CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

INT-ACT Final Conference · Thessaloniki, 11–12 November 2026

The Excelsior Hotel, Komninon 10 & Mitropoleos 23 · Hybrid: in person and online · Single track, in English

Day 1 · Wednesday 11 November

13:30	Registration
14:00–14:15	**Welcome and opening** Project coordinator (Aalto University) and host partners
14:15–15:15	**Session 1 – Bridging Past, Present and Future** Three years of INT-ACT: aims, approach and key results, from fieldwork to XR demonstrators · *Prof. Masood Masoodian, Aalto University (project coordinator)* · *Giorgia Romagnoli, URBASOFIA*
15:15–15:30	***Coffee break***
15:30–17:15	**Session 2 – Four Places, Four Stories: case studies** Four pilot cases, 20 minutes each, then Q&A · Lessons from the four pilot sites, each with an XR demonstrator built from local narratives: **Alentejo (PT)**, megalithic landscapes · **Calanais (UK)**, stone circles and community memory · **Koli (FI)**, nature, art and national identity · **Kavala (GR)**, a city of many cultures
17:15–17:35	**Results of the INT-ACT Stakeholder Advisory Board – shared findings and learnings** Giorgia Romagnoli, URBASOFIA
17:45–18:00	**Conclusions and closing**
20:00	**Working dinner** Kitchen Bar, Apothiki 2, A' Provlita Limena (the port), Thessaloniki · speakers, partners and invited guests

Day 2 · Thursday 12 November

09:00	Registration and welcome
09:30	**Collective Memories and Immersive Experiences: Reimagining Heritage in the AI era** Dr Charalampos A. Dimoulas, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
10:30	***Coffee break***
11:00	**Session 3 – Heritage for Society** Well-being, communities and inclusion — **Active participation in heritage interpretation as bearer of well-being** · Polytechnic of Turin & KMOP · *META-MUSEUM* — **The archives of cultural organisations as a resource for citizens' cultural participation and active citizenship** · Dr K. Baltá, V. Tricha (Municipality of Thessaloniki) — **Promoting well-being and accessibility: enhancing the museum experience for older adults through co-creation and technology** · Despoina Petsani (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki)
12:30	***Lunch***
14:00–16:00	**Session 4 – Heritage and Technology** Ethics, authenticity and access — **Heritage in the Digital Age: European Collaboration, Ethical Responsibility and the Right to Access** · Olga Anastasia Panagiotopoulou (Europe Direct Thessaloniki) — **Wearable eye-tracking technology for evaluating visual attention in audio-guided museum exhibits** · Nikos Athanasopoulos (Aristotle University of Thessaloniki) — **The Fashion Time Machine** · Stijn Van den Bulck (MoMu – Fashion Museum Antwerp) · *REEVALUATE Pilot 1* — **From Museums to Screens: Music and Sports in Olympia** · Dr Deniza Popova (Staatliche Museen zu Berlin) · *REEVALUATE Pilot 2*
16:00–16:15	***Coffee break***
16:15–17:15	**Session 5 – Looking Ahead** Roundtable with participants on policy, sustainability and next steps · European Commission intervention
17:15–17:30	**Conclusions and closing**

Funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union under Horizon Europe, grant agreement No 101132719. Views and opinions expressed are those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Research Executive Agency. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

Study visit and practical information

Day 3 · Friday 13 November · Study visit to Kavala

09:00	**Departure from Thessaloniki** By coach · meeting point: The Excelsior Hotel, Komninon 10 & Mitropoleos 23
11:30	**Welcome by the Municipality of Kavala** Introduction to the INT-ACT Kavala pilot site
12:00	**Guided study visit** Kavala's multicultural heritage and the INT-ACT pilot on site
14:00	***Lunch***
17:00	**Return to Thessaloniki** Arrival around 19:30

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Venue	The Excelsior Hotel, Komninon 10 & Mitropoleos 23, Thessaloniki, Greece
Format	Hybrid (in person and online), single track, in English
Online participation, Day 1	Link to Day 1 Meeting ID: 675 7570 5588 · Passcode: 653599
Online participation, Day 2	Link to Day 2 Meeting ID: 675 9092 3689 · Passcode: 393963
Presentations	About 20 minutes each, with Q&A for all speakers at the end of each session
Working dinner	Wednesday 11 November, 20:00 – Kitchen Bar, Apothiki 2, A' Provlita Limena (the port), Thessaloniki · speakers, partners and invited guests
Study visit	Friday 13 November – day trip to Kavala, one of the four INT-ACT pilot sites
Contact	Smaro Boura · **SmaroBoura@itml.gr**

