



## **Intellectual Output 2**

Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union



Co-funded by the European Union. The views and opinions expressed are, however, those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union, the European Commission or the Agency for International Programs for Youth. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

# Contents

IO2: Sensory Journey

Case Studies

Case Study 1: mu-zee-um

Case Study 2: Vabamu

Case Study 3: Berlin Wall Foundation

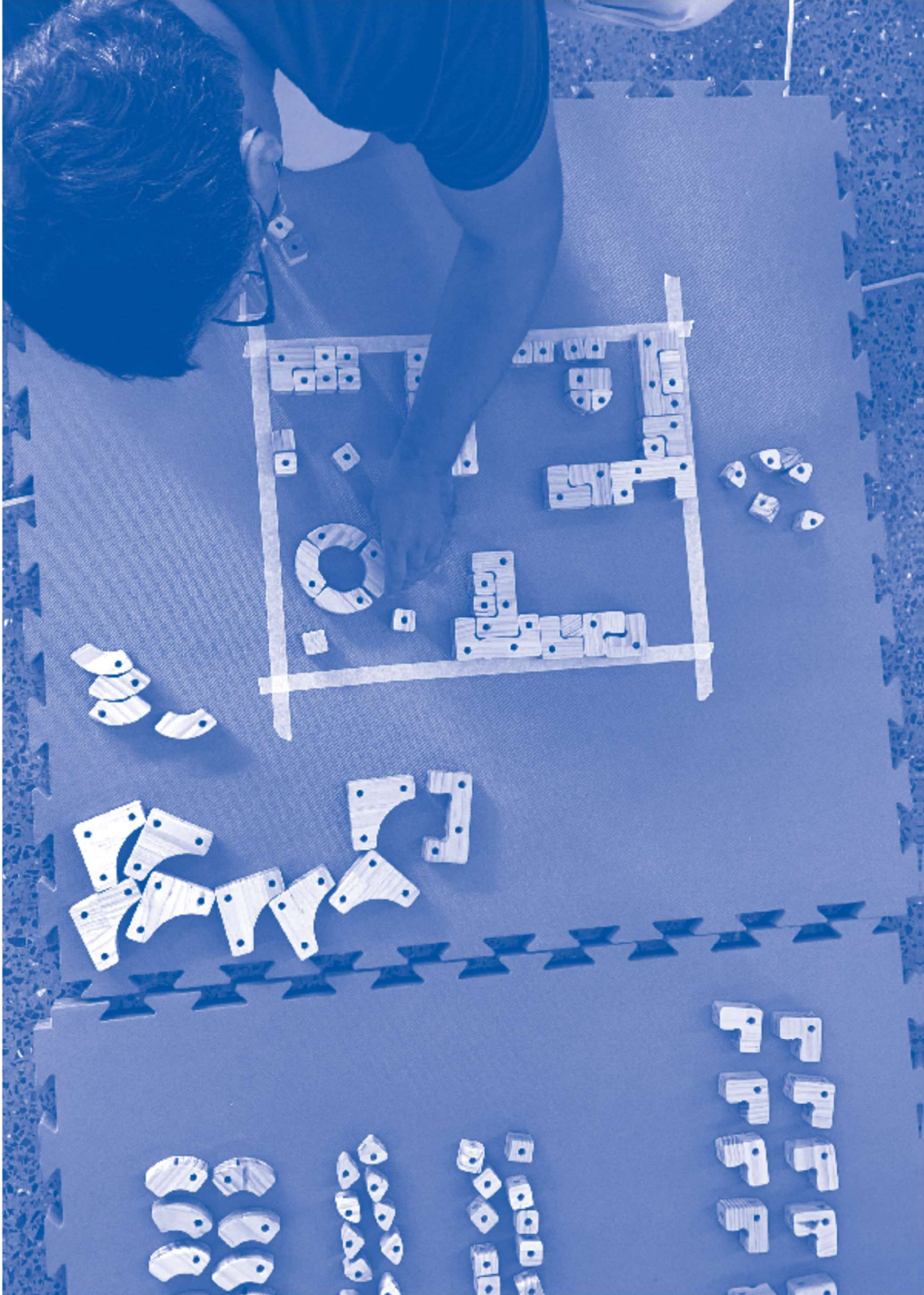
Case Study 4: creACTive

Case Study 5: Calouste Gulbenkian Museum

Case Study 6: MUSAC

IO 2

## Sensory Journey



A visit to a museum or a historical site is always a multilayered journey that is sensory, aesthetic, and social. Exhibitions trigger our senses in such a way that we gather impressions and receive a wealth of information. The more sensorial routes are triggered, the more we can produce an impact on our audiences' emotions and intellect.

We designed the Sensory Journey tool to help museum or historical site educators, youth workers, and mediators to develop educational activities for young people with learning difficulties and intellectual disabilities (aged 13-30 years).

## Sensory Journey

### **What is the Sensory Journey?**

The Sensory Journey is a methodical approach to enhance our experience in a museum or memorial site using different senses. Educators, youth workers, or mediators can create their own sensory tools so that young people with learning difficulties and intellectual disabilities can explore a museum or memorial site and gain access to the works, exhibited objects or topics by seeing, hearing, touching, tasting and smelling. In addition, we can also tap into our "sixth sense" (also referred to as proprioception), or the awareness of our bodies position and movement. The Sensory Journey can be adapted to different kinds of museums and memorial sites.

A sensory experience is not limited to sight and sound. Multiple sensory experiences are more powerful and can be rewarded by greater levels of visitor engagement. With this approach, young people with learning disabilities not only experience but also acquire knowledge about an exhibition.

Everyday objects that may or may not be related to the exhibitions can be used. Thus, we propose creating a toolkit (e.g. a basket or a cart with multiple drawers that slide out) containing different items such as:

- Original artifacts, whenever possible, and taking into consideration their conservation.

- Reproduction of an object that is part of the exhibition, as a way to open up showcases.
- Architectural scale models that can be used as visual or tactile tools.
- Objects that suggest the themes of an exhibition to help explain rather abstract terms.
- Samples of materials that suggest how something is made, or what it is made up of.
- Photographs, clippings, or pictograms and emotion cards that suggest places, events, or emotions.
- Audio files or music.
- Video files or footage.
- Materials with strong scents.

### **What are the objectives of the Sensory Journey?**

**For museum or memorial site staff, youth workers, educators, and mediators:**

- To bring works, exhibited objects or topics closer to visitors.
- To pay more attention to specific target groups and learn about their needs.
- To offer an experience-oriented focus.
- To offer new methodical approaches, especially regarding visitors who require easy-to-understand language.
- To simplify complex topics regarding history or art and to offer a “low-threshold approach”.
- To prompt a conversation about history or art.

