



CECA Newsletter 5 - May 2021

Keywords and concepts



Dear CECA members

Through the Define working group, we have been asked by ICOM to help with the reshaping of the museum definition.

CECA had already worked on the first survey just after the Kyoto conference, and the results of this first survey were published in ICOM Education 29.

This time, the assignment was a bit different as it consisted of each member selecting ten explicit concepts and keywords that they found important for a museum definition.

236 suggestions were made by 70 members. When analyzed, the result gives a balanced image of what ICOM is: thinking forward without being revolutionary, a kind of « middle of the road » result that will probably deceive both modernists and traditionalists but may constitute an acceptable result for all, which is the aim of the project.

Our choice was to try and reflect the relative importance of each concept as a whole, trying to split the most frequently quoted concepts into subconcepts extracted from the accompanying definitions. You'll find the result of this analyse in the following document.

As CECA president and member of the Define group, I have, of course, always stressed the importance of the inclusion of the word « Education » in the final definition. Let's hope that other committees will push in the same direction.

Marie-Clarté O'Neill, President of CECA

Education

- **Education and its definitions**

Two meanings for education:
One, from the Latin "ex ducere", means to develop, to flourish
The other refers to learning, change as a result of experience

- **Education and its aims**

Museum education as a field for developing intellectual, moral and emotional skills. The museum as a place of lifelong learning.

- **Education and its contents**

Education takes place throughout life and includes formal, non-formal and informal learning. Great potential diversity of content.

- **Museum education and its methods**

Uses the collection to transmit in an informal educational context. Involves exploration, study, observation, critical thinking and dialogue.

Goals to be achieved by the museum

- **Nature of the museum's intended experience**

The museum as a place connected to the outside world, a place for reflection, inspiration, encouraging critical debate and creativity, making sense of what is seen

- **The museum as a response to needs**

The museum is seen as being able to meet needs for enjoyment, peace, inspiration, understanding of the world, well-being, psychological health

- **The conditions for achieving the museum's goals**

Sensitive to the world's evolutions, interactive, playful, participative, dynamic, the museum must provide a quality experience

Social

- **The museum as social actor of the present time**

Independent public programme, a space for experience and dialogue that leads to the appropriation of cultural heritage and the building of a social fabric.

- **The museum as factor in social change**

The possibility that the museum as a social space gives space to voices that represent other, new and decolonised knowledge or opinions

- **Relation to communities**

Need to share individual and collective memory and living heritage in the territory, to meet communities that society does not want to see

Collections

- **Nature of the collections**

Tangible and intangible heritage, landscapes, to form a coherent and significant whole, in the context that allows them to be resignified

- **Care and value given to collections**

Collect, acquire, preserve, conserve, manage

Inclusion

- **Serving a variety of audiences**

The museum must seek to reach a diversity of audiences, identified and served by taking into account the multiple barriers to access, social, cultural, physical, emotional, etc.

- **Public participation**

The museum should encourage participation in the production of the museum itself, regardless of cultural, social, religious, political, racial or gender background

Openness / accessibility

- **Open**

Museums are open and democratic spaces that offer ideas and interventions from new perspectives to welcome more and more citizens

- **Accessibility**

While physical and sensory accessibility has improved for visitors with disabilities, little has been done to make the museum socially or intellectually accessible

Means used for education

- **Practical ways to implement education**

The content is conveyed through a variety of practical means: exhibitions, programmes, digital products, the presence of artists, mediation staff, etc.

- **Content to be implemented for education**

The museum offers, through mediation, an interpretation of heritage in the form of a discourse that makes a critical dialogue possible

Research

- **Research**

The multiple specificities of museums can only be developed harmoniously if they are nourished by research on diverse and evolving subjects

Institution

- **Institution**

The museum, as a public or private, multifunctional organisation, is intended to play a permanent role, while remaining open to the permanent evolution of society