MAP · WORKING DINNER VENUE

Kitchen Bar

Apothiki 2, A' Provlita Limena (the port)
Thessaloniki 541 10, Greece

Tel. +30 231 050 2241
Open daily, 09:00 – 01:30

Waterfront location on the port; booking recommended.
Wednesday 11 November, 20:00.

Directions

Coordinates 40.6320° N, 22.9355° E

maps.google.com – Kitchen Bar

The venue is on the harbour front, a short walk from the city centre.

The programme may be subject to change.

Funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union under Horizon Europe, grant agreement No 101132719. Views and opinions expressed are those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Research Executive Agency. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

SESSIONS

Session 1 · Bridging Past, Present and Future

Wednesday 11 November, 14:15–15:15 · The INT-ACT journey: aims, methods and key results

INT-ACT is a three-year European project (2024–2026), funded under Horizon Europe and coordinated by Aalto University. It explores how immersive technologies can preserve and share living intangible heritage: the stories, rituals, memories and emotions connected to heritage sites. Session 1 presents the project as a whole, from research methods to the XR demonstrators developed at four pilot sites.

INDICATIVE TOPICS

— Three years of INT-ACT: aims, approach and key results

— Capturing the intangible: turning stories, rituals and emotions into knowledge

— Building immersive XR heritage environments: methods and lessons

PARTNERS

Aalto University (coordinator) · University of Edinburgh · University of Évora · ITML · URBASOFIA · Municipality of Kavala · ARILYN

Masood Masoodian and Giorgia Romagnoli
Project coordinator, Aalto University · URBASOFIA

SPEAKERS · PROJECT OVERVIEW

Masood Masoodian is Professor of Visual Communication Design in the School of Arts, Design and Architecture at Aalto University, and project coordinator of INT-ACT. He gained a PhD in 1997 from the University of Waikato, New Zealand, and leads the Aalto Visual Communication Design (AVCD) research group in the Department of Art and Media. He is the founding chair of the IFIP Technical Committee 13 Working Group on Human-Centred Technology for Sustainability. His research focuses on the role of visual design and visualisation in societal challenges such as environmental crises, ageing populations, public health and well-being. He has coordinated and taken part in numerous national and international research projects and has published nearly 200 peer-reviewed journal articles and conference papers.

Giorgia Romagnoli is an economist and EU project manager passionate about sustainability and creating a positive impact through international collaboration. She holds an MSc in Research Economics and Sustainable Development and is currently pursuing a Master's degree in Circular Economy Solutions.

Session 2 · Four Places, Four Stories

Wednesday 11 November, 15:30–17:15 · Four case studies, 20 minutes each, with Q&A

Each pilot site is a living landscape of stories. Session 2 shows what each site taught the project, drawing on local interviews and narrative workshops and on the XR demonstrator built for each place.

Alentejo, Portugal
Megalithic landscapes and cultural tourism. Narrative workshops and interviews with local residents.

Calanais, Scotland
Stone circles and community memory. An immersive exhibition with an INT-ACT tablet app combining aerial footage, AR and interview stories.

Koli National Park, Finland
Nature, art and national identity in the landscape of Koli.

Kavala, Greece
A city of many cultures. Developed with the Municipality of Kavala, the host of the study visit on 13 November.

Funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union under Horizon Europe, grant agreement No 101132719. Views and opinions expressed are those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Research Executive Agency. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

SPEAKERS AND TALKS

Session 2 · Four Places, Four Stories

Wednesday 11 November, 15:30–17:15 · Four case studies, 20 minutes each, with Q&A

Áurea Rodrigues

University of Évora · Alentejo, Portugal pilot case

SPEAKERS · ALENTEJO, PORTUGAL

Áurea Rodrigues. Áurea Rodrigues is Assistant Professor in the Department of Sociology at the University of Évora and a researcher at CIDEHUS (Interdisciplinary Centre for History, Culture and Societies). She holds a PhD in Tourism (2012) from FCT, an MSc in Management and Development in Tourism (2004) and a degree in Management and Planning in Tourism (2002), all from the University of Aveiro. She has carried out research at Penn State University (2009), the University of Siena (2010) and the University of California, Berkeley (2011). Her current interests include astrotourism, cultural tourism, tourist consumer behaviour and sustainable tourism in rural destinations. Her papers appear in the Journal of Vacation Marketing, European Countryside, the International Journal of Tourism Research, Tourism Analysis and Anatolia.

