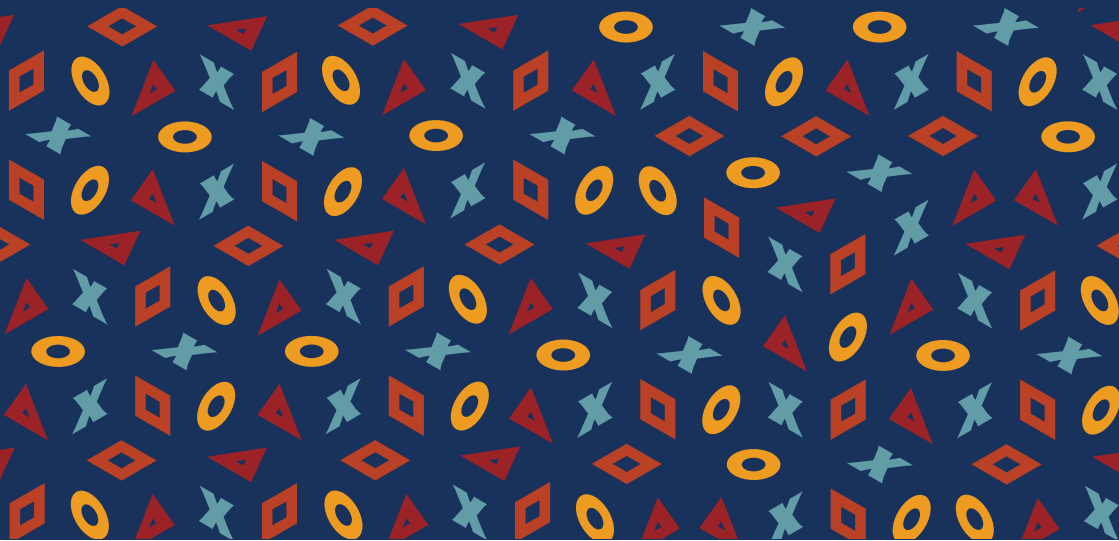


Project presentation

# Informal and non-Formal E-Learning for Cultural Heritage

## xFORMAL

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PROJECT PRESENTATION



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# Project Presentation

## Abstract

The xFORMAL project aims at verifying the impact that informal and non-formal learning and knowledge may have on students and citizens of every age and, with this in mind, a tool will be constructed with which to provide an insight into how people learn non-formally or informally in both cultural real and virtual space.

## Challenge

In contexts where formal education may have limited relevance to likely future livelihoods and employment or in contexts where particular groups, based on wealth, ethnicity, location, or gender, may have denied or have very limited access to formal education, people may be motivated to seek out and engage with informal learning, out of their perception of the necessity to learn and when presented with the opportunity to do so. In contexts

where formal education is entirely lacking, difficult to access, of poor quality, or is not seen as useful for future ambitions, young people may approach informal education for pragmatic reasons, as a matter of necessity.

## Aims

- to provide education, where formal education may not be doing so or may simply not exist;
- to encourage citizens to establish and build personal learning environments;
- to define and reproduce people's being and becoming place in society, as well as their own developing subjectivities;
- to meaningfully participate in the real social and cultural life of their communities;
- to encourage researchers and experts to cross the boundaries between the SSH and ICT areas and to improve the cooperation between academic and non-academic sectors.

## Project's Strategies

The project strategy is based on a number of cornerstones aimed at the discovery and enhancement of Europe's cultural heritage at the dawn of history, before the advent of Rome.

**Choosing the past of the pre-Roman European history** means including the minorities of the past, means to discover a part of the European history, which is usually neglected by citizenship and in many school curricula. Yet the populations that inhabited Europe in the first millennium BC shared a lot in cultural, technological, religious and linguistic features. They represent the unity in fragmentation and diversity, which is a strong reminder for our society in the present and in the future. Selecting this period of the history for the project, has a double advantage: on one side the scenarios on cultural heritage can be easily built, on the other side citizens are led to discover an unusual part of their cultural landscape, which reminds them the common European history.

**Choosing landscape** as environment plays an important role in constructing social and personal identities. The landscape with its cultural heritage is conceived under this perspective as the medium which conveys information, rather than an objectified container. In the cultural landscape the visitor becomes a social actor.

