

Creative industries and product development - how can creative industries work with cultural heritage institutions to develop innovative products inspired by cultural heritage?

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Creative industries – specification of activities and areas

The creative industries began to be discussed in the 1990s in Australia and the United Kingdom in connection with the creative economy. This type of economy sees creativity as a driver of innovation, technological change, and a comparative advantage in business development.

The term "creative industries" gradually found its way into the terminology of government, regional, and municipal strategies that sought to regenerate and revitalize areas with declining heavy industry, such as Scotland and Queensland, Australia.

In such areas with developed infrastructure, it made sense to create conditions for the development of creative industries that can create new jobs while demonstrating a high degree of flexibility and independence in the labour market, production, and services. Creative industries also rely on individual creativity, skills, talent, and intellectual property. These are fields ranging from purely non-commercial to commercial, including IT (software development, games, information and communication technologies).

In 2018, in connection with the introduction of the Creative Europe program (2021–2027), the European Union stated that "cultural and creative industries" refers to all industries whose activities are based on cultural values or on artistic and other individual or collective creative expressions. These activities may include the development, creation, production, distribution, and protection of products and services that represent cultural, artistic, or other creative expressions, as well as related functions such as education or management. They will have the potential to generate innovation and jobs, particularly from intellectual property. These sectors include architecture, archives, libraries, and museums, arts and crafts, the audio-visual sector (e.g. cinema, television, video games, and multimedia), tangible and intangible cultural heritage, design (including fashion design), festivals, music, literature, performing arts, books and publishing, radio, and visual arts.¹

COMMHERITOUR project – goals and vision

The aim of the COMMHERITOUR project is to demonstrate the contribution of crafts as cultural heritage from the perspective of economic development and the development of local tourism. At the same time, the project aims to seek inspiration from abroad and introduce new ways of

¹ Creative Europe Programme [online] [citováno 13. 5. 2025].
<https://culture.ec.europa.eu/creative-europe>

marketing craft heritage so that traditional crafts are not simply forgotten and, at the same time, their viability generates sufficient financial resources for the local economy.

Workshop – motivation and initiative for active cooperation

Cultural heritage and cultural and creative industries have long strengthened social cohesion based on historical memory and the wealth that our society continuously cultivates. This leads to secondary effects such as sustainable growth, more resilient and inclusive social cohesion, and increased competitiveness for Europe. At the same time, creative development is promoted through the use of innovative elements, particularly as a result of the enormous development of digitalization (AI, VR, AR), which can, for example, help make cultural heritage sites more attractive to visitors and make them more interesting overall. The aim of the workshop was to encourage participants to actively collaborate with cultural heritage institutions in developing innovative products that can highlight the needs of users, visitors, and the public, based on examples of good practice from the Czech Republic. The workshop was methodologically based on the principles of design thinking.

In this case, design thinking refers to a methodology that focuses primarily on mapping customer needs and understanding customers who are the recipients of innovative solutions.²

The workshop was designed for 25 participants from various professional fields – partners of the COMMHERITOUR project, with a total duration of 2 hours.

Description of workshop implementation

The aim of the workshop was to encourage participants' inner creativity and to find and discover ways to understand the needs of clients/customers/users. At the same time, it sought to initiate processes that accelerate the emergence of new ideas, topics for collaboration, and visions through creative techniques based on the principle of Design Thinking. The overall framework of the workshop was the theme of innovative products that can be created through collaboration between creative industries and cultural heritage institutions.

The basic thematic starting point of the workshop was also a reflection on what craftsmanship can influence:

- can directly influence the learning process,
- is important for skill development,
- leads to the acquisition of new knowledge,
- develops creative thinking,
- strengthens the competencies of individuals and communities.

During the workshop, participants also addressed the following aspects that accompany the creation of innovative products in the creative industries, such as:

² <https://online.hbs.edu/blog/post/what-is-design-thinking> [citováno 13. 5. 2025]

- current innovation trends applicable in creative industries and cultural heritage institutions
- mapping the needs of customers/clients/users of cultural heritage institutions,
- experiences of cultural heritage institution staff with new products,
- barriers and other obstacles that may affect creative collaboration,
- seeking new opportunities for collaboration between CCIs and cultural heritage institutions.

Participants were informed that innovative processes in the creative industries bring with them:

- certain and sometimes unexpected challenges,
- committed involvement, which involves close cooperation between the creative professional, the cultural heritage institution, and their clients/customers,
- the development of a unique solution that takes into account the needs of real clients/customers/users,
- a certain authenticity of the entire innovative process, including its outcome,
- and, of course, the required innovative solution that will offer, for example, a better experience for visitors to cultural heritage institutions.

The workshop also worked with examples of good practice from cultural heritage institutions in the Czech Republic, which led to inspiration and consideration of whether some of these examples could also work in the countries of the project partners. These included, for example, the use of augmented reality in guided tours of cultural institutions, the visualization of the manufacturing processes of old machines in museums through multimedia, and the development of haptic skills in adults and children using modern additive technologies (3D printing).

The workshop also led to the development of interdisciplinary teamwork through four group activities. Participants usually had 10–20 minutes to complete them:

- Present inspiring innovative projects (both successful and unsuccessful) that you know from the field of cultural and creative industries and cultural heritage. List 3–5 key points that were likely important to the project and influenced it in some way.
- Try to present your ideal visions (personal/visions of the organization where you work) in the field of innovation and cultural heritage in CCI and explain them.
- Are we aware of the problems and obstacles around us? Do we know how they limit our visions, goals, and plans? Let's try to identify them through brainstorming.
- Choose one of the visions, add the barriers to it, and propose the best possible solution. Don't limit yourself, think smart and creatively. Work on it with your team in the form of a mind map.

Workshop summary

The workshop, as an accelerator of new ideas, provided participants with several interesting principles and techniques that they can use for their future teamwork and for developing innovative ideas in cultural heritage institutions.

The workshop stimulated participants' inner creativity and worked with their experiences, ideas, and visions, helping to develop some interesting topics, such as digitization and scientific research into crafts—artistic blacksmithing, for example—or innovations in popularizing craft products in local markets.

