

Toolkit for Co-Creation of Cultural Heritage Databank

Cultural heritage databank is a valuable resource for conservation work, community work, art, education, tourism activities and many other purposes.

Local heritage cannot be found from archives. It is in possession of people, saved in their memories, photo albums, houses, and in the landscape. It can be traced and mapped with interviews, interpretive walks, home visits and exploring home archives. This process requires cooperation between lay people and experts, and can at its best lead to continuous

dialogue of local values, enhance cultural identity and sense of belonging.

When data is collected in a joint process with the local community, the intangible values and local perceptions of heritage can be mapped and saved, and acknowledged equally with authorized heritage values set in listings, legislation and land use planning documents. Together these parallel approaches create a holistic view to cultural landscape and its shared values.

1. Framing

Framing the research is essential for keeping in track in the middle of the information coming in from different sources and for finding the right pieces when processing the data later.

Framing can be done by asking the basic questions:

- What do we want to know?
Is it about a place, a custom, an event or an era?
- Why do we want to know?
For conservation, for an exhibition, publication, guided tour, art?

When you have answers to these questions, you can create your set of questions to be asked from all of your informants or other sources.



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2. Collecting data

Data set can be divided in four blocks: Narratives, Maps, Photos, Location

Use of narratives as an empowering element

The method for collecting narratives, storytelling, is known to be an empowering tool. It builds trust and connection between people, but also connection between people and places. When several generations are involved, storytelling can reveal some unexpected nodes in the landscape, around which mundane life has anchored with different meanings.

Storytelling has multiple values. It is a process, which brings people together to learn from each other about their cultural landscape and heritage. Recorded narratives from storytelling events can be used to connect the stories into the landscape on a map, and when published, as triggers for further discussions and enlarged social learning.



NARRATIVES

**Who would know about this?
Who would remember it?**

Find people and ask questions. Typically, the amount of respondents increases along the way, when informants suggest more people to be interviewed.



PHOTOS

Search from digital and museum archives

Ask from people about home albums when interviewing them



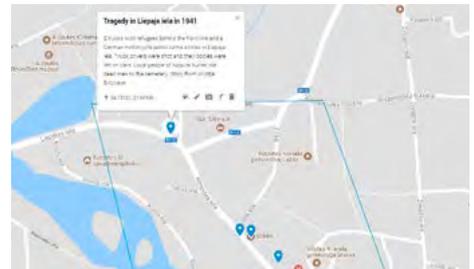
MAPS

Search for historic maps from museums and digital archives.

Find modern map from internet or municipality office.

Ask informants to draw mental maps, reflecting their memories with the environment and perceived landscape.

Maps are needed for attaching the narratives and photos on a place. Comparison of maps from different decades or centuries opens up the historic layers of the landscape and visualizes the changes in it.



LOCATION

Location is needed for attaching information on a map.

Ask your informants to show location of their narratives and photos.

Try to locate archival photos. You can ask assistance from your informants or the local community.

Location, or coordinates, enable replacing of the data on a different maps or images. They also enable to perceive the current landscape from the same location where the narrative emerged or a photo was taken earlier.



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3. Saving data

Actual data bank begins to form, when all data collected from different sources is saved in one place. Data should be saved systematically, in order to increase or process it later.

Using PGIS for saving and sharing data

PGIS, participative geographic information system, is a useful tool for sharing and co-creating place-based data. It is also a tool for spatialization and temporalizing our knowledge about the particular places in which we live.

When saving data to cultural heritage databank, digital and open medium would greatly enhance the further use of this collection. Therefore PGIS applications should be considered.

In Aizpute workshop we used Google Drive and Google Maps for saving and sharing data collection.

Databank can be used in community workshops, educational events, for research, for conservation or as a source for creative work or tourism. Anyone with access to internet can be invited to view or to collaborate the collection. Narratives and photos are placed on a map as points or areas, and they can be edited or increased when more knowledge is gained from the community or from archives or researchers.

This kind of socio-cultural PGIS can also be used for community planning, when local values need to be identified and mapped.

WHAT TO SAVE?

NARRATIVES	PHOTOS	MAPS	LOCATION
List of informants	Photos labelled by location and source	Maps labelled by source	Placed on a map
Recordings	(also date and photographer for photos taken during the running project)	Maps used for field work with remarks labelled by working group members	Labelled by source (informant, archive, field notes etc.)
	Publication rights		



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4. Processing data

Big amount of data collected in various formats and from various sources needs to be structured and contextualized in order to reflect it to the surrounding society at the time when memories were born, photos were taken and maps were drawn.

A starting point can be a place; everything connected to one place or area is put together and arranged in a timeline. Some data can be connected to several places.

This arrangement creates pinpoints. If material is digital or digitalized, it can be presented on a

digital GIS platform, like Google Maps, connected to a location. Material can be photos, transcribed interviews or parts of them, recorded interviews (audio or video), mental or other maps, links to other digital sources like archives or web pages or social media platforms.

For contextualizing data in Aizpute we applied a method for urban heritage analysis called DIVE.

In DIVE data is structured in temporal layers. DIVE comes from describe, interpret, value, enable. In Aizpute the data was structured as description, interpretation, field notes and archived material.



