
STUDY MODULE

LECTURE 5



EuroVision
**Museums
Exhibiting
Europe**

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1 Preparation for the moderator

In order to adequately prepare for Lectures 4 and 5: Museums as Social Arenas, you are required to:

- Read Toolkit 2 (downloaded from the website) carefully, especially pages: 19-37 (Lecture 1: slides 2-3), 38-53 (Lecture 1: slides 4-5), 54-77 (Lecture 1: slides 6-7 here you also find the examples of possible activities) 78-115 (Lecture 2: slides 2-7).

Širok, K. (2016) (ed) *Integrating a Multicultural Europe. Museums as Social Arena* (EMEE Toolkit series, vol. 2), Vienna: edition mono/monochrom, available online: <http://www.museums-exhibiting-europe.de/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/EMEE-Toolkit-2-Integrating-multicultural-Europe.pdf>.

- Take a look at the Workshop 2 files, on which these activities are based (<http://www.museums-exhibiting-europe.de/emee-workshops/>)

Please note:

According to Toolkit 2, museums will be more equipped to face the contemporary needs of society, when adopting a social arena concept:

- social arena is a concept from the 90's, developed by Richard Handler, who described museums as places *"in which many people of differing backgrounds continuously and routinely interact to produce, exchange, and consume messages"* (1997: 9). One of the most powerful ways to achieve this is to create a "social arena" within the museum – places *"in which many people of differing backgrounds continuously and routinely interact to produce, exchange, and consume messages"* (1997: 9).

Lecture 4 will end with homework for the participants, which will be presented at the beginning (15 minutes) of Lecture 5.

Lecture 5 will also be divided into two parts: first, consisting of Lecture 2 (45 minutes) and second, Activity 2 for the participants (45 minutes).

2 Material needed

- flipchart and/or whiteboard with pens
- laptop and video projector
- paper
- printed "Lecture 5 Worksheet" (one for each group)
- printed Evaluation form from Lecture 5 Working material (for each participants)

Participants will need the following materials for their homework:

- notepad/ paper
- pencil/ pen/ ...

3 Learning objectives

- Acquiring contents and knowing characteristic features of the EMEE project (<http://www.museums-exhibiting-europe.de/project/ziele/>).
- Understanding and interiorizing the concept of Change of Perspective (COP) (<http://www.museums-exhibiting-europe.de/project/cop/>).
- Tackling with the museological term *social arena* and knowing the options it enables and proposes.
- Training on developing an innovative and interdisciplinary way to connect the museum with its society and connect the inclusion elements into the potential museum work, based on the multi-layered objects and selected target groups.
- Making museums more open, more sensitive to the needs of society.

4 Structure of Lecture 5

Input presentation via PowerPoint (PPT): 8 slides

- **LECTURE 2 (45 minutes):**
 - Discussion of homework from lesson 1 (max. 15 minutes)
 - Input presentation via PowerPoint (PPT)
Possibilities of reaching the social arena in the museum (around 30 minutes): 7 slides

Note: Lecture 2 divides into one text (Text 2) and topics. Further information follows below with the described topics/text.

- **ACTIVITY 2 Group work on Social Arena possibilities: (45 minutes)**
 - Planning an exhibition project with a selected object, target group and museum (25 minutes): 1 slide
 - Presentation of the results and evaluation (20 minutes)

PRESENTATION SCRIPT FOR LECTURE 2 (for the moderator)

Aim:

In the second session, we will continue to work on the term “social arena” and try to develop different approaches for different museums with the target groups to work with. The participants will be asked to collaborate on developing new ideas and special tasks/ examples to work on.

This lecture will be much more practical in order to understand the possibilities of planning and implementing the social arena in museums, or any other similar institution. The goal is to educate the participants on how to work from ideas to the creation of social programmes which can be implemented in museums.

5 Discussion of homework from lesson 1, Lecture 4 (max. 15 minutes)

Aim:

Sharing the ideas of a possible cooperation between museums and communities through the most relevant topics and issues, represent a warmup activity for the following session and further group work. It is very important that the participants write down on the board (or pre-prepared slide) the results of their homework in order for the group to be able to see the overall ideas and to compare their categories.

