable proficiency in spoken and written English is required to attend the course.

4. Shortlisted applicants will be asked to participate in a personal (oral) interview.

After approval of their application file, participants will receive an official letter outlining in detail the conditions of participation. Heritage Management Organization Membership comes with participation in any of our Organization’s Executive Leadership in Heritage Management Workshops.

*Spaces for this workshop are limited, so please apply early.*

*The application deadline is Friday 1 May 2022.*

For questions regarding the application process and the administrative aspects of the course, contact us at info@heritagemanagement.org.