DIAMOND: Dialoguing Museums for a New Cultural Democracy

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Abstract

The role of museums as inclusive institutions is a very debated issue: many attempts have been made to improve the relationship of museums and different publics, in order to turn the museum into places for people of all ages, cultures and backgrounds. Most of the existing experiences seem to be promising in terms of the results they are achieving, but they normally lack a structured forms of evaluation.

Diamond is a two-year Grundtvig funded project aimed at realizing museum activities addressed to marginalized groups. It intends to do so by exploiting the enormous potential of museums as tools of empowerment and social inclusion and that of Digital Storytelling (DS) within the cultural and social domain by training the other partners of the project in the DS methodology and by using it in the implementation and evaluation of the project's activities: telling stories is indeed an activity embedded in human being's way of making sense of reality, shared by all cultures no matter where they come from and what sort of environment they live in. The use of DS adds to the process of telling stories the potential of self-biography (a very powerful pedagogical tool) and the use of ICT, fostering the decrease of the digital divide among different age groups and different social groups. In the whole, the use of DS is a powerful tool in terms of individual empowerment in order to learn (new knowledge), to learn how to do (new competences) and to learn how to be (self-development, creativity, self expression).

The innovation of the project lies in the idea of bringing together a group of museums and research centres which are committed to providing learning opportunities for adult people (using also ICT) as well as to provide a deep analysis of tools and methodologies addressed to measure the impact of museums activities within society and adult learning field and to develop guidelines of good practice.

With specific reference to evaluation, there are documented experiences within this field, but there is a lack of evaluation of their social and cultural/educational impact through qualitative indicators; the project aims at identifying and developing qualitative indicators appropriate to measure this impact. DS will be used also as a tool of qualitative evaluation since it will help participants clearly expressing their feelings about the activities which will be realised within the museums.

References

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