**Choosing the heutagogy** to promote and sustain lifelong learning as learners acquire competencies and the capability to learn in new and unfamiliar environments.

**Choosing an E-game** to transfer informal and non-formal knowledge to the citizenship has solid reasons, falling under the methodology of Game-Based-Learning (GBL), which offers learning in a playful way and harnessing the intrinsic motivation of games. The game can contribute to citizens and students to build a

closer contact with science and develop scientific methods and tools for critical reasoning. The game, composed of a main narrative, adventure and several minigames, consists in the tip of the iceberg that, built on top of an information system, provides an informal learning environment that people can carry with them. Games are unique and special environments for learning and enjoyment.

**Choosing a cross-disciplinary and intersectoral approach** as general working framework enables citizens and students to benefit from different and complementary learning and analysis methodologies.

## Gaming for informal learning

**The game developed to experience the landscape will be** available in a test-release to play in mobile devices. It will be developed combining geolocation information with the information retrieved from the platform within a game narrative. In this adventure game, obstacles are overcome by moving through a complex world, accumulating adequate tools and booty, until finally the treasure or goal is reached. This genre focuses on exploration and puzzle solving, featuring long-term obstacles, without requiring quick reflexes or intense action. Instead, length and in-depth observation of monuments (from the smallest coin to the largest buildings) will build the terrain in which the citizens acquire information and knowledge on their cultural heritage. The game will be based on key scenarios built by the scientific team together with all partners during secondments and in online conferences.

It is envisaged that at least seven landscape routes in selected towns, regions or at country-level of Italy, Spain, Portugal, France and the historical district covered by the Polish partner (Northern Turkey, Greece and Romania) are created.

Both the platform and the adventure game will contain a self-evaluation tool, which at the same time will allow the researchers to answer the main scope of the project, i.e. how informal learning can impact on formal learning, passing also through the intermediation role of Museums and ONGs.

## Theoretical Background and Methodology

xFORMAL project will respect the key principles of andragogy to achieve success in informal learning considering the **E.M.O.T.I.O.N.** framework as the underlying necessity of not disassociating instructional content from emotional background. In detail, EMOTION means:

- **Engagement (E):** realise attractive and immersive scenario;
- **Motivation (M):** stimulate curiosity and challenge;
- **Opportunity of mastery (O):** define meaningful goals with clear action, results and feedback;
- **Themes and story (T):** design for their life challenges;
- **Intriguing learning (I):** implement curiosity or interest;
- **Objectives (O):** explicit educational objectives;
- **Natural flow between learning and fun (N):** emphasise a proper combination of game characteristics and learning content.

Also, the **Heutagogical** approach – the self-determined learning environment – builds the basis of the methodology used in the project. Heutagogy aligns well with the affordances of current technology, in that the technology supports exploration, learner-determined learning, and personalization of learning; it is non-linear in its design and promotes creation

and sharing of information and knowledge. It allows for collaboration in co-creation of new information and knowledge and promotes a network of connectivity that can bridge the gap between academia and the professions, while creating personal learning environments.

To enact the game-learning process the following methods will be considered:

**Inclusive:** citizens and communities will be included in the experience of their landscape and cultural heritage;

**Participatory:** citizens will be invited to play an active role in the process of acquisition of the cultural landscape, participating in the planning, managing and protecting their heritage.

**Building capacity of involved actors:** all the stakeholders will have equal 'voice' in the Participatory Action Research promoted by xFORMAL.

**Sustainable:** a bottom-up approach will create direct benefit to the communities, by strengthening the relationships among them to foster local ownership and shared responsibility.

## Expected impact

The activities carried out during the project – staff exchange, workshops, seminars, networking, conferences – will have a positive impact in enhancing research and innovation capabilities of individuals in several ways, depending on their activity:

**Museums, Science animators and communicators** will have the opportunity to work in other countries and sectors and will be engaged in new environments and educational sectors. They will be enriched by the knowledge on new methods, which they can transmit to their own institutions. They will also enhance the scientific methodology focused on obser-

vation, report and analysis, and will implement new methods for social research, included for aspects such as integration and inclusion.

