

# Heritage and Cultural Values in Tourism IMPACTS Project

## *Revised Project Outline*<sup>1</sup>

### **Background**

Although the initial bid for funding for IMPACTS in 2010 was unsuccessful (see Annexe 1), issues around cultural tourism and the way it interacts with historic places and local communities remain important.

Using the EAHTR Guidelines for Sustainable Cultural Tourism in Historic Towns and Cities as a starting point, cultural tourism is defined as:

*Tourism, the principal purpose of which is to share and enjoy physical and intangible heritage and culture, including landscapes, buildings, collections, the arts, identity, tradition and language.*

Because of their origin the Guidelines tend to focus on the physical rather than the intangible aspects of heritage and culture. However, there is an emerging perception that there are trends in tourism towards:

- creative opportunities, with a focus on what visitors take away with them;
- enjoying experiences and people rather than objects;
- authenticity, narratives and the story of a place;
- interpretation and communication through the transfer of culture; and
- activities and events that add value to experiences.

These trends embrace both tangible<sup>2</sup> (physical) and intangible<sup>3</sup> culture and heritage, but the intangible is increasingly taking on a much greater significance. This has been reinforced by the huge strides made in information and communications technology over the past 20 years. A project addressing this area could focus more effectively on the objectives of the Culture Programme than one addressing the everyday issues of destination management.

### **Objectives**

The workshop in London identified seven possible objectives.

1. To promote tourism as a means of developing and exchanging cultural and heritage values in the European Community.
2. To promote greater cultural mobility.

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<sup>1</sup> Based on discussions held in London on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2011

<sup>2</sup> Buildings, streets, gardens, public spaces, works of art, historical artefacts

<sup>3</sup> Language, literature, music, drama, dance, food, folklore, history

3. To explore the importance of the touristic experience of interaction with intangible and tangible culture and how this is evolving from the perspectives of both the visitor and the local community.
4. To develop a shared European understanding of the experience of cultural tourism.
5. To develop a diverse, deeper and more meaningful cultural experience for visitors in Europe.
6. To assist in developing a stronger European tourism product that is economically, environmentally and socially sustainable.
7. To establish a sustainable legacy of ongoing partner development and cooperation and knowledge transfer as part of the 'Heritage Europe' network

## **Method**

The Guidelines would still be used as the starting point, particularly regarding sustainability and the production of Cultural and Tourism Action Plans, but the project would concentrate on the cultural content making it both more focused and more practical. Consideration of Cultural and Tourism Action Plans will be important in assessing community engagement and buy-in.

The emphasis therefore would be on the interface of tourism with the tangible and intangible heritage and transfer between countries. The outcomes and good practice would explore and reflect the new importance of the intangible in terms of local people and visitors' cultural experiences

For the project to take in cultural tourism along both tangible and intangible lines it would require a very full input from each of the partners as to your cultural heritage offer. What are your experiences?

We would start with finding out what partners are doing in relation to using their cultural heritage to enhance visitor's and local people's experiences with a brief assessment of what works / what does not work in each city, as well as new ideas to be explored as part of the project.

The method suggested would be initially a brief e-mail questionnaire to each partner to get a preliminary position statement as the basis for drafting the detailed proposal, see Annex 2

## **Outputs**

The workshop in London identified several likely outputs.

1. Report of case studies for national and European dissemination.
2. A strategy paper to promote debate and encourage ongoing development of the concepts.
3. Revisions to the Guidelines.

4. A public debate and means of involving local people.
5. An on-line network for ongoing discussion, dissemination and cultural exchange.

## Outcomes

The London workshop suggested a range of expected outcomes.

1. Delivery of a subsequent demonstration project for the process.
2. Greater mobility of cultural workers and cultural material.
3. A sustainable and growing network of practitioners.
4. An increased knowledge base.
5. Action plans for projects that embrace new and improved ways of working at local, national and transnational level.
6. Increased awareness amongst regional, national and European organisations with influence on policy
7. Greater engagement of young people through innovative and creative use of new technologies in place
8. Exchange of experience and good practice – peer reviews on each others local actions

## Timetable

The following is a preliminary and indicative timetable.

Action	Date	Responsibility
Agree project outline	1.7.11	EAHTR
Send outline and request for information on tourism activities to partners	8.7.11	EAHTR
Partners to confirm support in principle	29.7.11	Partners
Partners to submit information on tourism activities	12.8.11	Partners
Drafting details of proposal	Start 15.8.11	EAHTR
Partners submit background information needed for bid	tba	Partners
Preparation of bid	tba	EAHTR
Submission of bid	? .10.11	EAHTR

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## **Annexe 1**

### **Reasons for Failure of IMPACTS**

In general terms the EACEA evaluation report assessed the proposal as:-

- Lacking in specific cultural heritage content with cultural issues not taken sufficiently into account, dealing instead with general issues on tourism and is seen as focusing more on process than cultural content
- Proposal not detailed enough in several areas – lack of detail concerning specific actions for cultural activities - themes of workshops/symposia not detailed enough to demonstrate trans-national effects of the proposal - tasks and role of partners not detailed enough
- Sustainability assessed as weak in terms of the potential of the project to result in continued sustained co-operation and in permanent benefits at European level. Project perceived as focusing mainly on the commercial values of cultural heritage tourism, rather than enhancing and increasing the knowledge base in connection to the heritage tourism field

## Annexe 2

### Questions for Partners

1. Does your municipality have a Tourism or Cultural Action Plan?
2. If yes, does it cover:
  - a. The role of tangible and intangible heritage?
  - b. Encouraging cultural exchange through tourism?  
Please give examples.
3. If no, are you interested in preparing an Action Plan as part of this project?
4. Thinking about tourism, what are the main tangible and intangible cultural characteristics of your city?
5. Have specific cultural offers been developed in your municipality to attract tourists? If yes:
  - a. Give examples, e.g. festivals, exhibitions, trails
  - b. Who are the main partners in delivery, including other municipalities?
6. Are steps taken to explain and interpret tangible and intangible cultural heritage to tourists? If yes, please give examples.  
If no, is it something you would wish to work on as part of this project?
7. Are tangible and intangible cultural heritage used to market your municipality as a centre for tourism? If yes, please give examples.  
If no, is it something you would wish to work on as part of this project?
8. Has the celebration of tangible and intangible cultural heritage in your municipality led to cultural exchange with other countries? If yes, please give examples.  
If no, is it something you would wish to work on as part of this project?
9. Thinking about tourism for the enjoyment of tangible and intangible heritage:
  - a. Give examples of where you think your municipality is performing well.
  - b. Identify key issues your municipality faces and say what the priorities would be for action as part of the project.