Saturnino Luz Filho

Calanais, Scotland pilot case

SPEAKER · CALANAIS, SCOTLAND

Saturnino Luz Filho works in medical informatics, devising and applying machine learning, signal processing, natural language processing and dimensionality reduction methods to study behaviour and communication in healthcare contexts. His main research interest is the computational modelling of behavioural and biological changes caused by neurodegenerative diseases, with a focus on the analysis of vocal and linguistic signals in Alzheimer's disease. He has also applied these methods to interaction in multidisciplinary medical team meetings, doctor–patient consultations, telemedicine and health promotion.

Masood Masoodian and Inkeri Aula

Koli National Park, Finland pilot case · Aalto University

SPEAKERS · KOLI, FINLAND

Masood Masoodian. Masood Masoodian is Professor of Visual Communication Design at Aalto University and project coordinator of INT-ACT. He leads the Aalto Visual Communication Design (AVCD) research group and is founding chair of the IFIP TC13 Working Group on Human-Centred Technology for Sustainability. His research focuses on visual design and visualisation for environmental crises, ageing populations, public health and well-being.

Inkeri Aula. Inkeri Aula (PhD), Postdoctoral Researcher in the Department of Art and Media at Aalto University, is a Finnish cultural anthropologist, researcher and artist who specializes in multi-sited and multi-sensorial ethnography. Her research spans environmental relationships, transgenerational exchanges, creative well-being, forest folklore and Afro-Brazilian culture.

Dr Manolis Pratsinakis

Kavala, Greece pilot case · Harokopio University of Athens

SPEAKER · KAVALA, GREECE

Dr Manolis Pratsinakis is Assistant Professor in Social Geography at Harokopio University of Athens. He previously served as Departmental Lecturer in Migration Studies and Deputy Project Manager of the SEESOX Diaspora project at Oxford. His research bridges geography, anthropology and sociology, focusing on migration trajectories, transnationalism and nationalism in Southern Europe. He holds a PhD in Anthropology from the University of Amsterdam and has published extensively on intra-EU mobility and crisis-driven migration.

Funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union under Horizon Europe, grant agreement No 101132719. Views and opinions expressed are those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Research Executive Agency. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

SPEAKERS AND TALKS

Day 2 opening · 09:30

Thursday 12 November · Living heritage in a digital age

Collective Memories and Immersive Experiences: Reimagining Heritage in the AI era

Dr Charalampos A. Dimoulas, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

The presentation explores the evolution of cultural heritage practices alongside technological developments, focusing on how artificial intelligence and immersive technologies are transforming the ways collective memories are documented, reconstructed, represented and experienced. It examines collaborative approaches to heritage documentation, preservation and management, leveraging rich-media enhancements enabled by XR media and immersive environments. Particular attention is given to the capabilities of AI and generative AI in supporting the interpretation and reconstruction of cultural assets, creating new forms of cultural experiences and fostering wider public engagement with heritage. Contemporary concerns are also discussed, including authenticity, historical accuracy, cultural representation, community participation and the ethical issues of using AI to reconstruct and reinterpret shared memories.

SPEAKER

Dr Charalampos A. Dimoulas holds a Diploma (1997) and a PhD (2006) in Electrical and Computer Engineering from Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. He is Professor of Media Technologies at the School of Journalism and Mass Communications and Director of the Laboratory of Electronic Media. His research covers media technologies, audiovisual signal processing, intelligent systems, machine and deep learning, and AI applications, with a particular focus on cultural heritage and CCI innovation. He is Principal Investigator of the H.F.R.I.-funded iMedius and SMARTv projects and leader for Aristotle University of Thessaloniki of the Horizon Europe projects SocioBee, Scene and Hamlet. He was Conference Chair of ACOUSTICS 2022 and Program Chair of AudioMostly 2015.

