

Mobility of Museum Professionals and Exchange of Expertise

Extract from the Report of the Working Group 2008-2010, a subgroup of the OMC Working Group on Mobility of Collections

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Conclusions & Recommendations

Conclusions	Recommendations for the European Commission
1) The information gathered by the subgroup is not complete. Only 17 member states replied. Among those 17, not all state-funded museums replied. Finally, the qualitative nature of the information sought proved difficult to collate and analyse.	A future study on the mobility of museum professionals, building on the existing questionnaire, would lead to a greater and more precise understanding of the nature of mobility and exchanges between museums' professional staff, as well as a clearer picture of the current funding that is used.
2) Museums are actively engaged in various forms of mobility of their staff for the purpose of sharing expertise and exhibitions; researching their collections; training staff; and networking.	The EU could channel this activity into mobility projects that are directly related to the mobility of collections. There is an opportunity to introduce a kind of formal programme of mobility of professionals that is tracked at European level.
3) Funding was indicated as the main problem encountered.	To this end the EU should consider creating a specific source of funding to facilitate and support the mobility of museum professionals, perhaps by creating a dedicated strand within Life Long Learning. Further details for a funding proposal are set out in Appendix 4. The projects could be broken down into types such as 'sharing of expertise', 'visits of senior experts', 'collaborations on exhibitions' etc. As with other EU funding programmes, criteria such as quality, relevance, impact and dissemination of the results would be taken into

	<p>consideration in the application process.</p> <p>Particular weight could be given to those applications that have an end result directly related to collection mobility, such as an exhibition; although it would be important to invest in those proposals that could in time encourage shared access to collections, such as the engagement of an expert to assess a part of a collection.</p> <p>A key consideration is that the application process should be as easy to navigate and complete as possible, and in this way encourage smaller and less-resourced museums to participate.</p>
<p>4) Currently the benefits from the sharing of expertise are communicated through conferences, publications etc. organised by the participating institutions.</p>	<p>If an EU managed programme of mobility were introduced, a centralised platform (website) could be created where projects could be recorded, and experiences shared. This would allow greater accessibility for museums at all levels.</p> <p>This could be the CM 2.0 website¹ or NEMO². What is important is that there is one space where experiences of mobility and shared expertise are recorded. In order to maintain up-to-date information on this site, each Member State would take responsibility to supply their national developments and experiences.</p> <p>A supporting website for the funding outlined above would track the supported mobility projects, and summaries and experiences could be posted. Partners could even be sought through a supporting website. Moreover, facilitating access to information would promote the effective participation of smaller museums.</p>
<p>5) In recent years, the EU has carried out a number of studies related to mobility (ECOTEC, Mobility matters, OMC WG Mobility of Artists, OMC WG Mobility of Collections...).</p>	<p>In the past three years, the EU has devoted significant energies and funds into investigating the current situation within Europe regarding mobility, and how it can be developed within the next Culture Programme. The studies highlighted on pages 6-7 have been</p>

¹ www.lending-for-europe.eu

² www.ne-mo.org

	developing concurrently, and there has been an amount of overlap in their conclusions and recommendations. It would be beneficial if the EU were to try to consolidate all these reports.
6) The potential to link up with the Long Term Loans sub-group was identified.	Within the proposed funding application criteria, the EU could prioritise those proposals that lead directly to mobility of collections, such as exhibitions and long term loans.
7) Existing professional networks actively create forums for networking, sharing of expertise and exchange of best practise.	A list of these networks could be maintained on an EU mobility website, with links and details of forthcoming meetings.
8) It was noted that in some countries universities (e.g. Poland) receive more funding than museums to develop exhibitions and other programmes. Therefore, it has been suggested that universities are included when information regarding mobility is disseminated.	Applications for funding could be made by universities as well as museums.
Conclusions	Recommendations for the Member States
1) The information gathered by the sub-group is not complete. Only 17 member states replied. Among those 17, not all state-funded museums replied. Finally, the qualitative nature of the information sought proved difficult to collate and analyse.	Member States should actively ensure that the questionnaire is circulated to all state-funded museums, and that completed information is collated and returned.
2) Museums are actively engaged in various forms of mobility of their staff for the purpose of sharing expertise and exhibitions; researching their collections; training staff; and networking.	Member States should, as far as possible, seek to facilitate the mobility of museum professionals.
3) Funding was indicated as the main problem encountered.	Member States should include into their budgets, where possible, specific programmes to promote the mobility of museum professionals, and the exchange of expertise.
4) Currently the benefits from the sharing of expertise are communicated through conferences, publications etc. organised by the participating institutions.	When a managed platform (website) is identified, Member States should disseminate the information regarding mobility programmes with European

	initiatives.
Conclusions	Recommendations for Museums
1) Museums are actively engaged in various forms of mobility of their staff for the purpose of sharing expertise and exhibitions; researching their collections; training staff; and networking.	Museums should make every effort to maintain their activities of mobility of their professional staff as they plan their future programmes of research and exhibitions.
2) The potential to link up with the Long Term Loans sub-group was identified.	When planning long term loans, either domestically or internationally, Museums should consider how an exchange of expertise might be facilitated to the potential benefit of both the Borrower and the Lender.
3) Existing professional networks actively create forums for networking, sharing of expertise and exchange of best practise.	Museums should actively encourage their professional staff to participate in their relevant networks to promote the exchange of best practise and sharing of experience and knowledge.

