

# RESEARCH THEME

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**Title of the doctoral research** Design driven participatory strategies for the “Museum of proximity” in post-pandemic times

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## Abstract

The research aims to be an in-depth exploration of the most innovative approaches in the field of design-driven participatory strategies for museums and cultural heritage. The context of the heritage continuum (an ecology of contents, that connects the collections of museums, cultural institutions, archives, online repositories, territories and users in a fluid space between physical and virtual) and the one of phygital (physical + digital) constitute the prerequisites for guiding, through design, processes of holistic and not only technology-driven innovation of the heritage to facilitate inclusion, social cohesion, equity, well-being, social and economic development.

The focus will be on how to design possible responses and strategies to face the post-pandemic crisis experienced by museums due to COVID. The leading concept is the idea of “Museums of proximity”, meant as a cultural local “ecosystems” for the community, in which the idea of proximity refers both to closeness and impact (physical and metaphorical) to the audience and to networking with other institutions, organizations, partnership and CCI in the surrounding. For museums and cultural institutions the challenge is not only bringing back the audience with renovated interests, purposes and cultural needs, but rethinking (physically and digitally) the connections with them and also with the territorial/urban/public networks, partnerships, stakeholders and CCI. In fact, proximity is maximized where CH is accessible and usable in a widespread, customizable and shared way, which implies appropriation and creative re-use.

The PhD research aims at designing new forms of cultural participation and cultural capability building among stakeholders in a ‘participatory continuum’ between primary activities and support activities of the museum value chain, to transform it into a virtuous value constellation and ecology of stakeholders. Envisioning and enabling innovative CH models, providing competencies and technologies, imagining novel functions, and fostering collaborations we want to underline the potential of the social resilience of culture and cultural heritage to promote inter-cultural and inter-generational mutual understanding, for a more plural and inclusive society.

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## Keywords

Culture driven innovation, participatory strategies for museums, Cultural Heritage of Proximity