



Exploring how museums behave like living beings

Tuesday 4 — Wednesday 5 November 2014

A Two-Day Interdisciplinary Postgraduate Conference hosted by the School of Museum Studies, University of Leicester, in partnership with Migration Museum Project

This conference seeks to explore the notion of museums as living organisms and the multiple questions that emerge from this context. Museums, like living beings, do not live in isolation, rather, they are embedded in complex eco systems. Museums are occupied and given life by people. They are constantly evolving, directly affected by the changes around them, as well as effecting and acting as catalysts for change. *Museums Alive! — Exploring how museums behave like living beings*, organized in partnership with Migration Museum Project, will be the sixth conference developed by the PhD community at the School of Museum Studies, University of Leicester, and follows last year's highly successful *Museum Metamorphosis* conference.

AIMS AND TOPICS

We aim to discuss and share ideas on some of the most seminal issues in museums today. Papers addressing the following themes and questions are encouraged, but we also welcome new suggestions and creative proposals:

Conscious Living

- How do museums form their identity both internally and externally?
- How do museums facilitate the creation of identities, and how in turn are museums' identities created by the communities they serve?
- How might we define living in the context of the museum?
- Should museums remain neutral or express emotions?

Open System

- How do museums as 'organisms' coexist and relate to the wider eco system? How do we define what that system is?
- How do museums migrate in order to adapt to the environment, not only in ways of living but also in ways of thinking?
- How do museums affect the world around them?
- How do museums behave in reaction to perceived threats and/or opportunities of change?

Organic Evolution

- How are museums born and do museums get sick or die? Do they mutate? How can we portray a museum's life cycles?
- How can museums use bodily 'senses' to respond to, capture and integrate with their visitors and the public?
- How do museums collaborate and compete with different types of 'species'?
- How can museums become laboratories or spaces for experimentation?

- If museums actively and emotionally participate in social issues, what are the implications that need to be considered?
- How can museums ensure that internal and external (the public) relations are balanced and appropriate?
- How can museums become adaptive within in a defined structure? How and why do museums evolve?

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

The conference team welcomes all postgraduate students, early career researchers and practitioners who are interested in and researching topics related to the museum field. All disciplines and nationalities are invited to participate.

FORMAT AND STYLE OF PRESENTATIONS

We welcome and encourage creative and alternative presentational styles, alongside the traditional paper. Workshops, panel debates, creative writing, films, installations, visual creations, displays and ignite presentations will all be considered.

- Presenters of traditional papers will have 20 minutes to deliver their paper (ending with a 30 minutes Q & A with the whole session panel).
- Workshops, panel debates and other alternative formats can either last 30, 45 or 60 minutes (please specify on submission proposal).
- This year we are also inviting proposals for ignite rapid fire presentations, a great opportunity to spend 5 minutes presenting about a particular project, area of work or piece of research.

ABSTRACTS AND SESSION SUBMISSIONS

Abstracts and session submissions should include the following information:

- 1) title of abstract or session
- 2) author(s)' name and contact information (including twitter handle)
- 3) biography (max. 100 words)
- 4) format and style of presentation
- 5) abstract or session description of no more than 250 words
- 6) optional: up to two jpeg images, each under 2MB, to complement your proposal

Abstracts should be sent by email to Sipei Lu, Conference Secretary, by midnight GMT on **20 June 2014**, to msphdconf@gmail.com.

Successful participants will be notified by mid July 2014.

COST AND PAYMENT

	Student	Practitioner
Early bird fee (until 31 August)	£45	£55
Full fee (after 1 September)	£65	£75

Lunch and refreshments will be provided on both days. In addition, there will be optional social events and museum visits.

FURTHER INFORMATION

<http://www2.le.ac.uk/departments/museumstudies/museums-alive>

Conference email: msphdconf@gmail.com

Conference blog: <http://msphdconf.blogspot.co.uk/>

Facebook: goo.gl/a2mjQ4

Twitter: [@msphdconf](https://twitter.com/msphdconf)