Session 3 · Heritage for Society

Thursday 12 November, 11:00–12:30 · Well-being, communities and inclusion

Active participation in heritage interpretation as bearer of well-being

Department of Architecture and Design, Polytechnic of Turin (IT) · KMOP – Social Action and Innovation Centre (GR) · META-MUSEUM project

Well-being is now understood broadly, as quality of life and as people's perception of their place in a fast-changing society. META-MUSEUM explores how active participation in interpreting cultural heritage can support it, and whether encounters with heritage can build the confidence to face profound change. Drawing on heritage studies, social sciences, computer science and neuroscience, the project runs transdisciplinary field experiments to find new ways of engaging with heritage that give people a personally rewarding sense of connection and ownership.

SPEAKERS

Valeria Minucciani is an architect and Associate Professor of Interior Architecture and Exhibition Design at the Department of Architecture and Design, Polytechnic of Turin, where she has taught since 2001, and Coordinator of the Specializing Master in Interior, Exhibit & Retail Design. She coordinates the EU-funded META-MUSEUM project. Her research covers exhibit design and museography, interior architecture and well-being, heritage and inclusion, and the links between interior architecture and neuroscience.

Michela Benente is an architect, researcher and Professor of Architectural Conservation at the Department of Architecture and Design, Polytechnic of Turin, and Vice Coordinator of META-MUSEUM. She works with the Consulta per le Persone in Difficoltà on evaluating accessible projects in the built heritage, and researches accessibility and inclusion in museums and cultural sites.

Gianluca D'Agostino, PhD in Architectural and Landscape Heritage, is a Research Fellow and Teaching Assistant at the Department of Architecture and Design, Polytechnic of Turin. He works on museography and heritage communication, focusing on "non-visitors in need": people kept away from cultural life by poverty and vulnerability. He is Project Manager of META-MUSEUM.

Vasileios Margaritis is Senior Researcher at KMOP, Professor of Research Methods and Public Health and Dean of the Swiss School of Management (SSM) Research Center, and Scientific Collaborator at the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens. An expert in research methodology, he leads community-based, transdisciplinary research and evaluates for organisations such as UNICEF.

Funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union under Horizon Europe, grant agreement No 101132719. Views and opinions expressed are those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Research Executive Agency. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

SPEAKERS AND TALKS

Session 3 · Heritage for Society (continued)

Thursday 12 November, 11:00–12:30 · Well-being, communities and inclusion

The archives of cultural organisations as a resource for strengthening citizens' cultural participation and active citizenship

Directorate of Culture & Tourism Development, Municipality of Thessaloniki (GR)

Archives are bound up with collective memory, identity and social engagement. Through oral history, collaborative documentation and educational activities, citizens can help shape collective memory, while digital tools widen access when preservation, accessibility and rights are safeguarded. The talk weighs the challenges (limited resources, uneven representation, personal data, token participation) and argues for turning the archive from a passive repository into a living public space, drawing on examples from the Directorate's own archive.

SPEAKERS

Dr Kyriaki Baltá (presenter) is Communications Officer of the Department of Cultural Events, Activities & Festivals and Administrative Support, Directorate of Culture & Tourism Development, Municipality of Thessaloniki.

Vasiliki Tricha is Director of Culture & Tourism Development at the Municipality of Thessaloniki. From this position, she coordinates iconic initiatives for the city, such as the historic Demetria Festival, as well as strategic collaborations (e.g., with the Greek National Tourism Organization - GNTO) for the tourism promotion and development of Thessaloniki.

Promoting well-being and accessibility: enhancing the museum experience for older adults through co-creation and technology

Lab of Medical Physics and Digital Innovation, School of Medicine, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (GR) · VITALISE project

This study explores the experiences and motivations of older adults (aged 60–85) around museum visits, aiming to promote well-being and identify opportunities for improvement. Co-creation sessions at the Museum of Casts and Antiquities in Thessaloniki, run within the VITALISE (H2020) project, used participatory approaches including the photovoice method. Older adults showed a positive attitude towards museum visits and strong openness to new technological aids. The study also identified accessibility challenges, such as difficulties with transport and navigation and the need for clearer, more accessible information about exhibits. These insights point to tailored adaptations of museum environments that meet older adults' needs, fostering inclusion and enriching their museum experience.

