Welcome to Hack the Culture

The Competencies Gap Map and what to do with it

Insights from the Status Quo Report

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The Ambitions for Project Result 1

Researching the Now
By Kirsten van Dam, Bespoke Manyone

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How can we support the regeneration of the European cultural heritage (CH) sector, in a highly digitised and post-COVID-19 era? Can digital transition and new entrepreneurial capabilities help to rapidly transform the rigid traditional business models, even of smaller players?

The CH 2.0 project thinks so and accompanies the six project partners in developing a new model for HEIs (Higher Education Institutions) to engage with CH organizations. The collaboration shall, on one hand, equip the academic staff with on-topic knowledge, skills and resources, on the other hand, provide new business models, knowledge transfer, innovative tools and digital skills, while implementing new approaches and synergies.

The Cultural Heritage 2.0 project is divided into 3 main phases, called project results (PR). PR1 focused on the analysis of the post-COVID needs of the Cultural Heritage sector, with the goal of developing forward-looking scenarios for the digital transformation of the sector. The activities of this phase have been very challenging: partners did 36+ qualitative interviews with cultural heritage experts, researching the potential for business model evolution to support organisations in the field.
The outputs of PR1 are:

01 Good Practice Cases Collection, which is a set of successful formats, set-ups and delivery models of student consultancy projects based on the sector’s challenges and needs for competencies the CH sector that graduates, as future CH employees could address on regional and European-wide levels.

02 Cultural Heritage Challenges and Needs Status Quo Report, that identifies the sector’s challenges and needs both from a European and a regional perspective and the cooperation potential between HEIs and CHOs.

03 The Future of Cultural Heritage Sector Scenarios Book, examines emerging forces, drivers of change and the possible impacts that may reshape the cultural sector in the coming decade.

Furthermore, each partner worked on scanning and identifying 150+ trends which lead to future business models, technology and values in cultural heritage. Eventually, to share insights and validate findings, making sense of the data and integrating our research to draw conclusions, a collaborative sense-making workshop was organized in each country.
Both tracks were conducted as a part of the desk research phase to examine the current state of the cultural heritage industry, with a specific focus on its challenges and requirements in a post-COVID-19 world that is highly digitised. Additionally, this research phase aimed to identify areas of weakness and investigate the potential for collaboration between cultural heritage organizations (CHOs) and higher education institutions (HEIs) to address these gaps.

The desk research phase included various activities that were conducted over several months. These activities included a literature review, which aimed to map the current status quo of the CHO sector in terms of the challenges faced both at the European and regional levels. The review also aimed to identify competency gaps from both the CHO’s and academics’ perspectives and explore the potential for collaboration between CHOs and HEIs to alleviate these gaps.

In addition to the literature review, the project team conducted interviews with CHO leaders and academics to obtain qualitative insights into the competency gaps identified. The team also explored various cases of good practice to identify current practices that could help to reach preferable futures and identify potential partners for the rest of the project.

The desk research phase yielded a detailed Status Quo Report that highlighted the current challenges faced by CHOs and identified their competency gaps. The report provided a foundation for the Digital Student Consultancy Approach Course, which will enable CHOs to meet their competency gaps and improve their business model evolution on regional and international levels.

Lastly, a Competencies Gap Map was also created from the information gathered across the project’s first phase and a collective reservoir of all the competence gaps identified. This gap map complemented the Futures Scenario book and was used to bridge the gap between the first and second phases of the project. All of these Reports and outputs are available to download FREE from our website.
Helping to revive Europe's Cultural Heritage: Insights from the Status Quo Report

Following the Cultural Heritage 2.0 project’s methodology on researching the Present of the sector, I would like to highlight some key findings from our recently published Status Quo Report, shedding light on the challenges and opportunities faced by the cultural heritage sector in our rapidly evolving, post-COVID-19 world.

Below are points of interest that we identified through our desk research:

01 Championing a Resilient Sector

In a world forever altered by the pandemic, the European cultural heritage sector faces multifaceted challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic not only disrupted daily lives but also had a profound impact on cultural heritage sites, content, and visitors. It became apparent that to survive and thrive, Culture Heritage Organisations (CHOs) needed to adapt. Through extensive research and consultation, we identified six main categories of challenges from a European perspective. These challenges span from personnel and job security to cultural, financial, and communication challenges.

