

# Partnership Relations among Museums in Hungary – Achievements and Opportunities

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*Acting communities – Active community involvement*

**SZÉCHENYI 2020**



MAGYARORSZÁG  
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# The ICOM's Definition – Past, Present and Future

The tasks/functions of museums  
based on collections and scientific  
research,

but

the role of experience and  
knowledge transfer has been  
increased.

# New Functions of Museums

Providing services to the public

Encouraging visitors to participate actively in the life of the museum

Bring visitors to take part in the activities of the museum

## By the Rule of Law...

The Museum Act regulates the operation of museums

- It has been modified several times ever since it was issued in 1997.
- Its latest amendment (2017) was aiming at providing the widest possible access by legislative strengthening of basic cultural provision.

# Different Types of the Hungarian Museums

## MUZEÁLIS INTÉZMÉNYEK

### MÚZEUM

ORSZÁGOS MÚZEUM

ORSZÁGOS SZAKMÚZEUM

MEGYEI HATÓKÖRŰ VÁROSI MÚZEUM

TERÜLETI MÚZEUM

Járási múzeum

Tájmúzeum

Városi / települési múzeum

TEMATIKUS MÚZEUM

KÖZÉRDEKŰ MUZEÁLIS  
GYŰJTEMÉNY

KÖZÉRDEKŰ MUZEÁLIS  
KIÁLLÍTÓHELY

## By the Rule of Law...

The primary aims of the Museum Act are

- to ensure social wellbeing and sustainable development;
- to support lifelong learning;
- to improve quality of life;
- to make regulation to protect the cultural heritage locally and nationwide.

## By the Rule of Law...

It also aims to:

- Increase and preserve the cultural heritage;
- Transmit them to future generations;
- And to regulate its social utilization;

## By the Rule of Law...

The responsibilities of public collections and public institutes for culture include:

- ensuring the access to tangible and intangible cultural heritage;
- providing services to the public that can support the personal development and fulfilment; foster active citizenship, social integration and community

development, furthermore improve those personal key competences which are necessary for employment.

## By the Rule of Law...

- The Museum Act defines that everyone is entitled to
- get to know the cultural heritage, how they evolved through history, and how they can be protected;
- use the services of public collections and public institutes for culture;
- enrich life-long their knowledge;
- create and operate communities.

# Opportunity or Obligation?

## **It's not easy to decide.**

It opens a new door, by which the social commitment of museums can manifest itself in new areas.

It is vital for museums to define their objectives,

to make strategic plans, and involve

new technologies.

It is indispensable to sensitize the professionals of museums,

and to train them to be able to fill the legislative framework with real content.

- The collection remain the base of all the main tasks of the museum,
- but
- broadening the scope of functions opens the way for repositioning the museum.

# In the Future Museums will not Survive without Communities

- Museums have never been isolated institutions.
- The museum building is the Space of the operation,
- but
- this Space has to connect inseparably to further institutions, organizations,

individuals and communities – in cooperation and partnership.

## At Early Stages...

Very few museums would have born without the will and cooperation of the members of the community.

Later, the long-term preservation of the museums' treasures had to be supported by the local associations, then by the decision-maker local governments.

The history of museums confirms that governmental assistance is essential for the survival, and development; the substantial financial support is

indispensable. It was at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and it is the same today.

## The 20th Century...

After the initial enthusiasm for establishing a museum, many issues may affect whether the community considers the museum of their own or not. It is often a historical processes.

As a result of World War II, and of the abolishment of the Hungarian society between 1946 and 1949, the local and town collections was partly or totally perished.

After the legislative provisions in 1949,

museum developments started at a larger scale in the 1960s in the framework of the county museum institutions.

# The End of the 20th Century...

The situation of the museum system was modified since the change of the political regime, then by the municipal law (1990), but there was no substantive alteration.

Nevertheless, some changes were perceivable in the case of smaller museums – even in their relations with their local communities,

as the local governments became the maintainer. The county system was pulled down in 2012 which has fixed the

regional museums' maintainers locally. It has many advantageous and disadvantageous consequences.

# Museums and their Communities Today

„Actually, the community regards the museum an important element of their own culture and their spiritual cultural heritage,

an institution that is essential when learning about their past,

reflexing on the present and in effect, having confidence in the

future.”

Varga Benedek  
president  
ICOM Hungarian National  
Committee

It was said at the conference called *Museum as a Passion* – Budapest, 2017 .

# Museums and their Communities Today

Frist  
Example –  
Sukoró,  
(Fejér  
county,  
Hungary)



# The Association of Hungarian Country House Museums 2002



# Museums and their Communities Today

## Second Example (2013) Cegléd

A real community museum in Cegléd was opened in a dilapidated building which once inhabited by the citizens of the market town.

