

RISING TO THE CHALLENGE

DIGITAL INNOVATION
IN MUSEUMS

CALL FOR PAPERS



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International symposium Rising to the challenge – digital innovation in museums

April 26 - 28, 2018, Lausanne, Switzerland

There is no contesting the fact that digital technology has become increasingly important in the museum sector. As we look ahead to Lausanne's new PLATEFORME 10 museum district – which will bring together the **mcb-a**, Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts (Cantonal Museum of Fine Art), the **Musée de l'Elysée** (photography museum) and the **mudac** - Museum of Contemporary Design and Applied Arts – we are organizing an international symposium to examine the role and prospects of digital innovation in museums, both exploring recent experience and looking to the future.

The symposium is part of an ongoing process of exploring how the three museums can open up beyond their physical borders to offer an original and innovative visitor experience. It is in keeping with the museum district's geographical location in an area driven by innovation and research, and follows on from reflections on architecture that resulted in two award-winning firms being selected to design the district: Barcelona-based Barozzi Veiga for the Musée des Beaux-Arts and Lisbon-based Aires Mateus for mudac and the Musée de l'Elysée.

There are several reasons why digital technology is so important – even necessary. They can be broken down into three categories, which correspond to the three core missions of a museum as defined by the International Council of Museums: to preserve, exhibit and pass on our heritage.

While bringing museums and digital developers together can increase opportunities to pass on our heritage to the general public as well as enhance research, such a partnership is also a way of increasing the standing of a city or region – an aspect that should not be overlooked.

By taking part in the digital innovation hosted by PLATEFORME 10 in Lausanne, you will in fact be contributing to the entire city's development.

At the symposium, we will turn our gaze to the future, assessing all the implications of digital innovation in order to determine the roles it can play within each of the three museums.

We welcome proposals for contributions that may lead to a better understanding and appreciation of digital innovation in museums.

The presentations will take place over three half-day sessions on 27 and 28 April 2018

Some suggested topics:

Collections:

The broad digitization of collections has become a valuable support for the work of museums, making inventory control easier and playing a crucial role in preservation. It can also serve as the cornerstone for a wide range of initiatives, such as putting collections online and enhancing cooperation between museums. The main advantage of sharing collections in this way is that it makes it easier to locate works and promote exchange between museums.

- How does one draw up a good digital strategy for tomorrow's museums
- What innovations and developments can be made using digital tools, and how should that change be managed?
- How can we use digitization to promote cultural heritage in a way that takes into account the wide variety of collections?
- How can we make databases accessible to different audiences and integrate this into a content strategy?
- How can we build bridges between digital collections, social media and potential collaborative content creation?
- How can digital technologies be used to exhibit "invisible" content, i.e. pieces that are impossible to exhibit or not suited to the current installation?

Exhibitions:

Exhibitions are the main point of contact between a museum and the public. It is through exhibitions that museums pass on their tangible and intangible heritage to the rest of humanity, using design that increasingly incorporates new technologies. These technologies may include augmented reality if the presence of objects or documents alone is not enough, or they may give designers the chance to come up with original installations that function almost as museum pieces in and of themselves.

- What role should digital technology play in exhibitions, and how should these new means of interaction be integrated?
- Can an exhibition be developed specifically for the web? If so, in what format and for what type of content?
- Can digital technology stand in for physical museum pieces?
- How can digital technology be used to create a link between permanent and temporary exhibitions?
- How can we create a link between exhibitions and visitors' everyday lives?
- Are new visitor behaviors influencing how exhibitions are designed?

Passing on heritage:

Audio guides (i.e., headsets that provide commentary in lieu of a conventional museum guide) have started to be replaced by apps and tablets. Websites are also an increasingly popular tool for digital mediation. In addition to practical information such as entrance fees and opening hours, websites can make use of digital technologies to offer a whole series of activities related to the museum's collections and exhibitions. Digital mediation comprises various forms of interaction and can help build a relationship with visitors and allow them to appropriate their experience. It may sometimes even extend to "participatory museology". While it is no substitute for the direct museum experience, mediation through digital technologies can turn museum-going into a virtual experience.

- How can we use digital tools to strategically position museums?
- What type of emerging and innovative projects could be used?
- How can new technologies be used to seek out new audiences?
- How can we bring the museum and its public closer together by creating a participatory experience?
- How can we engage visitors through an active museum experience?
- How can museums be used to observe and experiment with digital innovation?
- How can we ensure there is room for failure in digital research within museums?
- How can we promote democratization and accessibility?
- How can digital mediation be integrated into the city's transformation and become a political asset?
- How can we promote the virtual experience without excluding the physical experience?
- How might the public be called upon to evaluate digital projects?
- Can prototyping play a role in digital mediation?

Submission, informations

We invite museum professionals and researchers looking at the role of digital innovation in museums to submit proposals to the organizers by email. Proposals should include a one-to three-page summary accompanied by case-study references and a bibliography and include the applicant's name, address, institution and CV.

Deadline: November 30, 2017

Submission per email only: celine.chable@vd.ch

Contributions may be submitted in English or French. Travel and accommodation expenses will be partially or fully reimbursed depending on the donations received from sponsors. We plan to publish the proceedings of the symposium.

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For more information on the symposium and research project, please visit our website:
<http://www.plateforme10.ch/en>