02 Empowering Regional Perspectives

The cultural heritage sector is not uniform across Europe. To truly understand the landscape, we collaborated with six organizations across five countries, including three Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), to provide insights into the sector’s challenges and needs from regional perspectives. From Italy to Denmark, Austria to Ireland, each partner uncovered the unique dynamics and difficulties faced by cultural heritage organizations in their regions. Understanding these nuances is essential to crafting solutions tailored to local contexts.

03 Bridging Competency Gaps

Competencies are the cornerstone for success in the cultural heritage sector. To address competency gaps, we defined three key elements: knowledge, skills, and attitudes. By acknowledging these gaps and providing the means to bridge them, we empower cultural heritage organizations to navigate the digital age effectively. This ensures that the sector’s staff and leadership are well-equipped for the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead.

04 Unlocking the Synergy

Collaboration between HEIs and cultural heritage organizations is pivotal to the sector’s regeneration. HEIs play a fundamental role in European identities, interdisciplinary collaboration, and the promotion of cultural heritage assets. By fostering cooperation between these two sectors, we could unlock a wealth of potential. Our project seeks to strengthen and expand the perception of what is possible for CHOs-HEIs collaborations.
“An increased resilience and capacity to deal with transformation and even loss of specific manifestations of cultural heritage can help people adapt to new circumstances and absorb adversity in their own lives too.”

Holtorf, 2018

We invite you to delve deeper into the insights and recommendations presented in our full Status Quo Report, which you can read and download from our website.

Your support is vital in championing the regeneration of Europe’s cultural heritage sector. Stay updated with our progress by following us on social media, signing up for our newsletter, and engaging with our educational resources.
Our research and overall process were informed and guided by Bespoke’s Futures Design Framework. This methodology integrates tools, methods, and mindsets from the design process and theoretical frameworks from strategic foresight practice. It is a collaborative approach to understanding the changes and forces emerging in the present and identifying new areas that are shaping a given landscape or sector.

Therefore, it was essential to invite a wide range of perspectives and voices into the process. Starting with the research phase, we engaged with over 300 participants, including sector experts and their stakeholders, leaders in museums, trend experts in business innovation and technology, and academia. Through collaboration and engagement, we developed and validated four distinctive scenarios to better understand the possible impact on the European Cultural Heritage Sector.

Firstly, desktop research and horizon scanning were conducted to identify a diverse range of signals of change within the European Cultural Heritage landscape. The world is full of early signs of change, and scanning the horizon will lead to relevant future directions, developments, new behaviours, new business models, technology, values, and audiences happening globally in arts, culture, and cultural heritage.
The insights (trends) can inspire the Cultural Heritage Sector, generate actionable points of departure, serve as a strategic foundation for scenario work and inform the framework for the development of Future scenarios for the Cultural Heritage Sector. We have complemented that scenario framework with key drivers, where we define a key driver as a "factor that is considered to have a determining influence over the direction the future will take." The future state of the cultural sector will be a composite of the various drivers identified and can have different influences on the existing insights and trends, accelerating some or creating others that are altogether new.

After this, we continued with a scenario process. The scenario approach involved extrapolating the impacts of those drivers through several steps and describing future situations (scenarios), where several key impacts combine and describe the path from any given present to these future situations. These future situations cover the "edges" of the scenario funnel. In the end, ten scenario skeletons were developed based on different future projections, of which four scenario narratives were selected to explore and develop, based on consistency, plausibility, and distinctiveness to represent the future.

Lastly, in a participatory way that included different perspectives, Future Dialogues Workshops were hosted in three European countries to collect the opinions and reflections of cultural heritage stakeholders, educators, and experts in technology and business model development. Inspiring conversations between participants who shared their thinking about how one might respond to each scenario were held, and collaboratively enriched and explored the scenarios, discussing the impact and what this would mean for future competencies. In the end, Bespoke analyzed the reflections and impacts mapped in the responses, their relationships, and outcomes, and developed four final scenarios from these inputs. The scenario narratives represent the collective opinion and dominant views of the group as a whole. These scenarios aim to inspire and rehearse what might lie ahead for the European Cultural Heritage Sector.