**For the target group:**

- To experience a new approach to visiting a museum or memorial site in a fresh, inclusive way using attractive elements, and to acquire general knowledge in an engaging manner.
- To provide access to art and history by offering diverse approaches.
- To enable participation in cultural life and the culture of remembrance, to make the experience of being in a museum or memorial site (often for the first time) pleasant and to break down prejudices, barriers or preexisting fears regarding contact.
- To create and satisfy curiosity.
- To create a safe space and encourage the target group to appropriate the topics of an exhibition.
- To encourage youngsters to explore and share their thoughts about a work of art or a historical topic.
- To promote critical thinking and active observation.
- To gain an awareness of, and to express one's own needs, interests, and feelings.
- To learn through fun activities.
- To stimulate the senses through different works of art and to encourage moments of artistic expression.
- To activate and start conversations about art and history and its meaning for today's society and the life of the young participants.
- To cultivate empathy in young people by making connections between the present and the past.

## **What steps do I need to create and implement a Sensory Journey?**

The first step is to identify the potential for using a sensory approach within the museum or memorial site. Are there any sensory elements in the exhibition or methods already used in educational formats? What are the suitable objects, works of art, and topics we can access via sensory tools? What are the learning objectives?

The second step is to develop a set of sensory tools regarding the specific objects, works of art, and topics, and the conditions of our museums or memorial sites, as well as the specific needs of our target group. In this regard, it is crucial to be in contact with the target group, and to involve youngsters, teachers, or social workers working with the target group in the process of developing, testing, and adjusting the Sensory Journey.

The third step affects the educators, youth workers, or mediators who have to determine which tools from the tool set are suitable for each group during each Sensory Journey.

The last step includes a conversation with the teachers before the activity, preparing the space, tools, and briefing the people involved. Depending on the group, the educators, youth workers, or mediators should decide which and how many tools are used to avoid an information overload. The dynamics of the presentation should be varied between explanations and supporting material (e.g. audios) to help maintain the concentration of the group.

The Sensory Journey can either be inserted, as a methodical approach, into a guided tour or workshops (e.g. in a pre-existing educational format targeting youngsters with learning disabilities) or it can be carried out as a separate activity following an exhibition tour. In the first case, sensory tools are used during the guided tour to provide access to the presented objects, artworks, or topics. In the latter case, the activity can start with an ice-breaker followed by a brief visit to the exhibition, the Sensory Journey in the form of a workshop and a final reflection.

Regarding the duration of the Sensory Journey, we recommend 90 to 120 minutes. It is important to stay in touch with the needs of the group, allowing for



breaks in between. If the group starts to show a lack of motivation or attention, the activity may be brought to a close.

### **Group size**

A maximum of 15 participants and two educators are recommended to ensure proper attention is provided to each participant. The group can be broken down into two smaller groups.

### **What are the competences required for educators, youth workers, and mediators in the creation and implementation of their own Sensory Journey?**

Those who wish to develop and perform their own Sensory Journey must possess the following competences:

- Sensibility and openness to others' emotions, and proven experience of handling diverse groups of youngsters with learning disabilities.
- The ability to create a safe environment so that youngsters with learning disabilities can feel welcome and supported.
- Knowing how to apply history or art as a method for empowering youngsters and encouraging them to participate in cultural life.
- The ability to communicate and think creatively.
- Flexibility and adaptability to the needs of the participants.
- Suitable knowledge of easy-to-understand language.
- Good verbal and non-verbal communication skills, including empathy and understanding of the needs of young people with or without learning disabilities.
- The capacity to adapt their communication skills to the level of the group, taking into consideration their learning abilities.

- The ability to listen actively (avoiding stereotypes and prejudices) and to stimulate discussion, to be used as a platform and a “safe place” to allow youngsters to be heard and give their opinions.
- The ability to inspire support and mutual understanding within the group of participants.

# Case Studies

# Case Study 1. mu-zee-um

**Type of museum:** art museum, history museum

## How did we implement the Sensory Journey?

The Sensory Journey was implemented at Mu.ZEE, a museum specializing in Belgian art from the 1830s onwards. Mu.ZEE's temporary exhibitions change regularly, and consequently, it is important to select the works of art before the activity and prepare the materials as a presentable, portable unit. It is also necessary to have prior information about the group such as: age and cognitive level, number of participants, and special needs.

For this activity, the participants were youngsters aged between 18 and 25 years old, including persons with intellectual disabilities and autism spectrum disorder (ASD). They were divided into four groups of 8-11 youngsters, and each group worked on a different exhibition. The first exhibition was *Léonard Pongo – Primordial Earth*. This was a photography/video exhibition on the work of the Congolese artist Léonard Pongo, who seeks other ways of giving form to the superhuman force of the Earth. His images of the Congolese landscape allow nature to speak, without any attempt to offer any interpretations. The second exhibition was of the Mu.ZEE collection, which spans different periods and styles, but with Belgium as its common denominator. Each group worked on approximately five artworks, and their pace and interests were taken into consideration. The structure of the activity is as follows:

At the start of the activity, everyone stands in a circle: we can hear and see everyone. We introduce ourselves. We situate ourselves in the space: where are we, how does this space feel, how does this space sound? This is also a moment to remind the group of the museum regulations.

During the activity, it is recommended that participants sit down near the work of art.

After the activity, there should be some time allowed for a short evaluation by the participants. This can be done by sitting down next to the last work viewed, and answering the following questions related to the senses and emotions.

## Developed Tools

The groups worked on specific works of art that were chosen by the educators based on the possible interests of the youngsters, the adaptability of the tools to the works of art, or the theme of the activity. For example, youngsters can easily relate to multimedia works, as they come from a digital generation.

Each work was associated with a specific activity that may involve one or more senses.

For example:

1. Léonard Pongo  
*Untitled, 2021*  
Video 8'19"

The activity consisted of viewing and listening to a video work and experimenting with shadows.

- To facilitate the participation of people who cannot cope well with loud stimuli, we turned down the audio and provided headphones.
- The participants were given white cardboard cut-outs with recognizable shapes (fish, clouds, birds), which they used to move between the canvas and the projection. We observed the shadows created by the cut-outs, and the effect it produced on the artwork: does it change the meaning of the artwork?
- Hands danced to sounds and music, in the light of the projection. Again, the shadows play with the artwork.



