SoPHIA Stakeholders' Virtual Conference
Cultural Heritage – Rethinking Impact Assessments

April 21-22, 2021

Conference topics

The **Conference: Cultural Heritage – Rethinking Impact Assessments** is one of the milestones of the SoPHIA project and will provide a space to discuss the project's main results to date, in order to gather comments, feedback and suggestions to advance toward the final version of the impact assessment model.

The **first day**, organised in a series of **panels**, will invite representatives from all case studies to discuss **cross-cutting issues** identified in the work process so far; the **second day**, organised in a series of **stations**, will focus on these issues relating them to the elements (themes and sub-themes) of the SoPHIA **draft impact assessment model**.

To guide the work during the Conference herewith are highlighted the main cross-cutting issues arising from the application of the draft impact assessment model to the CH study cases; questions, both in positive and negative terms, are posed to illustrate the potential counter-effects that have been identified and that require further analysis in view of finalising the model, concretely as regards the possibility of incorporating the lessons-learned. The aim is to provide a red thread between the panels of the first day and the stations of the second day.

- *Culture and Sustainability*

Panel 1 relates to Station 1: *Protection – Climate, Resource Management and Green Economy in Cultural Heritage*

The panel will explore the impact of the culture sector on the environment and analyse the role cultural institutions and initiatives are playing for a sustainable future. The question of climate change, usage of resources and green economy in cultural heritage interventions is an overarching concern with regards to its ecological, economic, social and cultural aspects. In view of a holistic model for cultural heritage interventions, this issue must be analysed in further detail. Potential ways, mechanisms, and implication of the sustainable usage of resources for cultural heritage sites/interventions will be discussed. The following key questions have been identified: How can a cultural institution contribute to raise awareness to adopt sustainable behaviours in our daily life?, How can culture and cultural institutions contribute to a sustainable development

and the sustainable usage of resources?, How can CH sites be integrated in urban green space and recreation policies?, What are the skills and abilities needed to foster such contribution?, What are the relevant indicators to measure the potential of CH for the green economy?.

- *Education and Cultural Heritage*

Panel 2 relates to Station 2: *Social Capital and Knowledge in Cultural Heritage*

This session will discuss the extent to which education is seen as a fundamental part of the work in heritage. It also asks what challenges the field faces, and how the impact of education on cultural heritage can be measured. The social capital of cultural heritage strongly depends on who has access and how access is enabled via educational activities, knowledge transfer, and partnerships across disciplines, policies and communities. Challenges and opportunities for cultural heritage in ensuring diversity in social capital and knowledge will be discussed. The following key questions have been identified: How can access to CH for educational purposes be improved?; How can CH sites and organisations diversify their educational programmes to address diverse audiences?; How is knowledge transfer ensured and how can partnerships and networks support knowledge transfer?; How can processes of social innovation support improving educational approaches to CH?; How can we create a bond between young people and the cultural site to allow transmission from the past to the present?.

- *Public Spaces and Cultural Heritage*

Panel 3 / Station 3: *Quality of Life and Infrastructure in Cultural Heritage*

This session will focus on larger cultural areas and how to assess social capital, and access to these areas. The stakeholders and target groups are usually very broad, which also makes it important to ask how negotiation processes can be initiated, the response to different demands, and the inclusion of varying perspectives in impact assessments. SoPHIA research has shown that the location and reachability (via public transport, barrier-free access, etc.) of urban cultural heritage sites/interventions is an important prerequisite for the attractiveness of cultural heritage and it's potential with regard to the quality of life. Challenges in terms of location, decentralization, reachability and attractiveness to various target groups will be discussed in order to define this area of impact in more detail. The following key questions have been identified: How can potential tensions and counter-effects between tourist visibility and local identity be addressed and assessed?; How can interventions on CH create public space for meeting and socialization, and as a democratic space open to dialogue?; How can notions such as "wellbeing" and "quality of life" promote the design of new urban policies that place citizens at their centre?.

- *Assessing European Capitals of Culture (ECoCs)*

Panel 4 / Station 4: *Processes of Cultural Heritage Assessment*

ECoC standards of evaluation and monitoring, defined by the European Union, are sophisticated in nature, with no comparable principles of assessment in cultural programs. The panel in this session will broach the opportunities and challenges of these unique assessments, through discussions with representatives from various former and upcoming ECoCs. Continuous and longitudinal monitoring and assessment has many advantages for the management of cultural heritage as well as for ensuring participation and a multi-stakeholder perspective. The ECoC examples, however, also show how challenging it is to ensure such an approach of assessment. Furthermore, a multi-stakeholder perspective and longitudinal approach in assessing cultural heritage also depend on the resources available. The possibilities and mechanisms of how such approaches can be ensured despite these challenges will be explored. The following key question has been identified: the multi-stakeholder- and time-axis are horizontal and qualitative variables related to process, how can they be included in a CH impact assessment model in practical terms?; What added value does longitudinal monitoring and assessment with a participatory approach have for the implementation of a CH intervention?; How can results from continuous monitoring and assessment be incorporated in the implementation process of a CH intervention?.

- *Placing Dissonant Heritage within European Cultural Heritage Narratives*

Panel 5 / Station 5: *Sense of Place – Identity, Memory and Narratives of Cultural Heritage*

In the recent past, a growing emphasis of EU cultural policy on cultural heritage has been witnessed. This session will explore how Europe's dissonant past is placed within its cultural heritage narratives, and what step can be taken to facilitate Europe's relationship with its uncomfortable history. The narratives projected and told through cultural heritage contribute to identity building, a sense of belonging and community. However, the importance of giving room to different, potentially conflictual narratives from various communities has been underlined often, including in the SoPHIA case studies. Ways of grasping a variety of narratives, communicating and reflecting them through cultural heritage will be discussed in order to define this area of impact in more detail. The following key questions have been identified: How can identity, memory/remembrance and values/rituals be differentiated when assessing the impact of CH?; How to embed the multi-dimensional character of identity, memory and narratives in a CH impact assessment model?.

- *Over-tourism and the City*

Panel 6 / Station 6: *Prosperity and Profiting in Cultural Heritage*

This session aims to deconstruct the phenomenon of over-tourism and its impact on the urban fabric and its heritage value(s). Panelists will also discuss strategies to deal with

urban centres affected by the rising traffic of tourists. The economic and social impact of cultural heritage interventions often appear to be in conflict with one another. A specific example is the tension between the touristic profitability of cultural heritage and the disadvantages stemming from tourism. In order to grasp this potential dichotomy, the dangers and advantages of economic development for social issues will be discussed, to define this area of impact in more detail. The following key questions have been identified: How can urban policies consider, in a constructive manner, both the potential economic as well as the social impacts of CH interventions?; How can we balance funding/financial return/economic value vs free access and inclusion?.