Download the Future Scenario Book [here](#) and you can find regular updates on our work by [signing up for our ezines](#) or following our social media channels.
The Competencies Gap Map and what to do with it

Madeleine Harbich and Manuela Holzmayer, are project managers of the Cultural Heritage 2.0 project for the University of Vienna, one of the three higher education institutions in this project. Here they outline the development of the Competencies Gap Map, and how it can be of value to your organisation.

During the conceptuialisation and development phase of our Future Scenarios for the Cultural Sector, the project consortium identified competency gaps among cultural heritage organisations and higher education institutions. At the very beginning of this project, the consortium drew up a Competencies Gap Map in order to incorporate the findings into future project outcomes.

The consortium carried out intensive desk research and qualitative analysis through 34 interviews with Cultural Heritage experts and leaders as well as technology trend experts from 9 countries across Europe. The Competencies Gap Map provides an overview of the competency deficiencies of three target groups, firstly the staff and leadership of Cultural Heritage Organisations (CHOs), secondly, the staff and educators of Higher Education Institutions, and academics who design challenge-based learning projects and learning interventions for students in higher education. (Examples of such digital student consultancy approaches are held throughout this project.) And thirdly, HEI students in (digital) humanities, art and cultural study programmes (HEI students).

The competencies identified are important for the move forward into a post-Covid-19 Cultural Heritage sector in Europe. Download the Competencies Gap Map [here](#) and learn about the Why, How, With Whom, Who and What behind CHOs transformation as well as the three levels of implementation.
This was the opening line when in September 2023 the University of Copenhagen turned its attention to helping three cultural institutions to develop solutions to different challenges that each institution is facing. Twenty students within the humanities were divided into teams and got the opportunity to strengthen their skills for their future professional lives.

Over 48 hours, the students got to meet their clients, look into the future scenarios with ManyOne, develop new concepts using Open Educational Resources, qualify their solutions and pitch their suggestions to an audience consisting of clients and academic professors as well as expanding their network.

The clients were exhilarated by the students’ insights and the students felt empowered by attending a rapid innovation process and putting their knowledge into practical use (see the following page)
What the **students** had to say... 

“...You learn a lot from a text book but there is so much you can learn from actually being in the space, meeting new people. A lot of our studies are general, and I feel like we can contribute a lot, but we aren’t really exposed to these places in which we can really matter.”

“I think we would have ended up with some really different solutions and presentations if we hadn’t had the education resources offered. It was like a guided chaos. The tools did a lot for us in showing us how to think outside the box and even showing us that we were actually still thinking inside the box. It really showed us how to look for that deeper knowledge. That did a lot.”

What the **client** had to say... 

“I think the hackathon almost exceeded my expectations. When we got the feedback from the clients, I realized that we have actually done something for the past 48 hours! We are really able to do this - a group of people that have never met before! I didn’t expect that.”

“If you think about it in the long run, all the work we did and all the discussions we had during the hackathon you can just pop it into your CV. It really gives you an advantage when trying to look for a job in the future.”

“Just taking the time to think about “what is the problem that I would want to have someone look at if I could choose” is super beneficial. Having six people look into that for two days is very valuable because it gives a fresh take on things. In part, it confirms that we are talking about the right things, but it also gives great inspiration to new steps.”
Meet the Clients and the scope of the cases:

**VILLA KULTUR**

Villa Kultur focuses on how we create better working lives for a new generation of cultural creators and creative entrepreneurs. Traditionally this all culminates in a catalog of inspiration and ideas, which is published online and used for dialogue with politicians etc. **But is there another way to develop and disseminate knowledge about cultural work? How do we ensure that the knowledge and tools that are produced are used in the cultural industry?**