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DIVE Aizpute, Latvia LiviHeri storytelling workshop / (D) description (I) interpretation (V) valuing (E) enabling

Timeline	(D) Description of the event/memory/photo Built environment, landscape, town life, events	(I) Society context of the event	(I) Interpretation researcher's notes	Other notes	Photos or other material
1930 and earlier	<p>Jew community & synagoga</p> <p>Johanna Bergers's bicycle & sewing machine shop *1</p> <p>Cultural center in Atmodas 7</p> <p>Horse Born in the yard of Atmodas 5</p> <p>Before the 1st WW Valija Fūrmane's uncle had household goods shop at Lielā street 9</p>	<p>Multicultural</p> <p>First independency</p> <p>Nationalization - after this reform uncle's shop had been taken away from him</p>	<p>Warm childhood memories about spending time at uncle's shop</p>	<p>*1 Narratives about the Jews of Aizpute</p> <p>Household goods shop at Lielā street 9</p>	<p>Detail from a German map from 1843</p> 
WWII	<p>Tragedy in Liepaja street</p> <p>Cultural center in Synagoga</p> <p>Valija Fūrmane had witnessed WWII crimes against jews and gypsies</p> <p>Post office in Atmodas 9 (Mirdza Birzniece)</p>	<p>German time</p> <p>Dorman house in Serde</p> <p>Society sees the cruelty but can't do anything</p>	<p>Locals buried the victims of Liepaja street</p> <p>Strong community</p> <p>Despite the fact that Valija knew german soldier's crimes as a child, she had very good relationship with them</p>	<p>Narrative, recorded</p> <p>Town center around Atmodas 9</p>	<p>Recorded interview Valija Fūrmane</p> <p>Memory map by Mirdza Birzniece</p> 
Soviet time	<p>Atmodas 9 divided in 6 apartments</p> <p>Shops downstairs</p> <p>Secret meeting places</p> <p>Valta Strode worked at alcohol shop at Podomju street 9, which had an emergency button to call the police</p> <p>Illegal business (alcohol sale) at Podomju street 9</p> <p>No running water at the house</p>	<p>Visible society and hidden society</p> <p>Valta had help from police: protection, running water -> police had chance to get alcohol. "Blats" = "under the counter/favouring the customers"</p>	<p>Perceived landscape varied from mapped landscape collectively</p> <p>Despite living in the crowded conditions, people cooperate to deal with everyday challenges</p>	<p>Information based on narratives. No archival sources available</p> <p>Sport equipment shop</p> <p>Furniture shop</p> <p>Bike & motorbike shop</p> <p>Gun shop</p> <p>Consumer association office</p> <p>Carpenter's office</p> <p>Alcohol shop & storage (also in modern time?)</p>	<p>Soviet era map</p> <p>Recorded interview Valta Strode</p> 
Modern time	<p>Waterpipe 1990's</p> <p>Shop in other end</p> <p>Veranda built 1993 & demolished 2015</p> <p>In all interviews informants know about Serde and their activities.</p>	<p>Second independency 1991</p> <p>Almost none of the informants has been at the events at Serde, but they still know about them.</p>	<p>Restoration period started</p> <p>Serdes activities are very noticeable.</p>	<p>Town center around old Herzberg house</p> <p>Transfer point for empty glass bottles</p> <p>Grocery</p> <p>Clothing store</p>	<p>Municipality officer's photo archive</p> <p>Photos of the persons who are somehow connected with Atmodas 9</p> <p>Recorded interviews (audio files)</p>



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5. Databank as resource

Cultural heritage consists of the resources inherited from the past in all forms and aspects - tangible, intangible and digital (born digital and digitized), including monuments, sites, landscapes, skills, practices, knowledge and expressions of human creativity, as well as collections conserved and managed by public and private bodies such as museums, libraries and archives. It originates from the interaction between people and places through time and it is constantly evolving. These resources are of great value to society from a cultural, environmental, social and economic point of view and thus their sustainable management constitutes a strategic choice for the 21st century. (CoE 2014)



Cultural heritage databank is a valuable resource for local conservation work, community work, art, education, tourism activities and many other purposes.

In conservation work sufficient knowledge regarding the temporal layers and motives behind the visible changes enables holistic understanding of heritage and its core values. This knowledge base enhances also fostering and improving the human capital of the local community regarding their cultural heritage and its management. Especially built heritage is a resource and living lab of sustainable construction, providing concrete models, methods, materials and scaling.

Databank can inspire artists and creative workers to modern expressions and interpretations of heritage. Art can also offer methods for cultural heritage education.

Educational materials and art can be modified for tourism, as well as conservation projects. Conservation projects highlight the processual nature of heritage; it is evolving in time in interaction between people and places, as have many buildings, which have sustained for centuries. In a historic town there is always some ongoing conservation work. Presenting conservation sites and processes, instead of finalized conservation work, the human capital expressed in craftsmen skills, conservation management and local commitment to heritage can be turned into the most authentic tourist attraction.

Continuous co-creation of cultural heritage databank with contribution possibilities for all community members can greatly enhance cultural identity and sense of belonging.



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References

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