Viewing of Léonard Pongo's work before the activity. © mu-zee-um vzw



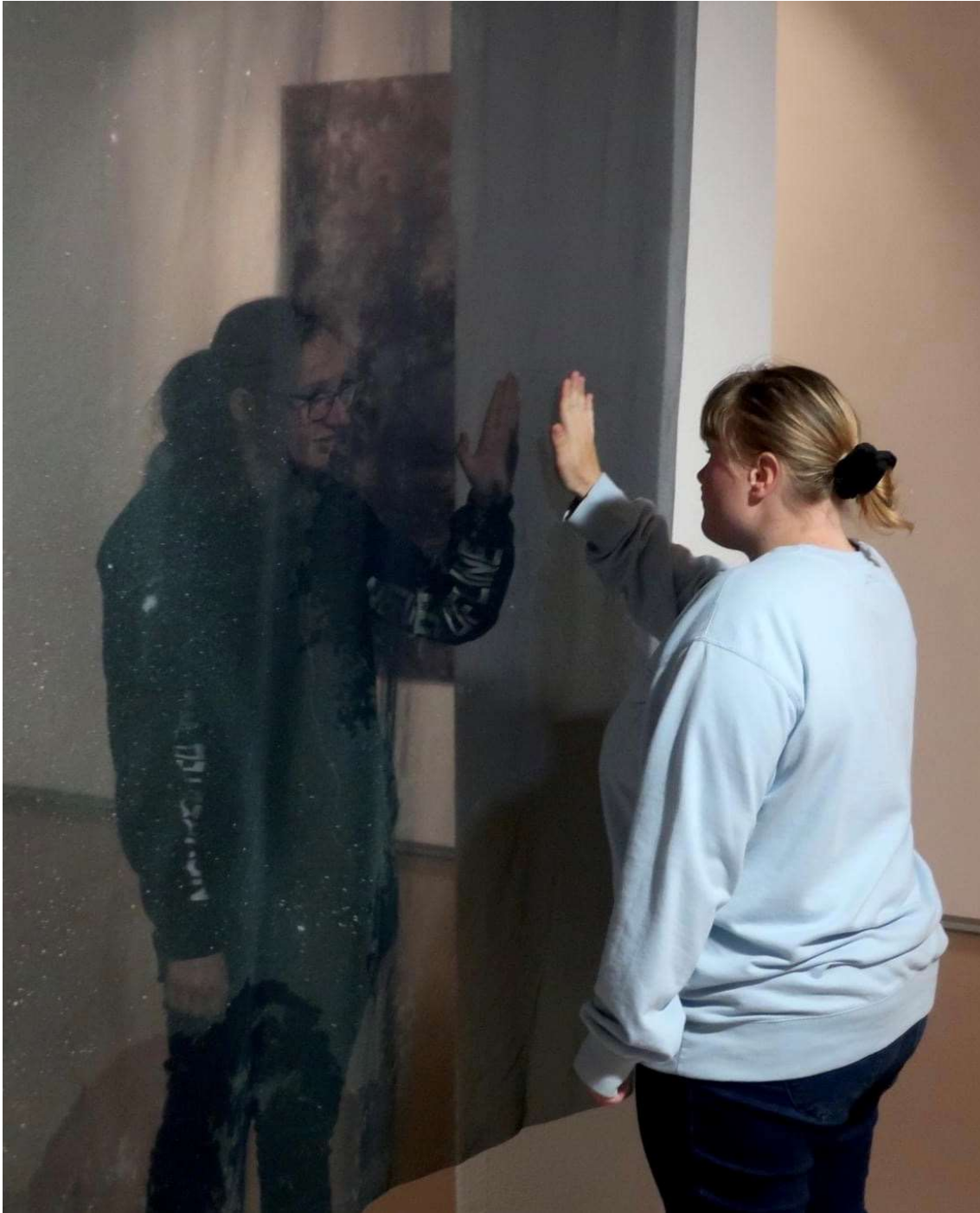
Cut-out shapes cast shadows on a video projection on the floor, allowing the participants to become a part of the artwork. © mu-zee-um vzw

## 2. Léonard Pongo

*Untitled, 2022*  
UV printing on CS sailcloth

Different activities were carried out on either side of canvases.

- We stood on opposite sides of the canvases and moved to the music; first with one person on each side, then several people.
- We mirrored each other's movements on each side of the canvas: What is the effect of the canvas on our movements? Do our movements complement the artwork?
- We discussed the pictures printed on different materials: is this art or not? What makes it art? How does the photo take on a different meaning because of the material it is printed on?



The participants move on either side of the canvases to the music that accompanies this work of art. They become a mirror of each other. © mu-zee-um vzw

Children and youngsters with autism often have great difficulty with imitation<sup>1</sup>. Researchers have found that they need to develop some imitation skills before they can acquire joint attention (the shared focus of two individuals on an

---

<sup>1</sup> INGERSOLL, B. (2008). *The Social Role of Imitation in Autism: Implications for the Treatment of Imitation Deficits*. *Infants & Young Children*, 21(2), 107–119.



object). As such, imitation is an important focus of intervention for children and youngsters with autism, and helps them improve their overall social abilities.

3. Marie-Jo Lafontaine  
*Belle jeunesse*, 1998  
Color photographs on aluminum

For this artwork, we used emotion cards to illustrate the feelings of the subjects portrayed:

- What emotion does this portrait express? Can you make such a face yourself?
- How does the background color affect the portrait?



We used emotion cards to illustrate the feelings of the subjects portrayed. © mu-zee-um vzw

4. Rik Wouters  
*Women at the window*, 1915  
Oil on canvas

We used color cards to discover different shades and followed these instructions:

- Choose the color that matches the subject's face.
- Look at each other's faces. What colors do you see? What color is in the shadow/in the light?



We used color cards to discover the colors in a portrait. © mu-zee-um vzw

5. Léon Spilliaert  
*P.C. Van Hecke en Novine*, 1920  
Pencil, watercolor, gouache, silverpoint and Indian ink on cardboard

Constant Permeke  
*Peasant family with cat*, 1928  
Oil on canvas

The portraits of Permeke and Ensor show rich fabrics such as lace, velvet, rough brown fabrics, feathers, jewelry, etc.

- Participants looked for clothes to match the portraits and touched the different fabrics. How did the artist try to represent the feel of that fabric with paint?

- We sorted through patches of fabric: Which ones matched Permeke's painting, and which matched Spilliaert's? Why?
- Why are they wearing these clothes? What atmosphere do those clothes create?
- If you were to pose for a painting, what would you wear? How would you sit down? Participants either posed on pedestals or sketched portraits with a tablet.



Cloths, hats, and beads help to create a *tableau vivant*, inspired by the portraits in the museum. © mu-zee-um vzw

**How did we include young people with learning disabilities, people working with our target group and museum or memorial site staff in the process of developing the Sensory Journey?**

From the start of the IAM project, volunteers from mu-zee-um and people working with this target group were invited to brainstorm together. In different subgroups, tools were developed and tested with the different target groups: young people with intellectual, visual or hearing disabilities. The participants were then invited to share their experiences so that the Sensory Journey could be adjusted.

# Case Study 2. Vabamu

**Type of museum:** History Museum

## **How did we implement the Sensory Journey?**

We devised an entirely new museum class, focusing on two stories in the museum's permanent exhibition, to keep the lesson as specific as possible. We chose children's stories so that the students could relate to them more – Hansu and Urve, both aged 14.

