MeLa*

European Museums in an age of migrations

WHAT MeLa IS ABOUT

The main objective of the MeLa research programme is to define innovative museum practices that reflect the challenges of the contemporary processes of globalization, mobility and migration. As people, objects, knowledge and information move at increasingly high rates, a sharper awareness of an inclusive European identity is needed to facilitate mutual understanding and social cohesion. MeLa aims at empowering museums spaces, practices and policies with the task of building this identity.

www.mela-project.eu

MeLa EXPECTED RESULTS

MeLa aims to redefine the role, mission and network of museums, as well as their communication and exhibition strategies. The findings of the research will coalesce into scientific publications and policies for the use of the European Union and museum community.

EUROPEAN ADDED VALUE

MeLa will help museums become agents of European citizenship-building, by drawing on common heritage as a cardinal bonding factor.

MeLa OBJECTIVES

MeLa general objectives include:

- Rethinking the role of museums in building a democratic inclusive European citizenship;
- Envisioning strategies and exhibition practices to support the new role of museums in an age of migrations;
- Improving knowledge on cultural heritage diversity and identity representation.

MeLa MAIN QUESTIONS

- How do museums face the challenge of representing multiple cultures in contemporary society?
- How do museums play the role of mediators in cultural exchanges?
- How can museums represent memory and identity with an intercultural approach ?

HOW MeLa PROJECT OPERATES

MeLa involves nine European partners – universities, museums, research institutes and a company – who will lead six Research Fields (RF) with a collaborative approach. Public events will be organized to fuel and share the research, bringing together experts from different museums sectors, scholars and artists. Art exhibitions will provide further stimuli to the research, and in progress findings will be tested in pilot projects to exemplify new methodological solutions.

* "mela" is the Sanskrit word for "gathering" or "meeting." Today it is referred to intercultural encounters, intended as opportunities for community building.

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RF01: Museums & Identity in History and Contemporaneity
examines the historical and contemporary relationships between museums, places and identities in Europe and the effects of migrations on museum practices.

RF02: Cultural Memory, Migrating Modernity and Museum Practices
transforms the question of memory into an unfolding cultural and historical problematic, in order to promote new critical and practical perspectives.

RF03: Network of Museums, Libraries and Public Cultural Institutions
investigates coordination strategies between museums, libraries and public cultural institutions in relation to European cultural and scientific heritage, migration and integration.

RF04: Curatorial and Artistic Research
explores the work of artists and curators on and with issues of migration, as well as the role of museums and galleries exhibiting this work and disseminating knowledge.

RF05: Exhibition Design, Technology of Representation and Experimental Actions
investigates and experiments innovative communication tools, ICT potentialities, user centred approaches, and the role of architecture and design for the contemporary museum.

RF06: Envisioning 21st Century Museums
fosters theoretical, methodological and operative contributions to the interpretation of diversities and commonalities within European cultural heritage, and proposes enhanced practices for the mission and design of museums in the contemporary multicultural society.

Duration:	*March 2011 - February 2015 (48 months)*
Funding Scheme:	*Collaborative Project (CP): small and medium scale research project*
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