Information for the moderator:

The presented target groups (selected local communities), topics and museums need to be placed into a suggested stylesheet onto a large whiteboard (or pre-prepared PPT slide for the participants to fill in).

In order to be on time with the whole Lecture 5, please skip the presentations and discussion of the homework, and go merely to filling in the stylesheet if the group of participants is very large. Ask each of the homework pair formation to insert the three categories into a pre-prepared whiteboard (or even better a PPT slide – *see appendix Working material*): the selected local community, topic and museum. Keep this stylesheet for activity 2 later on.

When the group is not too big, ask the pairs to present their findings and discuss the selections with the group.

Option:

If the group is already very well educated on the following subjects, the best time for discussion could be then. Participants can present their ideas and working process. Please try to evaluate on your own what is more valuable for the participants to do.

6 Input presentation (PPT): Possibilities of reaching a social arena in the museum (around 30 minutes)

Information for the moderator on the presentation script for Lecture 2

Aim:

The lecture will start with the questions: Who are the museum communities? What needs and challenges do they represent? In order to create a debate with the students, we divided the lecture in two parts. Each is accompanied by the topics to develop in class (chronologically), with a part of Toolkit 2 to follow, a list of articles to read and examples to use. For each part of the lecture, there are some PPT slides. The second part is the activity for the participants.

This part will present a clear insight of the concrete possibilities for the museums to reach the social arena, which

are explained in order to understand the options available to be developed. The practical approach will help to reflect on the goals and the steps on how to reach them. The approach you choose should be the one that answers best the needs of the community or the chosen group.

○ **Topics that will be discussed in the lecture (slides 2-7):**

- Social Arena
- Vulnerable groups in museums
- Schooling groups
- Good practices to follow - Topics that enable Social Arena

Supportive literature:

Ames, M. M. (2015) 'De-schooling the Museum: a Proposal to Increase Public Access to Museums and their Resources', *Museum International Special Issue: Key Ideas in Museums and Heritage (1949–2004)*, 66(261-264), 98-106.

Falk, J. H., Dierking, L. D. (2013), *The museum experience revisited*, Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press.

Golding, V., Modest, W (2013), *Museums and Communities. Curators, Collections and Collaboration*, London: Bloomsbury.

MacFarlane, J. R. (2015) 'Museums as Community Centres', *Museum International Special Issue: Key Ideas in Museums and Heritage (1949–2004)*, 66(261-264), 31-34.

Mensch, van P., Meijer-van Mensch, L. (2011), *New Trends in Museology*, Celje: Muzej novejšje zgodovine Celje.

Skartveit, H.-L., Goodnow, K. (eds) (2010), *Changes in Museum Practice: New Media, Refugees and Participation*, New York: Berghahn Books.

Tranter, D. (2012), *Museums and communities: changing dynamics*, Champaign: Common Ground.

Varine-Bohan, H. (2015) 'The Modern Museum: Requirements and Problems of a New Approach', *Museum International Special Issue: Key Ideas in Museums and Heritage (1949–2004)*, 66(261-264), 76-87.

Watson, S. (2008), *Museums and their Community*, Routledge.

Online relevant museum posts/ blogs/ sites:

Blakemore, E. (2016) 'How Museums Are Helping People with Memory Loss', *Smithsonian.com*
<http://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/how-museums-are-helping-people-memory-loss-180957768/?no-ist> Accessed 14 January 2016.

N.N. (n.d.) *Learning at Manchester Museum* <https://learningmanchester.wordpress.com> Accessed 14 January 2016.

N.N. (n.d.) *Tenement Museum* <https://www.tenement.org> Accessed 14 January 2016.

Rampoldi, P. (2016) 'A ciascun museo le sue comunità', *Musei senza Barriere*
<http://museisenzabarriere.org/2016/01/14/a-ciascun-museo-le-sue-comunita/> Accessed 14 January 2016.

Serota, N. (2016) 'The 21st-century Tate is a commonwealth of ideas' *The Art Newspaper*
<http://theartnewspaper.com/comment/comment/the-21st-century-tate-is-a-commonwealth-of-ideas/> Accessed 14 January 2016.

Simon, N. (n.d.) *Museum 2.0* <http://museumtwo.blogspot.si> Accessed 14 January 2016.

