

Cultural Heritage & Museums Audiovisual - Film, TV & Radio Greece Cultural Synergies

100 buildings/100 stories connects historic buildings with citizens

100 buildings/100 stories is an initiative in Greece created for the development of a digital preservation management and registration system of historic buildings.

The objective of this initiative is to bridge the communicative gap between the tangible and intangible heritage of a city by applying innovative off-the-shelf digital heritage services among its citizens and stakeholders. The challenge is to make citizens aware about the vulnerability of their built heritage and encourage them to digitally share their personal stories (crowd-sharing) related to buildings. This way, an intangible part of the city's cultural heritage can be preserved and creatively re-used to showcase the collective memory of the city, aligned with its architectural heritage.

Starting with the development of a digital preservation management and registration system (HER.M.eS.) in the form of a collection portal of the historic buildings of Hermoupolis, the project now aims towards its sustainability, integrating it into a more accessible tool that can also incorporate intangible qualities. Citizens, as ambassadors of this initiative, could provide the qualitative dimension needed: the stories. Narrating, sharing, and re-creating stories of the city can raise a feeling of belonging among citizens and raise awareness about their fragile heritage. In addition, by acknowledging their heritage and feeling that they all belong in that city, they become able to shape their own opinion for its conservation management plan in the future.

Towards this idea, started the initiative "100 buildings/100 stories"; each story contributed by citizens relates to a building. Once the story is registered and related to a building, the building gets a QR sign. The sign directs users to a responsive online page via their mobile phones that presents the story and the building through textual and audio-visual information.

In order to start sharing and uploading stories from the citizens, the project created an online form. The easily accessible form requests the user to: either share a story, propose a building of

the city that is worth mentioning at the list of the 100 buildings, or both. The form also provides data space to upload photos or videos. Local schools were also involved and held formal and informal meetings and seminars with their teachers. To better communicate the methodology, the project developed an online toolkit for educators with guidance and basic instructions to search for stories and uniformly create videos, audios or podcasts, etc., together with their students.

To boost the visibility of the project, a social event in the form of cultural festival was hosted. The event was about education and youth and their contribution to the research and dissemination of local and European cultural heritage. 10 relevant actions organized by local cultural institutions, public schools, and the local University under the umbrella of the previous “European Year of Cultural Heritage” acted as paradigms for the rest of the citizens to imitate and follow in order to enhance the local cultural heritage.

In this project’s context, stories do not need to be “old” or only refer to the past. Buildings can marvelously and creatively incorporate the present and the past, the modern and the classic.

Find more about the project here