

Post Dublin

The Italian group has given a positive evaluation of the Dublin seminar and thanks Jenny and colleagues very much for their efforts.

A few remarks to reflect all together on what could be improved for the next sessions:

- We found the session in the galleries, (e.g. on day 1 the interpretation of objects reflecting on learning styles) very useful. However, we regret not having had more time to reflect on what had been done, for instance: why had certain objects been selected for the exercise instead of others?, or, during the workshop in day 2, what was the purpose of what we were doing?, why were we using clay instead of other materials? What was the meaning of it all? And also missed the fact that this exercise of exploring galleries, studying objects, replicating one of them didn't lead to a story telling exercise.

Suggestion: (could we maybe involve a professional storyteller in one of the next seminars, e.g. Turin to learn how to construct a story, if we have to facilitate others in doing so?)

- In other words, we missed reflection on the sense of our actions, maybe we are too verbal-reflective in our learning style. Don't want to project it onto others, but if other feel that way too.

Suggestion: why don't we appoint a few people as "critical friends", with the task of always raising questions on the why we are doing things and what we are aiming at?

- Someone missed background information on museums and museum policy in Ireland and also about intercultural issues (migration, etc.). Some of these things came through piecemeal, maybe it would be useful to have a more structured presentation on these issues. In other learning partnership we made this a sort of a "must" for each meeting, but given the specific character of this learning partnership, I thought it might not be so necessary. For research purposes, I have researched all countries involved in the project and have a profile for each, which I could circulate (only to Italians, however, as it is in Italian). One could also encourage participants to look at countries' profile on the Council of Europe website: www.culturalpolicies.net

Suggestion: for the upcoming meetings, maybe have 1 or 2 introductory presentations in the Netherlands one dealing with the museum scene, one with migration and how things stand with regard to that.

If you like (and that would save someone the effort) I could make a presentation on the Netherlands (what I think I know about it) and we could check the correctness of the information I have. Maybe it would make the thing more lively – like me being put to a test!

If you like, also I can forward to all participants a document on museums in Ireland (statistical data, interesting) which I have downloaded for myself. One should encourage the idea that learning happens afterwards, in between, etc

- Some of our participants got interested in side-information, aspects they accidentally ran into, e.g. the artists in residence scheme, the use of volunteers, and it might be useful to follow these interests up by encouraging small working groups which can work at a distance also for a short time (e.g. I know there is a lot on volunteers in the UK, I remember a book

on the “Volunteers in heritage organisations”, with examples of contracts to issue and guidelines to work with them.

Suggestion: maybe we can start listing these subjects and during the next meetings allow time for a “market of ideas” on these same subjects. Learning fostered by serendipity, could one say so ... so not only the planned learning outcomes! And also encourage e-mail exchange of information

To sum up:

- In the NL: 1 or 2 presentations on the museum scene and migration, diverse communities, national policies to encourage integration to set the backdrop to our seminar
- Imagine IC excels in methodology and is mainly working with intangible heritage, stories, etc. Many of our participants work with objects and, as Liane was pointing out, could be taken aback if they can't make a direct connection to their work. So, apart from the examples Imagine IC could offer (the table for encouraging story telling and Rotterdam), could we maybe think of offering the group a visit to the Troopen museum (and meeting a curator or educator, and discussing presentation and interpretation there) and Anne Franke's house and discussing their programmes to encourage intercultural dialogue and maybe other examples, where the Dutch colleagues simply arrange the meeting and then the group goes, maybe split in two. I'll let you choose the case studies ... (and what about the Wereldmuseum in Rotterdam).
- Could we maybe devote the first half day to resuming from the previous seminar... summing up how it went, the suggestions (also coming from the evaluation forms), questions that were left unanswered .. Some people will be new (UK and NL), so we will have a couple of new presentations.. some people missed not knowing enough about others professionally, Could we think maybe of another quick exercise in couples, like introducing each other professionally: what is your job? what do you do? One thing you like, one you don't for a total of 1 minute presentation each.
- We really have to explore how expectations have been met and how people have more focussed learning objectives after the first meeting. I can chair that first session in the NL, maybe with a flip chart.

I'll be thankful for your comments.

MS

24 March 2006