Information for the moderator – How to work with Text 2

Slide 2: Social arena as a museum term was established by Richard Handler, who understood museums as Social Arenas of ongoing, organized activities in which many people from different backgrounds “*continuously and routinely interact to produce, exchange, and consume messages*” (1997: 9). This term has already been presented in Lecture 4 and will be upgraded as a concept in order to open doors to possibilities of implementing changes in museums, or in other similar institutions. The social arena concept can lead museums towards cultural dialogue – and not only a dialogue, perhaps even a *polylogue* – as a combination of many different dialogues – so that people, ultimately, may perceive these institutions as their own.

The goal is not merely to integrate and include society in the museums, but also to integrate the museums into society – for them to become accepted. “*Museum use is also a cultural practice. It is shaped by the social relationship of the user, as well as those of the museum, and defined by whom it includes and excludes*” (Coffee 2008: 262).

Slide 3: Museums as social arenas should be flexible, open spaces for all the people who desire to be more active in the discourses of museums and heritage as in the field of changing the mentality of people through museum exhibitions and events. However, it happens much too often that we forget there is a vast group of people who face different barriers while approaching the museum’s physical or social space. To reach the possibility of museums being as inclusive as the social arena concept demands from museums, museums need to align with the most basic conditions by taking the vulnerable groups into account (already introduced in session 4/ 1). Museums can work side by side with people from different vulnerable groups and produce a fascinating experience for everyone. To ease the first steps on this path, a selection of good practices to learn from and develop with the target group audience are presented.

Slide 4: The educational role of museums should not, however, be overlooked. Museum visitors search for more than just learning or static reading from boards. No matter what the type of museum visited is; everyone is looking for an experience which is more than simply classical, formal. Museums are exceptional places designed for informal learning and interacting with visitors. In a way they are – intentionally or not – places of intergenerational interaction, exchange of knowledge, views of the past (and present), and places of discovery about our society. Everyone that works in and with museums realizes the necessity of active education. The question on everyone’s mind is how to develop programmes that would connect, involve and allow active participation for visitors?

In order to open the museums, we also need to ask ourselves with which topics we would like to engage the young and what kind of education strategies we will use in order to ensure sustainability and new opportunities. Good practices are shown as:

1. Creating a youth-friendly organizational culture: strong management, involving the staff to collaborate, involve staff from across the organization in training and planning to challenge the current practice and develop a shared mission.
2. Tackling barriers to young peoples' participation in museums: Identify the barriers during the planning stage and work towards solving them. Build a legacy and a strategy for sustainability in the planning process, and be ready for new opportunities that occur during the project stage.

Slide 5: If you do not have a lot of time, here are two examples to present in class:

1. Kids Museum, The takeover day <http://kidsinmuseums.org.uk/takeoverday/>
2. Anne Frank House, Free2Choose Create [http://www.annefrank.org/en/Education/Docentenportal- - Iconen/Free2choose-Create/](http://www.annefrank.org/en/Education/Docentenportal--Iconen/Free2choose-Create/)

Slide 6: The museum should be considered a social space of reciprocal exchange and transaction of cultural and social goods, stories, relations, a space of encounters, reflections, (re)conceptualization of social practices and the creation of socio-cultural meaning. Besides being the authority of the museum narration, museum employees should give support to all kinds of social interchange. This is not just to create narratives about the others for the others, but support the others to create the narratives about themselves and for everyone. The social arena concept cannot work in a museum without taking care of the museum staff (Širok 2016: 74-75). There should be no place for prejudices and stereotypes, but rather a space where people can confront their fears and build a social arena made of tolerance and respect.

Museums can also do many things outside the physical borders of their institutions. Crossing spatial borders can help museums to get closer to society and get the reputation of authenticity. They can create events without the need to create an exhibition in the most crowded streets.

Slide 7: In the search for the means for the museums to start implementing the social arena concept into their everyday work, a list of various and very broad topics are prepared to build practical examples of social arena. These topics can be used when preparing exhibitions, or when thinking about the special events in the museums – or even outside the borders of the museum, when it moves to the streets, parks, or to the places in the city where people congregate. These topics can serve as a cue for discussions, for forums or as a suggestion for implementation in the exhibitions – temporary or even permanent ones. Topics are presented with one example of good practice to show in class. More examples can be found in the Toolkit (Širok 2016) that you have to read before starting the lecture.

