

**PRESS RELEASE - September 20, 2023**

**“The GLAMers -  
Enhancing GLAMs through youth engagement during the COVID-19 crisis”**

**European Erasmus+ project 2021 - 2023**

**Successful completion of the Project**

With the official approval of the final report by the Cyprus National Agency of the Erasmus+ Programme, the final curtain has fallen on the GLAMers' activities. However, the legacy of the project will continue to support GLAMs (Galleries, Libraries, Archives and Museums) in their process of recovering from the pandemic effects and of increasing their community outreach. The model created by GLAMers will assist GLAMs adjust their overall approach and develop their skills to efficiently interact, collaborate with and engage youth audiences across Europe.

The Covid-19 crisis has showed that the cultural and creative sector can be severely hit by these dramatic situations, since several cultural institutions are still used to focus almost exclusively on the face-to-face modality. Most of GLAMs were unprepared regarding the effect of the pandemic including a sudden loss of incomes well as a severe of their relationship with their audiences. Although digital activities of cultural institutions pre-existed (through virtual exhibitions, as well as digital collections of open access resources), they were too few to counterbalance the overwhelming effects of the pandemic.

However, the pandemic has also been an opportunity for GLAMs to think in new ways about young audiences, technology, and their own methods and strategies. The GLAMers project was launched in February 2021 to upskill and empower GLAMs by encouraging interaction and co-creation with youth stakeholders and individuals and by offering GLAMs a set of resources which will support them in creatively exchanging with youth organisations.

The first output of the project was released in September 2021 under the form of an open access publication entitled *Practices of digitally mediated youth engagement in GLAMs during the pandemic*. At the crossroads of 3 main concepts, Youth, the pandemic and GLAMs, this study showed how to support the dialogue of cultural heritage institutions in their attempt to face COVID-19 related challenges by better engaging youth in their outreach activities. Grounded on European and international initiatives for the benefit of GLAMs, this report has been useful to create a collection of practices of digitally mediated youth engagement developed by European GLAMs during the pandemic. A number of concrete examples of youth engagement in the ordinary activities of GLAMs are showcased in the publication while advice on means to engage youth are given by experienced staff of the selected practices.

The second step consisted of creating an open access digital collection of digital resources, including:

- A 5-module online training suite, available in English, French, Greek and Croatian at the GLAMers educational platform, set up by CUT, the Cyprus University of Technology, coordinator of the project: <https://mnemosyne.moodlecloud.com/login/index.php>. The topics of this training package are:
  1. Social networking and digital technologies to enhance youth participation in GLAMers (developed by the Greek partner Web2Learn)



3. GLAMers in the COVID-19 crisis: challenges and opportunities for youth participation (developed by the Michael Culture international association)
  4. Digital Heritage as a mean to unlock youth participation in GLAMers (developed by the CUT)
  5. Capacity building at museums: the technical, organizational and strategic dimensions of youth engagement in GLAMers routines (developed by MUO, the Croatian Museum of Arts and Crafts).
- Seven webinars (described at <https://glamers.eu/webinars/>) addressing GLAMs and youth organisations.

A direct testbed of the GLAMers methodology has been then put into practice, by organizing real events at the premises of some museums where youth (both young individuals and youth communities) had a vital role for animating the process. Six events took place across Europe (in Cyprus, Greece, Croatia, France, Belgium, and Italy), described in the report “Synthesis of the Impact assessment reports of the cultural events involving youth”, presenting the results at transnational level with regard to impact of the events carried out locally and nationally (available at <https://glamers.eu/io3-implement-and-assess-cultural-events-by-glams-involving-youth/>).

The final output has underlined the GLAM rebirth by means of youth engagement, by emphasizing social values with youth at their core. This has been done with:

- A live streaming of cultural events <https://glamers.eu/io3-implement-and-assess-cultural-events-by-glams-involving-youth/>, including a collection of four infographics per event <https://glamers.eu/infographics/>
- The development of “Do’s & Don’ts Videos” based on the interviews from the cultural activities <https://glamers.eu/dos-donts-videos/>
- One media campaign for the needs of the GLAMers
- A final report with general conclusions that will have been drawn from the video-interviews <https://glamers.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/IO4-report.pdf>

The degree of innovation of the project is based on four key dimensions, namely:

- A prompt reply to the COVID-19 pandemic. The proposal offered an immediate set of actions and hands-on implementation opportunities to GLAMs, with the aim to put knowledge developed throughout the project in practice and to be able to assess processes and outcomes of youth engagement for the benefit of the GLAM sector.
- The dynamism of youth and civic communities engaging in social change during COVID-19 to stimulate GLAMs. Although COVID-19 heavily affected daily practices, long-term strategies and plans, in several cases the pandemic was an opportunity to rethink on practices that are vital to future societies and have social value. The GLAMers project advanced this approach by making the connection between an emergent need (rebirth of the cultural and creative sector) and a unique opportunity (youth engagement for a social purpose on local, national and European levels). The dynamics of the citizen-driven, bottom-up activities for a social purpose during COVID-19 demonstrated the power of communities to intensify links between institutions, civic organisations, local and national policy bodies. The benefit of these dynamics to the suffering cultural/creative sector was the innovation key of the project.

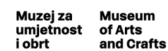


- A fresh look at the pandemic as an opportunity for social inclusion and social cohesion that youth participation and empowerment leverages. Youth engagement in culture also means a unique chance for social inclusion and social cohesion.
- The variety of suggested youth engagement. The GLAMers has offered a holistic view on possibilities and more opportunities for action in the forms of:
  - 1) Cultural youth associations that could possibly liaise with GLAMs in the larger framework of the revitalization of the cultural and creative sectors.
  - 2) Young artists.
  - 3) Young activist groups for social change.
  - 4) Young persons as individuals, not belonging to a group or a community, wishing to be part of the answer for social change.

Project Website: <https://glamers.eu/>

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## Project Partners



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