# User Engagement and Digital Cultural Heritage: Reflecting on the Kaleidoscope Project





The project <u>50s in Europe Kaleidoscope</u> was concluded in February 2020. The project explored user engagement with digital cultural heritage by focusing on archival photographs related to the project theme ?1950s in Europe'.

## **Digital Tools**

Kaleidoscope gathered user-experience feedback on two tools: the <u>WithCrowd</u> annotation tool and the Visual Similarity Search. The Visual Similarity Search draws on deep learning techniques enabling the linking of resources/images based on visual similarity. Both tools propose innovations in digital exhibition methods by using participatory approaches.

## **Content Collection and Curation**

Digital storytelling was used as a strategy to engage stakeholders via a project exhibition entitled <u>?Blue Skies, Red Panic'</u>. The exhibition was realized in various forms: as a travelling exhibition touring cities in Europe including: Pisa, Girona, Antwerp, and Berlin; and as a virtual exhibition showcased on <u>Europeana.eu</u>. The process of sourcing and sharing heritage photographs aimed to enhance the digital collections, increase user interaction, and explore innovations in curatorial practice.

## Focus Groups and Workshops

During the Kaleidoscope project a number of events were organised by the consortium. Focus groups and workshops reached target audiences of cultural heritage professionals, academic researchers, students, artists and local citizens. The <u>memories workshop</u> in Girona entitled ?Family Photo Talks' used oral history as a co-creative methodology. The <u>Crowdsourcing workshop</u> in Athens invited participants to contribute to the Kaleidoscope annotation campaigns focused on the themes of 1950s Style and Design and 1950s Transport and Travel. While the <u>Rephotography workshop</u> in Coventry focused on repeat photography as a way of engaging users with ?then' (1950s) and ?now'.

## Massive Open Online Course (MOOC)

The projects educational focus has created an international outreach, which extends beyond the lifecycle of the project. Kaleidoscope collaborated with the <u>Culture Moves team</u> to develop the MOOC ?Creating a Digital Cultural Heritage Community'. Modules include a core module introducing user engagement theory, and modules focused on photography and museums. The MOOC currently (May 2020) has 2,035 registered users and is still open for <u>enrolments.</u>

For more information look at:

Impact and Future Exploitation Report Photoconsortium webpage