Based on the two stories we selected, we also started looking for suitable sensory solutions that would help to tell the stories. Objects and visual sources became dominant, and we also added two audio clips and an olfactory item.

We also set a maximum limit on the size of the group – 10 students + educators.

## **Developed Tools**

### **Visual tools**

We used a variety of visual sources. Since the focus of our lesson was Hansu and Urve's stories, we immediately showed the students photos of them, and the photos were left visible to the students until the end of the story.

Both stories were also illustrated by the items in the showcase – Hansu's jacket and Urve's backpack, and the refugee boat in the exhibition room.

Since Hansu was one of the Estonians who was deported to Siberia and Urve was one of those who fled in 1944, we also used a map to illustrate their stories, and the student(s) were able to draw the line from the starting point to the destination, to get an idea of how far they both had to travel.

Hansu's story also included a drawing of a deportation wagon and a sketch of their room in Siberia that he made himself. The exhibition room, which is designed as a wagon, also helped students to relate better to the story.



The exhibition theme room *Inhumanity*, symbolized by the wagon. © Vabamu

We used emotion cards in the museum class, since the two test group students differed drastically in their learning style and expressive skills. The more talkative students (predominantly behavioral and learning difficulties) used the emotion cards at the end of Hansu and Urve's stories to show what Hansu might have felt when he was forced to leave his home and how Urve felt on her escape journey. With autistic children, most of whom did not speak or want to make contact, we used emotion cards only at the end of the lesson, when we asked them what emotions the stories and visit to the museum evoked in them.

Since the museum's rooms are quite dark, we used extra lighting to make the items and the museum educator more visible to the students, and turned off any screens that might have distracted them.



Suitcase with items of Hansu's story and emotion cards. © Vabamu

### **Audio**

We used two audio clips. For Hansu's story, we used the sounds of working in a wood workshop (because Hans worked in a wood workshop while he was in Siberia). For Urve's story, we used a poem that was read in Swedish, so students could get an idea of the language environment Urve found herself in after leaving Estonia, and the language in which she had to continue her studies at school. The poem was read aloud by children living in Sweden, and is about the uniqueness and equality of each person among others. Before telling them what the main message of the poem was, we let the students guess what the poem was about.

### **Scent**

For scents, we used a variety of small sachets and cans/jars. Hansu's story included sachets such as birch leaves, black bread, pine and spruce branches, and dried rosehip berries. The latter did not produce as good a result as we had

hoped, and we used it instead as tactile and visual material. The students were able to sniff the scented bags and guess what the scent was, then they had to guess how that scent might relate to Hansu's story.



Pictures and scented sachets related to Hansu's story. © Vabamu

For Urve's story, we used a glass jar containing soil. Students had to explore/sniff out what it was and decide whether Urve packed it in her suitcase on her escape journey. We made a mistake in the first pilot class, where we used an old jar with other odors that led students astray, so we recommend choosing a fabric as odor-free as possible, and a new jar/package when choosing scent sachets and cans.

### **Tactile tools**

We told Hansu's story in an exhibition room designed as a deportation wagon, which also gave us the opportunity to look around the wagon and measure how big it was.

From the items in front of the group, we had to choose those that Hansu might have packed at the moment he was deported. There were both old things and modern-day items, and this was to make the students think critically. Students were able to look at the objects themselves and pack them with their hands, in a sack made of bed linen. These were not the original items owned by Hansu, but similar examples: young people's novels (old books, where we glued on the covers of books that Hans packed with him), drawing paper, pencils, woolen socks, a linen towel, cotton bed linen, apples, a modern-day teddy bear, and rubles.



A selection of items that Hansu may have packed to take with him. © Vabamu

To tell Hansu's story even better, our goal was to find a cotton jacket identical to the one Hans wore in Siberia, so the students would have the chance to try it on. Unfortunately, we were unable to find this for the first test groups.

For Urve's story, we packed into the suitcase the things she needed for her escape. The selection had to be made from the following items: an old radio, an Estonian flag, Estonian soil, a summer dress, a hat, pearls, an MP3 player, headphones, German marks, and a copy of an identity document from the 1940s.





A selection of items that Urve may have packed to take with her. © Vabamu

In addition, the children also had the opportunity to explore the refugee boat located in the exhibition room.

To illustrate Urve's story, we also used water to show how cold the Baltic Sea could be in September 1944 (about 12 degrees). The students tried to guess the right temperature by touching the water with their hands, then finally we measured the actual temperature of the water with the children. It should also be mentioned that the water temperature stored in the freezer rose rapidly in a warm room, so water prepared at the beginning of the lesson may soon not be cold enough for the demonstration exercise.

**How did we include young people with learning disabilities, people working with our target group and museum or memorial site staff in the process of developing the Sensory Journey?**

We developed the sensory tour together with the museum team, based on our employees' previous experience with students with intellectual disabilities in

general education schools, scientific articles/literature and the practices of other museums. We consulted an art therapist and a kindergarten teacher, who have also encountered children with intellectual disabilities in their work. We conducted two test classes, and the weaknesses that emerged with the first test group and the feedback from the teachers were all taken on board and applied in the second test class. It should be noted that when conducting a lesson, a lot depends on the students' level, and the class leader must be ready to adjust his/her activities at any moment.

# Case Study 3. Berlin Wall Foundation

**Berlin Wall Memorial, Marienfelde Refugee Center Museum, East Side Gallery, Günter Litfin Memorial**

**Type of museum:** memorial site with an outdoor exhibition, history museum (indoor exhibition)

## **How did we implement the Sensory Journey?**

The developed sensory tools (using audios, tactile and visual tools, scents, and body movement/senses) were integrated into the pre-existing guided tours and workshops conducted in plain language at the Berlin Wall Foundation. The tools offer a multisensory approach to the historical sites and topics presented during the guided tour or workshop. Our pilot tests have shown that combining two or more senses to access a topic ensures a more profound experience: everybody has a different sense affinity, and the more sensory channels you address, the greater the chance that you can reach each member within the group.

To carry out the Sensory Journey at the outdoor exhibition, we built a trolley with all the tools needed. In this way, guides have a selection of tools available and can choose which and how many tools they want to use, depending on the needs and interests of the group. In the case of the indoor exhibition, it is also possible to place the tools at specific stations beforehand.

## **Developed Tools**

We have created two categories of tools: 1. Tools that are site-independent: they support the narration of the guided tour/workshop and provide access to recurring themes of the Berlin Wall Foundation. 2. Tools that are site or exhibition-specific: they relate to a certain topic or biography. All in all, we have developed more than 30 tools ranging from different audio types (music, sound, interview), hands-on-objects, models, visual aids (telescopes, photographs,

picture details) to performative acts (search tasks, instructed movements). Below, we present a selection of these tools.

