

***iSay*: Visitor-Generated Content in Heritage Institutions**

Event 1 – Call for Papers

The Shape of Things

New and emerging technology-enabled models of participation through VGC

Location School of Museum Studies, University of Leicester, UK
Dates January 31st–February 1st, 2013
Partners University of Leicester
Cardiff University
The Herbert Museum and Art Gallery
Art of Memory
EMMS Digital Engagement Network

Background

iSay is a two-year network funded by AHRC under the Digital Transformations in the Arts and Humanities theme. Focusing on Visitor-Generated Content (VGC) in heritage institutions, the network will convene four events during which heritage professionals and academics will explore the radically new models of visitor participation that are emerging within heritage practice in the digital mediascape, through sharing practices and discourses on the politics of moderation, control, legitimisation, adoption and use of VGC.

Event 1 ‘The Shape of Things’

A wealth of projects across the heritage sector have been seeking to capture and disseminate VGC. *iSay* aims to bring those projects together in order to understand their implications both on visitor participation and on visitor content. In so doing, the project will:

- expose the ethics and the practicalities of ‘generating’ visitor content;
- question the various frames within which VGC is encouraged and facilitated;
- problematise the term ‘visitor-generated content’ itself, to unpack inherent assumptions about power and influence;
- expose, critique and, importantly, learn from past practices; and ultimately
- re-conceptualise traditional practices of collecting, archiving and capturing VGC as live processes of dialogue for the co-creation of heritage.

The Shape of Things will be a two-day event and will include keynote addresses, presentations from museum professionals and academics with experience of VGC projects, participant-led sessions, and live debates on the value of VGC.

Keynote speakers:

Prof. Angelina Russo	RMIT, Australia	<i>Transformations in Cultural Communications</i>
Dr Nina Simon	Santa Cruz Museum of Art & History, US	<i>The participatory museum</i>
Mia Ridge	Chair Museums Computer Group; and PhD student, the Open University, UK	<i>Crowd-sourcing as participation</i>

Call for papers

We now welcome proposals of 300 words maximum for presentations at the first event, 'The Shape of Things: New and Emerging Technology-Enabled Models of Participation through VGC.' Presentations should share examples of sourcing VGC and reflect on pertinent and emerging VGC issues. 'Anti'-presentations that dispute investment in visitor-generated content are also welcome. Possible topics include but are not limited to:

- Process versus product: is the value of VGC within the co-production process or the resultant content?
- The added value of digital vs. analogue VGC
- VGC and moderation
- VGC and institutional (un)participatory culture

Call for VGC technology show-and-tell

We also welcome proposals of 300 words maximum for showcasing VGC technologies and solutions during day 2 of the event (Feb 1st 2013). Proposals should include a brief description of the technology, examples of use, and a list of technical requirements for showcasing.

Doctoral students

We have a limited number of funded places available for PhD students working in the area of VGC. The funding will contribute towards travel and accommodation expenses up to a maximum of £180. Interested students are encouraged to submit a 300 word proposal summarising their doctoral research and how it relates with the focus of the event.

Submission of proposals

All submissions to be emailed to iSayEvents@gmail.com by 7 Dec 2012, and to include presenter name(s), affiliation(s) and email address(es), as well as 300-word proposal(s) as detailed above.

Publication

Descriptions of projects and technologies presented at all the events will be included in the *iSay* blog, which will host discussions before, during and after the events. Authors of accepted papers will also be invited to contribute chapters for an edited volume that will be published in 2014 (details will be confirmed soon).

Registration

Registration for the event is *free*.

Important dates

Submission of proposals: **7 Dec 2012**

Notification of acceptance: **14 Dec 2012**

Description for project blog due: **10 Jan 2013**

Registration open: **30 Nov 2012 – 15 Jan 2013**

The Shape of Things: **31 Jan – 1 Feb 2013**

Enquires

General enquiries about the project may be sent to iSayEvents@gmail.com.