Some of the most applicable topics are presented in the table with optional or the most fitting target groups, museum types and possible engagement. The aim of the table is to encourage the participants to think about the numerous options.

TOPICS	TARGET GROUPS	MUSEUM TYPES	POSSIBLE ENGAGEMENT
STEREOTYPES AND TABOOS	IMMIGRANTS SCHOOL GROUPS LGBT	ETHNO MUSEUM	PROGRAMME?
CHILDHOOD	ELDERLY FAMILIES CHILDREN	CHILDREN MUSEUM	ACTIVITIES?
INDUSTRY	ELDERLY UNEMPLOYED IMMIGRANTS	TECHNICAL MUSEUM	EVENTS?

- **STEREOTYPES AND TABOOS**

By implementing such topics, museums can help to break the stereotypes and inaccurate perceptions, which can lead to fear and segregation – through the comparison between other countries. This is also a topic which enables the transnational aspect and the implementation of European citizenship – as a form, which exceeds the national one.

Bin ich schön? (Am I beautiful?), Museum for Communication Berlin, Germany <http://www.mfk-berlin.de/bin-ich-schoen/>

- **CHILDHOOD**

It offers a reference to the issues of change in the meaning of childhood over time, which can easily be traced by comparison between the past and present and between different European, or other regions. Since everyone shares and relates to their period of childhood, these memories have a strong emotional factor, going hand in hand with trends in museology, which are leaning towards addressing visitors' emotions.

V&A Museum of Childhood, London, UK <http://www.museumofchildhood.org.uk/>

- **INDUSTRY**

A topic which opens the questions about the social value of the European economy; it offers the strength which lies in the oral history; and collecting the material about this shift in industry that is current and serious.

State Museum of Textile and Industry, Augsburg, Germany <http://www.atelier-brueckner.com/en/projects/museums/tim-i-state-museum-of-textile-and-industry-augsburg.html>

Slide 8:

Key steps to develop when creating a Social Arena:

1. Making museum accessible and letting everyone know that.
2. Training museum staff.
3. Cooperation with organizations and individuals as cultural mediators – (partner in the community).
4. Working with focus groups – adapted to their needs.
5. Transforming visitors into partners in the exhibition process and events' creators.
6. Creativity in museum interpretation and representation to assure visitors-partners an engaging social experience!

Literature:

Coffee, A. (2008), 'Cultural inclusion, exclusion and the formative roles of museums', *Museum Management and Curatorship*, 23(3), 261-279.

Handler, R. (1997), *The New History in an Old Museum: Creating the Past at Colonial Williamsburg*, Durham: Duke University Press.

Širok, K. (2016) (ed) *Integrating a Multicultural Europe. Museums as Social Arena* (EMEE Toolkit series, vol. 2), Vienna: edition mono/monochrom, available online: <http://www.museums-exhibiting-europe.de/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/EMEE-Toolkit-2-Integrating-multicultural-Europe.pdf>

Further information for the moderator:

For the purpose of most efficient performance of the study module, Lecture 5, the results of the EMEE project can be found on the following website: <http://www.museums-exhibiting-europe.de/outcome/>, Accessed 10 January 2016.

The following results are especially relevant for the Study Module activity work:

- The workshops developed to support the EMEE Toolkits in order to disseminate and implement the project ideas for practical use (<http://www.museums-exhibiting-europe.de/emee-workshops/>, Accessed 10 January 2016).

6.1 Activity 2: Group work: Planning an exhibition with a selected object, target group, and a museum (including the presentation of the results of the other group) (around 45 minutes)

Aim:

The overall aim of Activity 2 is to use all the partial pre-work through Lecture 4's Activity 1, and homework, in order to build the entire picture of the social arena process in the museum work. The group work focuses on the concept of social arena and on the target groups in exhibition making. The activity illustrates museum work and tasks, as well as the importance of focusing on the selected target group and adapting the exhibition to its needs. For better involvement in this activity, participants should use all the gained knowledge from Lectures 4 and 5. At the same time, this activity implies all the gained knowledge on the possibilities of social arena implementation in the museum.