### **Site-independent tools**

Pictograms (visual tool) represent a word or an idea by illustration. They accompany the guide's explanations, and help students to understand what is being said. Historical events or processes (e.g. the Peaceful Revolution and the Fall of the Berlin Wall) as well as abstract terms or concepts related to a historical topic (e.g. freedom of speech, self-determination etc.) are visualized through the pictograms.

Emoticons (visual tool) represent an emotion. They help students to visualize how somebody felt in a certain situation in history, or help the youngsters to put themselves in somebody else's position. Through emoticons, the participants can express how they feel regarding a historical topic or the memorial site visit itself. When using emoticons, be mindful to ensure that the meaning of the symbols is clear.

We recommend working with pictograms and emoticons that are used in schools for special needs.<sup>2</sup> This helps to foster moments of recognition. As visual tools, pictograms, and emoticons work across age limits, linguistic boundaries, and levels of learning, providing a means of non-verbal communication.

### **Topic-related tools**

Divided Berlin/ Divided Germany: Historical coins from the GDR and Federal Republic are introduced as a tactile tool to exemplify the division of Germany. The coins offer a low-threshold approach to the former existence of two German states: by holding them in their hands, youngsters can compare their materiality, design, and symbols. The coins are a good way to start a dialogue. In our experience, participants who remembered these currencies (e.g. teachers)

---

<sup>2</sup> We are working with METACOM. *Symbols for Augmentative and Alternative Communication* by Annette Kitzinger ([https://www.metacom-symbole.de/metacom\\_en.html](https://www.metacom-symbole.de/metacom_en.html)).

began sharing parts of their own biography with the group. The youngsters recognized the coins as not being modern-day currency. The coins relate to the youngsters' everyday life and yet convey past and present as time concepts that are fundamental for an understanding of history.



Youngsters exploring historical coins from the GDR and Federal Republic. © Berlin Wall Foundation

As another way to visualize the division of Germany, we developed tactile maps of divided Germany and divided Berlin. Similar to a puzzle, the youngsters are asked “to put together” pieces of a map representing the two German states and West- and East-Berlin. Additionally, the flags of the Federal Republic and GDR are assigned. We used the maps in combination with the historical coins.



Tactile maps visualizing the division of Germany. © Berlin Wall Foundation

Escape tunnels: to discuss the former escape tunnels at Bernauer Strasse at the Berlin Wall Memorial (memorial site with an outdoor exhibition), we have combined four senses. We adopted a biographical approach, telling the story of Eveline Rudolph, who fled the GDR in 1962 as a young woman along an escape tunnel. First, the contemporary witness is introduced via a photo (visual tool) and then a short interview sequence (audible tool) describes her flight. Following the clip, we asked questions about what the youngsters have understood. Our experience shows that the audio should be no longer than 2:30 minutes and that the interviewee must speak in an intelligible manner. Before playing the clip, we recommend preparing the group for the audio so that they can focus on listening. If an audio is used in an outdoor space, make sure to find a quiet place without background noise or invite the group to come closer. In the case of loud or unpleasant sounds, it is advisable to give prior warning so that noise-sensitive people can keep their distance.



Creating a “tunnel outline”. © Berlin Wall Foundation

Following Eveline’s description, the guide visualizes how high and wide an escape tunnel was by creating a tunnel outline using two folding rulers (body-sensory tool). The youngsters are invited to get through this “tunnel”, and thus

to physically experience how people had to move through an escape tunnel. Finally, a scent sample of wet earth (olfactory tool) conveys the feeling of being underground.

Hartmut Richter's escape story: at the Marienfelde Refugee Center Museum (indoor exhibition) we work with the senses of sight, touch and hearing to tell the story of Hartmut. He fled the GDR in 1966 as a young man by swimming along a canal at the border. To begin with, the guide introduces Hartmut and the location of his flight using historical photos (visual tool). While telling Hartmut's story, the guide gives three hands-on objects (tactile tool) to the youngsters, so that parts of the story become tangible. A bag of cold water starts the conversation about how Hartmut felt while swimming along the canal. Hartmut only took his passport with him, stowed under a bathing cap. This part of the story is brought alive with an original GDR passport and a bathing cap that the youngsters can touch. The group can explore the materiality and function of these objects.



Touching water from the former border canal. © Berlin Wall Foundation

Beforehand or afterwards, the youngsters learn about the reasons why Hartmut fled: he was opposed to the political conditions in the GDR. As an example, an exhibited Beatles record (visual tool) is shown. It represents Hartmut's enthusiasm for Western music, which was forbidden in the GDR and whose fans were persecuted during this time. Additionally, the group listens to a



Beatles song (audible tool). After hearing the song, the guide asks if the youngsters liked the song, what kind of music they prefer and how they would feel if they weren't allowed to listen to certain music.

Border soldiers at the Berlin Wall: to convey the former border situation at the East Side Gallery (outdoor exhibition), we used selective vision as a methodical approach. To get an idea of what it was like to work at the Berlin Wall, youngsters stand on the former border strip (East-Berlin) and look across the river Spree towards the opposite bank (West-Berlin). At first, the group is asked to name things they can spot today using binoculars or "telescopes" made of cardboard rolls (visual tool). Afterwards, a historical photo of the site (visual tool) is presented. The group can compare the former situation with what they saw through the telescopes/ binoculars. These kinds of search tasks are a good way to activate the group and provide a sense of achievement when the task is fulfilled. We recommend using visual aids during search exercises because they help to break down a complex situation. In the case of the binoculars, the youngsters were able to focus on a certain part of their surroundings at a time, and could zoom in and out. The search task is also used as an opportunity to talk about the victims of the Berlin Wall, such as five-year-old Cetin Mert, who drowned in the Spree at this exact spot in 1975. The river was part of the GDR border area.



Youngsters looking across the former border at the Spree. © Berlin Wall Foundation

Border fortification and watchtower: at the Günter Litfin Memorial (urban space/ indoor exhibition) we combined three senses to express the layout of the Berlin Wall. Besides the former watchtower, in which the memorial is situated, no remains of the border fortification have survived at that site; a challenge we had

to overcome. We selected a historical photo (visual tool) to show how the site looked in the past and asked the youngsters to name things they can still spot in today's surroundings. An original fragment of the wall (tactile tool) and a piece of barbed wire (tactile tool) function as material representations of the border fortification. The youngsters can touch these historical hands-on objects and the guide links them back to the historical photo. We chose a performative approach based on body movement (body-sensory tool) to give the youngsters an idea of the depth of the former border strip. Working together and using a folding ruler, the youngsters measure the width of the former border strip. Conscious movement through space enhances students' understanding of the width of the border strip.



Joint activity: measuring the former border strip. © Berlin Wall Foundation

To make the watchtower and its former function accessible to all (the building is not barrier-free), we built a model of the tower (tactile tool) that allows “a look inside”. The replica is equipped with furniture and soldier figurines.