**VOLCANO**

The pedestrian streets in the small towns of Denmark are dying. Shopping malls and megastores pulls the trade out of the town centre and with no trade, shops close and foot traffic dwindles down. The street loses structure, colour, and identity. **How can the street be revitalised, drawing on both the history and culture? How can we use cultural placemaking to rethink the pedestrian street, with cultural heritage at the centre?**

**WILLUMSEN’S MUSEUM**

J.F. Willumsen’s Museum, north of Copenhagen in Frederikssund, opened in 1957 and is dedicated to the transgressive, grandiose and at times excessive figurative art of the Danish multi-artist Jens Ferdinand Willumsen (1863-1958) and his collection. Willumsen’s Museum has earned international recognition for its exceptional collection and exhibitions yet have been experiencing a notable absence of local visitors. **How can the museum strengthen the connection with the local community? How can it have a stronger presence throughout the town of Frederikssund? How can it create ownership and belonging amongst a local audience?**
Community engagement, adaptability, & fresh ideas open up new frontiers for CHOs:

Our Business Model Evolution Good Practice Cases illustrate successful examples of CHOs’ business model transformations as an adaptation in a time of adversity. In our collection, we’ve assembled inspiring cases representing European-wide CHOs. Most documented cases lean toward digital or hybrid models, showcasing the potential for CHOs to experiment with innovative business and financing structures. The emphasis is on offering a higher societal impact and reaching a broader audience range. This evolution aligns with the broader goals of CHOs, extending their influence beyond physical institutions.

Business Model Evolution in the Cultural Heritage Sector

By Déspina Kortesidou, UIIN

“There is little room in the daily life of CH professionals to experiment with new approaches to contemporary challenges by understanding their organisation’s challenges, analysing how to improve the visitors’ experience, and being brave to test and implement new ideas.”

CHO representative
In learning from CHO innovators, each case includes general information on the institutions’ rationale for change, their unique point of view, the challenge at hand, implementation steps, and the observed impact the change in their business model brought. Let’s take a closer look at a few interesting examples:

- **ARTIS (UK):** By reducing barriers to museum visits through innovative art interventions, they’ve redefined the visitor experience, for example, by training visitors on how to look at a painting in a 1-minute animated video.
- **BreraPLUS (Italy):** Brera Art Gallery offers an enriched platform that combines online exploration, concerts, masterclasses, and guided tours for its members, providing a holistic experience both onsite and online.
- **CPH: DOX (Denmark):** During the pandemic, the CPH:DOX festival transformed into a hybrid event, expanding its reach and making documentary films more accessible than ever.
- **DEN: Digital DNA & Focus Model (The Netherlands):** DEN’s initiative researches digitalisation in the cultural sector, helping CHOs develop new digital revenue models that match their strategic needs and goals.
- **HDGÖ - Digital Museum (Austria):** The House of Austrian History’s digital museum offers a dynamic, multi-platform experience, physically and digitally engaging citizens.
- **Rathcroghan Visitor Centre (Ireland):** This social enterprise in Co. Roscommon provides a rich interpretive experience and heritage preservation, contributing to the economic well-being of its community.

“The challenge with the old business model was that there were not enough radical innovations for museums coming from within the museums themselves.”

CHO representative

The value of the selected case studies goes far beyond the walls of their institutions. It underlines the transformative power of art and media in enhancing citizens’ well-being, offering a fresh perspective on the role of cultural heritage in the digital age. Moreover, using technology, CHOs can rethink pricing models to reshape a personal visit through subscription, new membership, loyalty, and hybrid business models. Moreover, as the cultural heritage sector’s role is shifting, CHOs could become spaces to connect visitors, local communities, and local embeddedness through events and peer-learning hubs. They could become places for dialogue between the two, requiring the environment to have the flexibility to be able to adjust itself. Finally, through our research, we realised that more and more visitors expect their experience to invite and enable participation when they visit a CHO. By introducing more participation, the social role of CHOs could also increase, and knowledge access and transfer will become a collective process.