Participants will need to prepare an exhibition project on the basis of objects from Activity 1 (Lecture 4), and homework results. The main output of this activity will be the formulation of two exhibition proposals by two teams, based on the stylesheets distributed to each participant (please see Working material).

Information for the moderator

- **Structure of the activity:**

1. The division of the whole group of participants into two groups (split the group of participants in two), selection of the target group, object and the museum
2. The preparation of the exhibition project (20 minutes)
3. The presentation of each group's outcomes and discussion (10 minutes).
4. A discussion and reflection on the strong and weak points (15 minutes)

The whole group of participants is put into two groups, according to the similarities in their homework outputs (*suggestion*: if possible, place together the ones who have chosen the same/ similar museum). Place the stylesheet with the three selected items (target group, topic, and museum) from the homework activity to a visible spot (or go to this PPT slide for everyone to see). Both groups will select a target group of their desire from the stylesheet with which they would like to work on an exhibition project.

If the groups are very efficient and quick in their process of creating an exhibition, the time can be reduced from 20 minutes to 15, and those 5 minutes added for the presentation of their projects.

Slide 9:

Both groups will gather all the five objects from Activity 1 from Lecture 4 and select the most appropriate one to work on an exhibition with a given target group (for this purpose please bring along the A1 sheet from Activity 1: *This is who we are* with a multi-layered presentation of the five selected objects). The selected object directs the topic of the exhibition project (in case any additional objects are needed).

After selecting the object, they need to reach a decision; which museum from the list they would like to work with for this purpose. Each of the two groups will need to prepare a detailed exhibition plan with precise tasks, derived from the knowledge gained during Lectures 1 and 2 with the help of the worksheet that will guide them through all the necessary points of the exhibition planning (*each participant should receive a Worksheet – Exhibition structure and fragmentation from the appendix*).

Each of the groups presents their work after 20 minutes of exhibition planning. While listening to one group presenting their exhibition plan, the other group should evaluate the plan and later discuss the strong and weak points of it in relation to Lectures 4 and 5 (*use the Evaluation sheet from the Working material*).

Further development: The outcomes can be of further use as a proposal to the existing museums to cooperate with the students and specific target groups.

Materials for group work: whiteboard, stylesheet (or a pre-prepared PPT slide), worksheet, evaluation form (*see Working material*), and the filled A1 sheet of paper *This is who we are* from Activity 2, Lecture 4.

List for further reading:

Barrett, J. (2011), *Museums and the Public Sphere*, Malden and Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell.

Glaser, R. J., Zeneton, A. A. (eds) (2013), *Museums: A Place to Work: Planning Museum Career*, New York: Routledge.

Knell, S. J., MacLeod, S. and Watson, S. (eds), *Museums Revolutions. How Museums Change and are Changed*, 2nd ed., New York: Routledge.

Marstine, J. (2011) 'The Contingent Nature of the New Museum Ethics', in Janet Marstine (ed) *The Routledge Companion to Museum Ethics: Redefining Ethics for the Twenty-First-Century Museum*, 3-25.

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Watson, S. (2007) 'History museums, community identities and a sense of place. Rewriting history', in Simon J. Knell, Suzanne MacLeod and Sheila Watson (eds) *Museum Revolutions. How museums change and are changed*, 160-172, New York: Routledge.

Online relevant museum posts/ blogs/ sites:

Blakemore, E. (2016) 'How Museums Are Helping People with Memory Loss', *Smithsonian.com* <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/how-museums-are-helping-people-memory-loss-180957768/?no-ist> Accessed 14 January 2016.

N.N. (n.d.) *Learning at Manchester Museum* <https://learningmanchester.wordpress.com> Accessed 14 January 2016.

N.N. (n.d.) *Tenement Museum* <https://www.tenement.org> Accessed 14 January 2016.

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Serota, N. (2016) 'The 21st-century Tate is a commonwealth of ideas' *The Art Newspaper* <http://theartnewspaper.com/comment/comment/the-21st-century-tate-is-a-commonwealth-of-ideas/> Accessed 14 January 2016.

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