Self-built model of the watchtower. © Berlin Wall Foundation

## **How did we include young people with learning disabilities, people working with our target group and museum or memorial site staff in the process of developing the Sensory Journey?**

Beforehand, we spoke to young people with learning disabilities, teachers from a special needs school, the educational staff from a sheltered workshop for people with learning disabilities and the Berlin Wall Foundation's educational staff and guides. The goal was to gather information about expectations, challenges, requirements, and ideas regarding a sensory journey.

After developing some tool prototypes, we carried out an initial round of tests with young people with learning disabilities (school groups and youngsters from a workshop). After taking their feedback into consideration, we adjusted the tools for a second round of testing with the same groups. For the detailed feedback sessions, we developed two questionnaires, one for the participating youngsters with learning disabilities and one for the guides executing the sensory journey. For us, it was important to take both perspectives into account. It was a way to ensure the practicability of the tools, so they can bring added value to the guided tours and workshops.

These questionnaires are available in the Annex of this book.

## Case Study 4. creACTive

**Type of museum:** Museum complex with the following sectors: archaeology, history, ethnology, visual arts

### How did we implement the Sensory Journey?

The Museum of Negotino is a cultural, educational and scientific institution founded in 1978, the main objective of which is to provide museum services in the Negotino municipal area. It operates by means of systematic research and by collecting, analyzing, studying, safeguarding, publishing and presenting objects of an archaeological, historical, ethnological and artistic nature. It places particular emphasis on education concerning cultural heritage, and contributes to enhancing professional scientific and research work for the promotion of culture, science and education.

As a result of its research activities, the permanent archaeological exhibition was created, which includes around 420 objects from prehistory, the archaic period, early antiquity, the Hellenic period, the Roman period, late antiquity and the middle ages. The objects are mainly made of metal (bronze and silver), ceramics, glass, and bone; they include plates, jars, tools, jewelry and coins, totaling 1,890 archaeological items.

The Sensory Journey was developed for the Museum of Negotino for a mixed group of participants: young people with sensory, mental and physical disabilities, and young people without disabilities. The process of introducing this innovative approach to the group consisted of the preparation of sensory bags by the beneficiaries of the Poraka-Negotino Center for Persons with Mental Disabilities.

We devised a program of creative and educational workshops focusing on the process of improving the museum's accessibility, increasing the social inclusion of young people with fewer opportunities, and encouraging creative expression through art. The activity started with an ice-breaker to help participants to get to

know each other, and to improve body movement. After this, the cultural staff and youth workers discussed the importance of art and culture in the process of the personal and social development of young people, especially those with fewer opportunities. Questions such as the following were used to guide the group reflection:

What comes to mind when you hear the word 'art'?

Why is art meaningful to you?

How can we use colors to express our own feelings and creativity through art?

The participants had to carefully select the materials and objects for their bags, taking their inspiration from the current art exhibition on young artists from the region, and which focused on the beauty of nature. The objects had to be environmentally friendly and easy to find in the museum's surroundings; they also had to complement or resemble the texture and shape of the objects found in the exhibition, such as sticks, leaves, flowers, sand, paper and cotton. This approach enabled the participants to experience the visual arts in a creative way, while stimulating the senses of sound, sight, and touch. To create a unique sensory experience, we used audio, as well.



The process of making the Sensory Bags. © creACTIVE

After the tour, the participants had an opportunity to express their feelings and impressions through painting.

## **Developed tools**

### **Audio**

We used quiet sounds in the beginning to stimulate the attention of the participants, and to create a pleasant experience. Bearing in mind that the activity was carried out with a mixed group of young people without disabilities, people with hearing and speech impairments, and mental and physical disabilities, the audio complemented their visualization of the artworks. For example, while presenting an artwork containing flowers, we played calm music in order to provide a sense of relaxation and to help students imagine spending time in nature.

### Tips and tricks:

- Before the activity, we coordinated accordingly with the cultural staff, youth workers or educators, and informed the participants about the planned activity and what to expect during the tour.
- We informed the participants about the purpose of the use of sounds during the tour.
- We encouraged them to pay attention to their physical reactions and their emotions during the tour.
- We asked their opinions about the artworks and encouraged respect for others' opinions and perspectives.

### **Visual tools and objects:**

We used various visual tools, objects, and materials to better present the artwork, especially for the people with a visual impairment. These materials had to be easy to find, safe to use, and usable for other exhibitions. Special attention was given to objects and materials that had similar shapes or textures to certain works of art. For example, if a work of art featured waves, we supported our explanation by giving them a piece of material that could also produce the same texture and sound.



We encouraged the participants to visualize their experience by creating their own artworks, which would help them to reflect on their experience during the tour.

**How did we include young people with learning disabilities, people working with our target group and museum or memorial site staff in the process of developing the Sensory Journey?**

The partner organization invited the special educators and rehabilitators, and beneficiaries from the Poraka Negotino Center for Persons with Mental Disabilities, the Negotino Association of the Blind and their personal assistants, young members of the Red Cross Negotino Branch and the Youth Center in Kavadarci.



Participants and Youth workers with their Sensory Bags. © creACTIVE

# Case Study 5. Calouste Gulbenkian Museum

**Type of museum:** Private art collection

## How did we implement the Sensory Journey?

The Sensory Journey, and the art cart, was designed, in this instance for an audience that has specific difficulties in verbally expressing and connecting with their environment. With this tool, the mediator can create connections with other senses and forms of communication such as using clear language and augmentative and alternative communication, textures and materials, sound recreation and reproduction, techniques, and design exploration.

We had to consider how to approach the work of art in a simple and enjoyable manner, as well as how to explain the processes and choices of the artist, without placing the museum's safety rules at risk.

## Developed Tools

In the case of Calouste Gulbenkian Museum, we built an art cart (“carrinho das artes”) that contains dividers, drawers, and other elements to store the material required for the Sensory Journey. The cart is easy to use and access and allows participants to be more autonomous throughout the activity. It contains the tools and materials needed to stimulate all the senses: sight, sound, touch, taste, and smell.

This kind of approach also allows us to adapt the visit to the interests of the group. This means that if the group shows more interest in sound exploration, then the activity can be adapted to achieve this goal. It will be up to the educator to choose what is the best for the group, whether to continue with the script and offer a variety of exploration through the senses, whether to explore one single work of art in greater depth.

With each work of art, we start with some questions that stimulate dialogue and promote their interpretation to build more curiosity.

### Audio

We used a portable speaker, as well as materials and instruments that produce different sounds. These may also be prerecorded sounds that may be related to the work of art. By listening to them, we imitate the sound using our voices/bodies. We also discuss which sounds correspond to each part of the work of art, justifying our opinion in each.



