Press release

Museum Affinity Spaces (MAS), is a research project funded by The Research Promotion Foundation Programmes for Research, Technological Development and Innovation "RESTART 2016 – 2020", DIDAKTOR (POST DOCTORAL RESEARCHERS) under grant agreement POST-DOC/0916/0248. The MAS project with duration of 24 months (1 November 2018 – 31 October 2020) and a total budget of €114000 brings together European research/academic institutions, museums, galleries, and schools in an attempt to create meaningful online learning synergies.

The literature indicates there is an absence of a museum-based, pedagogical framework for developing virtual learning environments, nor systematic online resources based on that framework, which can be easily accessible to engage in effective museum-school online partnerships. The MAS project can siginificantly advance this field. It is an innovative approach to museum learning in Cyprus, since it offers Cypriot museum staff and school educators the opportunity to virtually connect and cooperate with each other, as well as extend their network of collaboration beyond Cyprus by developing partnerships with their counterparts from different parts of Europe.

MAS' scope is to propose an instructional design with practical implementation and evaluation guidelines that would integrate the MAS framework to promote ubiquitous multiliteracies learning for CLD students in the context of the Infrastructure developed. There is specific focus on the development of the MAS project to accommodate for culturally and linguistically diverse students' needs. It is anticipated that students will deepen their knowledge of cultural heritage through participation in the partnership, while also become motivated to engage in museum learning, whether physically or online in the future.

The MAS framework, leveraging upon the theories of multiliteracies pedagogy, affinity spaces and flow theory, will provide an open source web-based solution customisable to addressing educators' and students' requirements, through:
-The strategic partnership search (MAS-Portal) which will allow the creation of the profiles
-The virtual museum creator (MAS-Cabinet) which will be the web software featuring the virtual environment created according to the pedagogical framework.
-The Support Mechanism (MAS-Hub) to connect the MAS virtual community and promote dialogue and networking opportunities.
 -The Open Educational Access resource packs, tutorials and webinars on how to deliver successful museum-school partnerships for developing lesson plans based on the MAS framework (MAS-Archive)
For more information on the project and frequent updates, check the project website.

The Art + Design elearning lab team
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@masprojecteu   Museum Affinity Spaces