It was the idea of a local amateur historian: Ferenc Hegyi.

The founders were local collectors and artists, who made their own collections accessible for the locals.

The materialized product of the passion of collecting could give community

experience and has become a community creating force.

<http://www.infocegléd.hu/hirek/olvas/-megnyitotta-kapuit-a-cegledi-kozossegi-muzeum-2013-10-01-132251>

# Is it Possible to Operate Professionally a Community Museum?

Self-education?  
Or a passion for museums?

How can be maintained the interest, sympathy and active contribution of the community during the process of organisation and operation?

Can professional authenticity and quality be maintained?

How can a realized initiation (like

this) remain sustainable in the long run?

- One possibility is the training course – *Community Archaeological Programme* – organised for volunteers by the Ferenczy Museum. Here is a video summary of the project:
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FcvD2aSzDfs>

# The Answers of the Museums

In the past five years, this process was supported by conferences where the best national and international practices were presented.

Such was the CETAID (Community Exhibitions as Tools for Adults' Individual Development), the closing conference of a Grundtvig project titled *Community Exhibitions as the Tools of Adults Education* (organised by Anikó Miszné Korenchy).

The professional training of

ethnographer museologists was dealing with this issue in October 2017 (*Museum and Society – Socialisation, Partnership and the Initiation of Museums*).

# The Answers of the Museums

The National Museum Education Conference, the Museum Andragogy Conference and the National Opening of Museum Education also contributed to the interpretation of the relationship of museums and communities and introduced good practices.

Community events like Autumn Festival of Museums, Museums'

Night or Cultural Heritage Days demonstrate how can this practice be applied in the philosophy and daily practices of this kind of institutions.

## Questions and Answers

How can a museum become, in the same time, a "loved" institution, and authentic place, while remain the "landmark" of knowledge acquisition?

This problem can be solved only by the continuous active cooperation of museums, libraries, public educational institutions and NGOs.

# In Partnership with Museums, in Partnership with Communities – Opportunities

The methodological guide, called *Socialised Operation of Cultural Institutions* (ed. Márton Beke, and Mária Arapovics) was written by our team.

(accessible:  
<http://cselekvokozossegek.hu/tudastar/intezmenyek-tarsadalmiasitasa/>)

The authors describe the characteristics, framework and impacts of community involvement of those cultural institutions (mostly public collections

and public institutes for culture) which has been taking part in our project titled *Acting Communities – Active Community Involvement*.

## Opportunities

- What does *participatory operation* means?
- The institution and the local community closely collaborate on regular base, they are actively present in the same network of relationships. In this process the institutions outreach their activities.
- This kind of operation gives floor and opportunity for individuals and communities to try themselves. By this practice the museums can promote community development.
- In this way museums can activate local citizens.

# Opportunities

- The participatory operation can expand the number of those who support the museum with active parttaking in events and other activities. At the same time political activities and party events mustn't be held there, museums have to remain nonpolitical places.
- This kind of operation is an opportunity to learn about the desires and needs of the citizens and to realize collectively the defined goals.
- The long lasting community activity can become the source of joy in itself and can have a positive impact on all participants.

# Opportunities

The definitions of the guide  
– as the text of the law –

relate to all the three types  
of institutions:

museums, libraries and  
public institutes for culture  
in the same way,

but

the text also refers to their  
special possibilities.

# Opportunities

The Guide can be only the starting point of the process-generation.

Only those elements of the participatory operation would be realized which are important to the museums and the community. Those museums which take part in the chain of events of the *Communities Week* (launched in 2017) sufficiently proved the existence of civil courage,

open museums, and acting professionals who are committed to their community.

The long term cooperation of these participants can generate not only one-off successful event, but it can be the moving force of the long-run community development.

<http://kozossegekhete.hu/>

# Opportunities

Good Example: cooperation of a local government with some large museums. The press reported that from 2017 the residents and students of the district 3rd (Óbuda-Békásmegyer) can visit free all the museums of the district including those which are not maintained by the local government (Hungarian Museum of Trade and Tourism, Kassák Museum, and the local branches of Budapest History Museum including the Acquincum Museum).

In 2016 the local government has

already ensured the local citizens to entrance free to the district maintained museums.

This possibility has significantly increased the residents' interest and the number of the participants taking part in the museum education programs.

<https://turizmus.com/utazas-kozlekedes/muzeumi-egyuttmukodes-obudan-1151776>

# In Partnership with Museums, in Partnership with Communities – Opportunities

I believe that this practice with reasonable reimbursement to the museums, which has been already introduced by some provincial local governments, and now by the municipality of the 3rd district,

will generate further cooperation and connections.

This initiative is just the starting point for diverse cooperation of

museums and communities.

It is really important as the joyful community acting can be the corner stone of the active civil life.

# Thank you for attention!

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