© Calouste Gulbenkian Museum - Margarida Rodrigues João

For example:

During this activity, we used these two paintings and talked about the landscape and its elements, comparing and finding differences or similarities between them:



Jacob van Ruisdael  
*Church in a River Landscape*, mid-1660's  
Oil on canvas  
Photo: Reinaldo Viegas

Jacob van Ruisdael  
*View from the Coast of Norway or A Stormy Sea Near the Coast*, 1660s  
Oil on canvas



© Calouste Gulbenkian Museum - Margarida Rodrigues João

After the presentation and interpretation of the work of art, we asked the participants if the artwork had any sound. Each participant then produced an interjection/sound associated with it: raindrops were made by snapping fingers,

the wind was imitated with voices, and some students were challenged to create the sound of waves by using their bodies as a sounding board.

After they created the sounds, each participant chose an element to produce. Then, everyone produced their sound together, simulating an orchestra, with the educator as the conductor.

### **Tactile tools**

We used two new works:



Jean-François Millet  
*Winter*, ca. 1868  
Pastel



Jean-François Millet  
*The Rainbow*, ca. 1872-73  
Pastel

These two new landscapes were created using materials different from the previous ones. We discussed materials and how they feel on different surfaces.

For example: we created a texture box that contains different materials associated with the works of art, challenging the participants to discover the materials used in each artwork.

The materials enabled us to understand and explore the artistic process and technique of the artist. By using the same material used by the artist, we can understand it better.



Group exploring the texture wall. © Calouste Gulbenkian Museum - Margarida Rodrigues João



Group exploring the use of pastels. © Calouste Gulbenkian Museum - Margarida Rodrigues João

As we can see in the photo, the group is exploring the material but they are not asked to create textures or lines like the ones in the landscapes. This was the first time they had used the material, so we wanted it to be flexible and give everyone in the group a good experience.

### **Visual tools**

Photographs, printed images, or specific objects can be used to help create relationships and a better understanding of the works of art. Hence, if someone talks about something in particular and others have never seen it or can't understand the connection by just listening, we can show an image that will help to encourage visual thinking.

For example: If we want to explain that the artist made a drawing (sketch) before a painting, we can show the sketch so that everyone understands what a sketch is and how it becomes a part of the artistic process.



Édouard Manet

*Boy Blowing Bubbles* (1867)

Oil on canvas

Photo: Catarina Maria Gomes Ferreira

After getting to know the image, what it represents, and a few interesting facts and details, the group was challenged to make a “blind sketch”, i.e., to draw the



outline of the subject in the painting without looking at the paper, only at the artwork.



Participants showing their work. © Calouste Gulbenkian Museum - Margarida Rodrigues João

In this pilot sensory journey, we did not cover all the senses. We believe that the visit should be adapted to the characteristics and pace of each member of the group, so we opted to work with three senses, calmly and thoughtfully, rather than rushing the group to explore all five. We plan to build the remaining sensory materials as such:

### **Scent-based tools**

Participants are encouraged to identify scents with specific details of the work of art.

To help everyone to smell, literally, the work of art or a memory that it triggers, we created some small boxes containing scented items such as spices, bits of wood, and so on.

### **Taste-based tools**

We can use our imagination to associate a flavor to the works of art. For example: if an artwork depicts food, there is a direct link to flavor. If an artwork represents a chimney, it can appeal to everyone's imagination as well as their memories, and remind them of any cooking they've done in a fireplace.

**How did we include young people with learning disabilities, people working with our target group and museum or memorial site staff in the process of developing the Sensory Journey?**

To develop this Sensory Journey, we did not talk specifically with a target group.

Instead, we incorporated reflections produced in other activities that work with this audience. It was by using these reflections that we were able to improve our proposals for the Sensory Journey. It should be noted that sensory activities stimulate this target group in a more active way, producing a greater understanding of the works of art, and a more enriching and happier personal experience than through any other pedagogical tool.

Together with the museum staff, we came up with a set of creative and artistic proposals that stimulate all the senses. We know that the sense of touch can be used more easily in this type of activity, but all other senses must be approached in the same way. The results are surprising's. Our concern is to use the five senses by giving them the same degree of importance and to that, we need to propose interesting activities that will stimulate- for example, sound, - in the same way as an activity that uses the hands for painting.

To achieve that, and for other matters, we need to carry out short evaluations after activities and, in this case, we spoke with a teacher, who gave us her feedback.

# Case Study 6. MUSAC. Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León

**Type of museum:** Contemporary Art Museum

## **How did we implement the Sensory Journey?**

The starting point of our Sensory Journey is to offer a didactic activity that is tailored to the characteristics, motivations and learning possibilities of our participants, in terms of their contributions, as well as that of our educators.

For our Sensory Journey, we worked on the exhibition *Project Another Country: That Space in Between*, an exhibition by the Filipino artists Isabel & Alfredo Aquilizan. Their work focuses on the phenomenon of migration, the concept of memory and the meaning of family as a result of their personal experiences as immigrants in Australia. The exhibition consisted of one big boat made up of everyday objects. It seems to sail under the heavy load of various belongings, a load that also alludes to memory, nostalgia, and dreams, but could also refer to the Manila Galleon, which transported goods and people and was an early example of consumption and globalization. Around the boat, and along the walls of the room, were images of seascapes linked by their lines of horizon.



Exhibition view of *Project Another Country: That Space in Between*. © MUSAC.

We started with an introduction to the exhibition, followed by a short explanation of the dynamics of the activity. We devised a Sensory Journey that combines focusing on the senses and multiple intelligences. The use of multiple intelligences is part of the working methodology of our Education Department, as it allows us to explore a topic from many points of view and taps each individual's creative capacity. It is especially beneficial for people with intellectual disabilities because it helps them express themselves, resulting in a more positive state of emotional well-being.

For our pilot activity, we worked with a group of 10 participants, including people with intellectual disabilities<sup>3</sup>.

## Developed Tools

### Suitcase

---

<sup>3</sup> Within the intellectual disabilities, we also include co-occurring conditions such as Autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and Attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder.

Since the exhibition was about traveling and leaving home, we used a suitcase that contains everyday objects such as shells, stones, fabrics, toys, sand, colored water, paint, etc. The suitcase is a recurring element in the installation. We gave each participant a drawing of an empty suitcase, on which they drew its contents. We had contact with the different materials through sight, touch, smell, and hearing. We felt their weight, temperature, and size. We looked at their shapes, colors, and materials and we tried to listen to the sounds they made.

Next, we prepared several adjoining boxes with another set of objects that have different textures: they might be rough, smooth, or spiked, but they can also be heavy, light, big, or small. The participants—blindfolded—have to put their hands in each of the boxes and try to guess what objects are inside.

### **Flashlight**

A flashlight stimulates our sight and helps us appreciate certain details in an object. It also teaches us different concepts such as light and dark, it orients us in the darkness, helps to lead us to the light source, and allows us to play with shadows and colors. We see the shadows cast by objects and how they get larger or smaller as we bring the flashlight closer.

