



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



NEWSLETTER

Introduction to the project and first steps



ABOUT THE PROJECT

AccessCULT has been funded by the Erasmus+ programme of the European Union from September 2020 and until February 2023. This is the first of our quarterly newsletters to keep you up to date with our progress and updates from our project.

PROJECT AIM

The project aims to improve the **accessibility of cultural heritage across Europe** through the exchange and promotion of good practice. The team will develop, implement, and test innovative multidisciplinary educational material for students as future experts, as well as training for existing cultural workers. The project will:

- help museums to have a greater understanding of the needs of visitors with disabilities in order to improve the environment and experience.
- share best practice and build the skills and competences of cultural institutions and students to improve the accessibility of cultural heritage.
- put forward and demonstrate innovative accessibility solutions through pilot projects so that all visitors can fully enjoy cultural heritage.

RECENT HIGHLIGHTS & PROGRESS UPDATE

Since September the AccessCULT team has been working hard to build the team and ensure the smooth delivery of our workplan despite the challenges of working across Europe during a pandemic!

We have held two transnational partner meetings. Unfortunately, we were unable to meet face to face, but with careful planning we were able to enjoy a kick-off meeting and virtual knowledge visits organized by Coventry University from 23rd-24th November 2020. In May 2021, we came together again, this time hosted virtually by INUK, Slovenia, to share developments, review progress and plan the coming months of activity. We are hoping it won't be too long before we can meet face to face!

We have also celebrated the launch of the project website and social media presence. Please find more information at accesscult.eu/ and facebook.com/accesscult/

SPECIFYING ACCESSCULT EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL (IO1)

Coventry University in the UK has led on one of our first pieces of work. To specify the AccessCULT educational and training material, they have undertaken a review of the currently available training and educational modules, existing knowledge about accessibility amongst cultural workers, and reviewed related projects and examples of good practice.



... AS A RESULT OF THIS REVIEW

they further defined the focus of the AccessCULT educational and training. The materials will enable current, or future museum staff to:

1. Define what accessibility and inclusion mean.
2. Identify basic accessibility concerns for a variety of different user and list common barriers experienced by people with disabilities and older people.
3. Understand how to create a service better for customers with disabilities.
4. Feel confident approaching and talking to a person with disabilities.

... SOME OF THE GOOD PRACTICE ELEMENTS

to be included in the training have in part been driven by the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and the need for Cultural Institutions to further consider digital and online interaction for example through:

- Online virtual tours with voice explanation, sign language options and subtitles and the option of choosing different languages.
- Offering of bespoke online tours and guides for people with different impairment conditions including online sensory tour guides.
- Easy to find accessibility information, with online video demonstrations of putting the principles into practice

“I liked the term intellectual access and how people engaged with the collections”

“Offering a tailored experience, tailored to need with opportunity to touch (with curatorial support),”

“the main strength it's the general philosophy of inclusion in which all disabled people really can enjoy of culture and co-create it.”

Quotes from online survey on the perception of partners and students on the approach of inclusivity and accessibility of cultural heritage sites in the UK.

DESIGNING ACCESSCULT EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL (IO2)

Building on this specification, **Universidad de Burgos** in Spain, has led our second Intellectual Output focused on the Educational Module Framework and its Design and an Accessibility to Culture Heritage Guidelines set out of the needs identified. Partnership has further defined the learning outcomes to ensure the resulting materials enable learners to:

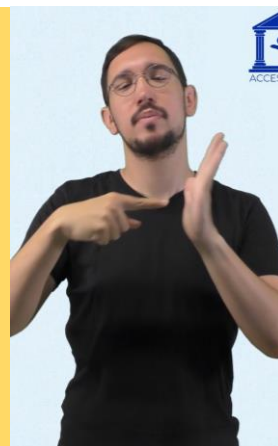
- Prepare diverse visitors for their visit by adapting their pre-visit communication.
- Plan routes to the museum for visitors with specific needs using scenarios.
- Communicate with visitors with additional needs on arrival using aids suitable for each user group.
- Design “during visit” material such as sensory maps with routes through the museum for those with avoidance strategies and those who can adapt.
- Develop exhibitions, events and activities which are accessible to all.
- Create social stories explaining gallery etiquette in the museum.
- Know where to go for further help.
- How to consider and involve people with disabilities in the whole process.

For more information, you can see the full **Intellectual Output reports at ACCESSCULT** website as well as project updates ahead of our next newsletter in December 2021

DID YOU KNOW?

“When speaking to or about someone with a disability, it’s important to make note of which terms are offensive, outdated, and inappropriate. For example, Person-first language puts the person before the disability, using phrases like “person with a disability”. Identity-first language uses phrases like “diabetic person” or “disabled person”. If you feel your disability isn’t as important as who you are as a person, you may wish to be spoken to in person-first language. If you feel your disability is an integral part of who you are, you may want someone to use identity-first language”.

Sofia Mastrokoulou (Istituto dei Sordi di Torino)



WHO WE ARE

An energetic consortium of **9 partners** including universities and cultural institutions led by University of Burgos, Spain. The partners represent **5 EU countries**: Asociación INFAD, Spain; Univerza V Ljubljani and INUK, Slovenia; Klaipėdos Universitetas and The History Museum of Lithuania Minor, Lithuania; Coventry University and Culture Coventry, UK; Istituto dei Sordi di Torino, Italy.