The presented cases are only a fraction of the collected good practices that can serve as a springboard for CHOs’ staff and leadership to embrace digitalisation and implement it cohesively across strategic, tactical, and operational levels. To dive deeper into these captivating Business Model Evolution Good Practice Cases and learn from the innovators shaping the cultural heritage sector, explore the complete collection on our project website.
Ca’ Foscari leadership in CH 2.0

The core idea of the project is to engage with cultural heritage organizations in problem-based learning interventions in multidisciplinary student teams, to tackle the challenges and explore the opportunities for the cultural heritage sector of a highly digitalized post-COVID19 world.

For that, some indispensable elements for leading the project were the access to interdisciplinary knowledge, spanning the areas of business model, innovation, and cultural management, as well as a deep engagement with the cultural heritage sector and its evolving needs. Ca’ Foscari hosts all of these elements. Its location in Venice makes this university embedded in cultural heritage, and in a relationship of continuous dialogue and exchange with the surrounding cultural heritage organizations by means of ongoing research, on-site learning, internships, consultancy, and sharing of spaces and facilities in what can be seen as an osmosis between the cultural heritage sector and academia. This makes Ca’ Foscari in a position of immediate access to cultural heritage organizations, and of up-to-date knowledge of their evolving needs.

Indeed, Ca’ Foscari is a hub of both interdisciplinary research and teaching hub on the topics covered by this project.

In particular, the Venice School of Management of Ca’ Foscari hosts Maclab, the laboratory of Management of Arts and Culture, founded in 2009 as a meeting place for research and teaching activities at the crossroads of management, creativity and cultural productions. Anchored in economics and management knowledge, Maclab extends its multidisciplinary reach to the manifold understandings and professional interests that mobilize notions of “culture”, “art” and, more recently, “creativity”, by designing and conducting research projects in this variegated field, with an approach characterized by interdisciplinarity and by an action and practice-based stance, in strong relation with the cultural, business and policymakers that make up both its object of research and its main recipient.

Moreover Ca’ Foscari offers a Master’s degree in arts management, that brings together students and educators from diverse disciplinary and geographic backgrounds. This programme integrates expertise, research methodologies and professional approaches from humanistic and economic and managerial areas, focusing particularly on the evolution of the national, European and global artistic and cultural panorama.

All in all, Ca’ Foscari provides the access to cultural heritage organizations, the expertise and the multidisciplinary student base that are the indispensable ingredients for running CH 2.0 and realizing its goals.
Cultural Heritage 2.0
Partners gather online for Transnational Partner Meeting

The members of the consortium meet each month to plan, collaborate on and review the work of the project. Approximately every six months the team gathers for a Transnational Partner meeting to address key elements of the project in more detail.

The third Transnational Partner meeting of 2023 took place online on October 11th 2023. Representatives of partners from across Europe gathered online to review and discuss the recent work they had carried out and to address the next activities of the consortium.

The meeting began with a summary of potential options for a workshop, hosted by Kirsten Laugesen van Dam from Bespoke Manyone in Denmark. The purpose of this part of the conversation was to consider the final project event in January, what the consortium wants to achieve from the event and what would be the best way to work towards achieving it. Various potential formats and activities had been previously proposed and gathered using a Miro board and these were explored and discussed, providing a very effective way for the consortium to design an event that best fits the end-of-project objectives.

Project leaders, Daniela Pavan and Sara Alba, of Ca’ Foscari University of Venice then introduced Frank Hiddink to the Partners. Frank will act as External Evaluator for the project and as well as reviewing project outputs and materials, will be conducting a series of one-to-one interviews with Partners over the coming months.

Next, Denise Callan of Momentum in Ireland gave an update on project dissemination. She outlined the progress that is being made on writing blog posts and the preparations that are underway for the next ezine, as well as the increasing engagement on social media channels. Preparation is also underway for a promotional video.

To date, PR1 and PR2 of the project have been completed and the attention has turned to PR3. Madeleine Harbich and her team at the University of Vienna are leading the work on PR3 and had prepared a workshop where the entire group were able to contribute and help with the development of the Business Model Evolution Success Stories Collection and Guidebook for Educators.

For regular updates on the project and the valuable resources it is developing follow us on Instagram, TikTok or LinkedIn or subscribe to our ezine.