### **Sounds**

There are sounds that are easily recognizable and are part of our daily life. However, if we take them out of context, it is difficult to identify them. We compiled different sounds in relation to the objects inside the suitcase. There are sounds from nature, from homes, the street, animals, and cars. We asked the participants to try to identify what each of the sounds corresponds to when they heard them.

### **Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligences**

Intelligence is not confined to a narrow set of standards, it can be found in many areas. The Theory of Multiple Intelligences suggests that people do not just

have an intellectual capacity, they also have a range of abilities and intelligences, including linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial, musical, bodily-kinesthetic, naturalistic, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. Our aim was to tap into these intelligences by means of the following activities:

### **Verbal-linguistic intelligence**

We played a language game that featured the key concepts of the exhibition. We defined words such as home, family, separation, displacement, migration, etc. and accompanied these words with images and pictograms.

We told stories in relation to these themes, to try to understand the reality of migrant people. For example, *Eloisa y los bichos [Eloísa and the bugs]* by Jairo Buitrago and *The Trip [El viaje]* by Francesca Sanna.

We talked about what we carry in our pockets or what we would take on a long trip, etc.

We wrote a letter as a message to put in a bottle and throw into the sea.

### **Logical-mathematical intelligence**

We counted objects, created a series and then placed or classified them according to different criteria: color, size, use, importance, etc.

### **Musical intelligence**

We played music to relax and to focus our attention.

We listened to sounds of the sea, boats, an airplane landing... and tried to identify them.

We chose a song related to the topic of the exhibition.

### **Visual-spatial intelligence**

We placed the objects in a space using criteria decided upon by the group.

We looked at the composition as a whole and then broke it down to create another. We explored our body movement in space while placing objects (in groups or individually).

We created an installation related to the boat using all the objects that we worked on.



Everyday objects are used to create small boats like the installation. © MUSAC

### **Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence**

We moved around the room as if we were swimming, or like waves, fish, wind, or like other boats.

### **Naturalistic intelligence**

We discussed which objects came from nature and which were created by humans.

We discussed environmental awareness, sustainability, recycling, consumption, and pollution of the seas.

### **Intrapersonal intelligence**

We interacted with others to agree on possible compositions. We exchanged objects and created objects on demand in relation to the needs of the group.

We focused on the senses. We used our sense of touch (feeling different textures, weights, temperature, etc.); smell, sight (measuring, using a pattern, observing their characteristics and details, etc.), and hearing (how the different materials sound when touched, scratched, struck, etc.)

### **Emotional intelligence**

We exercised empathy toward migrant people and refugees.

We carried out a role-play.

### **Existential Intelligence**

We shared the emotions we experienced in the activity with a round of words (saying the first word that comes to mind), by using emoticons, or by writing our feelings on a post-it note, etc.

### **MUSAC's Sensory Journey**



**How did we include young people with learning disabilities, people working with our target group and museum or memorial site staff in the process of developing the Sensory Journey?**

We hold regular conversations within our Education Staff and with the representatives of associations that we work with. We have a long-standing relationship with many associations, and we applied the learnings we gleaned from past activities to the Sensory Journey.

Each association (Asprona, ASPACE, etc.) deals with groups with different kinds of learning difficulties and intellectual disabilities, so the activities must be adaptable to each of their needs. It is not necessary to do activities involving all the senses or intelligences. The educator is the one who programs the activities for each case, according to the needs of each collective, and he/she must be flexible enough to direct the course and pace of the activity.

This is also applicable to all our educational activities, as using the senses and multiple intelligences is part of our working process. We accommodate all the sensitivities and needs of our users so that they are not forced to go to the museum only through their respective associations. This is how we promote inclusion, with all the richness that it implies, at all levels, for everyone.

# Appendix

## EVALUATION QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE SENSORY JOURNEY

### Questionnaire for museum staff/educators/youth workers

- Was it challenging to implement the sensory tools in your guided tour? If so, in which regard, and which tools in particular?
- Which tools were most/least successful and why?
- What measures are necessary for using the tools in your day-to-day work as guide? (Regarding storage of tools, information about the group, extra time for preparation before the tour starts/after it ends)
- What comments do you have regarding the practical handling of the tools? (transportation and packaging of tools, technical equipment, etc.). Do you have any suggestions on how to improve the practical handling of the tools?
- Was the handout providing information about the use of the tools sufficient?
- Do the tools support you in conveying the topics of your guided tour or do you feel that they are just an add-on?
- What was the most inspiring moment during the tour?

### Questionnaire for participants (youngsters with learning difficulties and intellectual disabilities)

- Did you feel safe during the tour?
- Did you receive sufficient spatial orientation during the tour?
- Which sense did you like best? Why?
- How did you cope with the tools? Were the guide's explanations comprehensible?

Tool 1: good [ ] medium [ ] poor [ ]

Tool 2: good [ ] medium [ ] poor [ ]

Tool 3: good [ ] medium [ ] poor [ ]

- Was the approach to the content appropriate?
- What kind of emotions did you experience during the tour?
- Could you understand the audios? Was it difficult for you to concentrate on the content? Were the audios too long or short?
- Was it sometimes too much content or tools for you?
- Was the duration of the tour (90min) too long? Should we have spent less time on each station/tool? Did you need a break during the tour?
- Did you miss anything?
- Did you learn something new? Did you get a better understanding of something connected to art/history or how your senses work?

# Contacts

## **mu-zee-um vzw**

Edith Cavellstraat 10b

8400 Oostende

Belgium

[mu-zee-um.be](http://mu-zee-um.be)

[info@mu-zee-um.be](mailto:info@mu-zee-um.be)

## **Vabamu. Museum of Occupations and Freedom**

Toompea 8

10142 Tallinn (Harjumaa)

Estonia

[vabamu.ee](http://vabamu.ee)

[info@vabamu.ee](mailto:info@vabamu.ee)

## **Berlin Wall Foundation**

Bernauer Straße 111

13355 Berlin

Germany

[stiftung-berliner-mauer.de](http://stiftung-berliner-mauer.de)

[info@stiftung-berliner-mauer.de](mailto:info@stiftung-berliner-mauer.de)

## **Youth Association creACTIVE**

8mi Septemvri br.3 -3/58

1000 Skopje

Republic of North Macedonia

[kreativ.mk](http://kreativ.mk)

[kontakt@kreativ.mk](mailto:kontakt@kreativ.mk)

## **Museu Calouste Gulbenkian**

Av. De Berna 45A

Lisbon 1067-001

Portugal

gulbenkian.pt

museu@gulbenkian.pt

## **MUSAC. Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y León**

Avda. Reyes Leoneses, 24

24008 León

Spain

musac.es

musac@musac.es



**VABAMU**



 CALOUSTE GULBENKIAN  
FOUNDATION

**MUSAC**  
Museo de  
Arte Contemporáneo  
de Castilla y León

