

## Section 1: Research Digest

Museums & Heritage

### Museums, Keyworkers and Lifelong Learning

#### Shared practice in five countries [UK]

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Büro für Kulturvermittlung

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#### Objectives

The primary aim of this project was to demonstrate that collaboration with and support for keyworkers is an effective way for museums to establish permanent links with people who are currently non-attenders and open museums to new audiences.

#### Methodology

The report is based on a series of case studies undertaken by each of the project partners at museums in the European cities of Dublin, London, Sobralinho, Stockholm and Vienna.

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Introduction - Preface - Project Aims and Objectives - What do we mean by Keyworkers? - What do we mean by Lifelong Learning? - Case Studies - Ireland: "Come to the edge" [The Irish Museum of Modern Art and Older Adults] - Sweden: The Great Museum [Stockholm Education] - United Kingdom: Voices-The Next Generation-A Newsletter for Young People [Victoria & Albert Museum] - The New Projects - Portugal: Cultural Remains of African Roots in Everyday Life [Museu Municipal de Vila Franca de Xira] - Austria: Our Point of View [Apprentices and the Museum of the Future: Ars Electronica Center] - Towards Good Practice: Our Findings - Reflections and Perspectives - Appendices - Resources - Addresses - Further Information - Credits

#### Summary

This book summarises the experiences over three years of the collaboration, exchange and discussions of the five partners of this Socrates-funded European project. The keyworker concept, used by each of the partners in different social and cultural contexts, proved to be a successful instrument to address groups of people who were isolated from the museum experience and who had not been the focus of interest for museums before.

The Irish Museum of Modern Art in Dublin has been working with older people aged between 64 and 88 over the last nine years. During the Socrates project these older people became integrated in the everyday work of the museum, curated an exhibition and have subsequently become keyworkers themselves. Young people from the local neighbourhood of the Victoria & Albert Museum in London, who had not visited the museum before, have become active participants in the museum, developing newsletters for their peers, designing web pages and becoming 'youth' guides. Stockholm Education enriched the

everyday working life of people who work in the city, enabling them to pass on their knowledge to visitors. The Büro für Kulturvermittlung in Vienna initiated various projects with apprentices who produced a video about a museum of the future, the Ars Electronica Center, to promote museums to their peers. The Museu Municipal de Vila Franca de Xira in Portugal aimed at creating a close relationship with immigrants from former African colonies to make use of the museum as a source for exploring traditional music, legends, stories and cookery.

The projects demonstrated that to be successful in attracting new audiences and visitors museums have to take the initiative and be pro-active. Developmental work requires collective support and contacts with other complementary agencies such as youth clubs, education centres or older people's associations. Outreach should be a general service and museums should consider external groups on the groups' own territory. Partnership has to be based on equality and resources are vital for projects to be successful. This includes members of staff who have responsibility for liaison work, accommodation and equipment, as well as funding. Projects also require a long-term commitment and opportunities for evaluation, which includes an input from partners as well as museum staff.

#### Availability

Available from the Victoria & Albert Museum, Cromwell Road, South Kensington, London SW7 2RL; fax: +44 (0) 20 7942 2193; e-mail: d.anderson@vam.ac.uk