**SSH researchers** will confront to a new methodology, integrating different methods and a new perspective on the field. Although there is usually an inter-sectorial collaboration between academic and non-academic experts on social research, science, humanities and cultural heritage, this project opens all of them the ability to work on two levels: individually through the secondments, and collaboratively in the analysis and consolidation of knowledge and experiences.

**School-teachers and educators**, who usually focus on formal learning, will benefit of the broader perspective of non-formal and informal learning in integration with school education curricula. Also, their collaboration will be fundamental for the identification of new methods and techniques to develop in future projects.

**ICT researchers and engineers** will have the opportunity to better interact with social and humanities experts, and with the driver of the different domains, better understand the requirements for the products they develop using ICT, concerning gamification and digital platform for the cultural heritage.

**Policymakers, school, museums, cultural heritage** institutions will have an opportunity to define clear objectives in managing their territories and their cultural heritage, by establishing priorities of the needs of the collective, and a acquiring better knowledge of the existing and feasible solutions. This will allow to delivering concrete proposals and action plans to develop in their organizations. Individually, the expertise acquired through knowledge sharing will enrich them with new methods and skills.

## Project Structure

**xFORMAL project is composed by seven different work packages:**

- WP1: Management & Coordination.
- WP2: Exploring Scenarios to build the paths of the cultural heritage.
- WP3: Gaming Informal Experience. Building the game of the cultural heritage.
- WP4: Piloting the Game
- WP5: Sharing Knowledge and Best Practices.
- WP6: Body of Knowledge and Exploitation of results.
- WP7: Ethical Issues.

## The Consortium

- University of Genova (Project Leader)
- Alteritas - Verona, Italy
- Aragon. Museo de Zaragoza
- Centro Ciência Viva - Bragança, Portugal
- Forskningscentrum för Europeisk Flerspråkighet - Vasa, Finland
- Instituto Politecnico de Bragança, Portugal
- MIBACT Museo Nazionale Etrusco di Villa Giulia - Rome, Italy
- N-CLOUD - Mariano Comense, Como, Italy
- Società Dante Alighieri Wrocław - Poland
- University of Bordeaux Montaigne, France
- University Póznan, Poland
- University of Zaragoza, Spain

## Contacts

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## Short Project Presentation

### What

xFORMAL is a four years research project part of Marie Curie Skłodowska Actions - Rise programme aimed at verifying the impact that informal and non-formal learning and knowledge may have on students and citizens of every age.

### How

The xFORMAL project focuses on the framework of an authentic landscape experience through the Cultural Heritage of the past (8th c. BC-1st c. AD). Through this experience, made in a game route, the landscape will convey this heritage using scientifically based informal tools derived from a Digital Game and Platform.

### Why

To raise awareness of the European cultural heritage before Rome and in the Ro-

manisation time, while also exploring the contribution that informal and non-formal learning can make to knowledge acquisition in citizens and students.

### Who

In addition to the coordinator University of Genoa (Anna Siri), the partnership consists of eleven valuable academic and non-academic institutions, the Italians Alteritas - Interazioni tra i popoli (Simona Marchesini), NLOUD Srl (Fabrizio Ponti and Federico Turchi) and MIB-ACT - Museo Nazionale Etrusco di Villa Giulia (Valentino Nizzo, Anna Tanzarella, Antonietta Simonelli), the Portuguese Instituto Politécnico de Bragança (Ana Pereira and Rui Pedro Lopes) and the Associação Ciência Viva Bragança (Ivone Fachada), the Spanish Universidad de Zaragoza (Francisco Beltrán Lloris) and the Gobierno de Aragón-Museo de Zaragoza



(Isidro Aguilera Aragon), the French Université Bordeaux Montaigne (Coline Ruiz Darasse), the Finnish Forskningscentrum för Europeisk Flerspråkighet (F|E|F) (Vittorio Dell'Aquila), the Polish Uniwersytet im. Adama Mickiewicza w Poznaniu (Wojciech Sowa), and the Società Dante Alighieri of Wrocław (Gianluca Olcese).

### **When**

The Project will be carried out for four years, from September 2021 to August 2025) according to the following structure:

### **Get in touch**

Have something to say? Get in touch with us and join the conversation!

#### **Website**

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