SPEAKER

Despoina Petsani holds an MSc in Medical Informatics and a diploma in Electrical and Computer Engineering from Aristotle University of Thessaloniki. She is a Research Associate at the Lab of Medical Physics and Digital Innovation, School of Medicine, AUTH, and Chief Innovation Officer at Xeeti. Her expertise covers decision support systems, AI-driven digital health solutions and Living Labs. Since 2017 she has led and contributed to many EU-funded projects, coordinating the Living Lab harmonisation process in VITALISE (H2020) and serving as Mission Coordinator of EVOLVE2CARE (Horizon Europe). She co-chairs the ENoLL Living Lab Harmonization and Health & Wellbeing Working Groups and sat on the Organizing Committee of the Health and Wellbeing Living Lab Symposium in 2024 and 2025.

Session 4 · Heritage and Technology

Thursday 12 November, 14:00–15:30 · Ethics, authenticity and access in digital heritage

Heritage in the Digital Age: European Collaboration, Ethical Responsibility and the Right to Access

Head of EUROPE DIRECT Thessaloniki, hosted by the Municipality of Thessaloniki

Digital technologies are transforming the ways cultural heritage is documented, interpreted, preserved and experienced. But technological innovation also raises important questions: How do we safeguard authenticity in digital reconstructions? Who decides what is digitised and how it is represented? And how can we ensure that digital heritage remains accessible, inclusive and meaningful to all? Drawing on examples from Thessaloniki, this presentation explores how European cooperation and funding programmes can support the relationship between heritage and technology, bringing together research institutions, cultural organisations and local communities. Projects such as REEVALUATE, ECHOES and the Digital Museum of Byzantine Culture illustrate different approaches to digitisation, immersive experiences and the interpretation of cultural heritage. The presentation argues that technology should not be treated as an end in itself, but as a means to protect heritage, broaden access, encourage participation and strengthen the connection between cultural assets and the people who give them meaning.

SPEAKER

Olga Anastasia Panagiotopoulou is a communications professional, currently serving as Head of EUROPE DIRECT Thessaloniki, hosted by the Municipality of Thessaloniki. In this role, she works to strengthen citizens' understanding of European policies, initiatives and opportunities, fostering connections between European priorities and local communities across the Region of Central Macedonia.

Funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union under Horizon Europe, grant agreement No 101132719. Views and opinions expressed are those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Research Executive Agency. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

SPEAKERS AND TALKS

Session 4 · Heritage and Technology (continued)

Thursday 12 November, 14:00–16:00 · Ethics, authenticity and access in digital heritage

Wearable eye-tracking technology for evaluating visual attention in audio-guided museum exhibits

Lab of Medical Physics and Digital Innovation, School of Medicine, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (GR)

This study uses wearable eye-tracking to evaluate how accessible audio description influences visual attention in museums among older adults and post-stroke survivors (aged 55–85). After baseline cognitive and well-being questionnaires, participants toured three exhibits wearing Pupil Core eye-tracking glasses and headphones, along with a Fitbit Charge 5 smartwatch and Digitsole Pro smart insoles, and listened to both the original and a linguistically modified, accessible audio guide. Focusing on the West Pediment of the Temple of Zeus at Olympia, combined head and pupil tracking captured eye movements, pupil dilation and gaze fixation across four predefined points of interest. The modified guide consistently sped up visual localisation, cutting average response latency by nearly one second and maximum delays by four seconds, and substantially reduced spatial disorientation and non-responses, in strong agreement with the cognitive assessments and comprehension questionnaires.

SPEAKER

Nikos Athanasopoulos is a Research Associate at the Medical Physics and Digital Innovation Lab, School of Medicine, Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (AUTH). He holds a BEng in Industrial Informatics Engineering. His research focuses on wearable eye-tracking technologies, gaze and biometric signal analysis, and healthcare environments.

The Fashion Time Machine

MoMu – Fashion Museum Antwerp (BE) · REEVALUATE project, Pilot 1

Results from Pilot 1 of REEVALUATE, which tested a modular framework for every stage of a digitised artefact's life cycle. Garments, accessories and sketches from MoMu were digitised and enriched through collaborative contextualisation, and patterns created at crowdsourced "Pattern-a-thons" were digitised and published. The assets were then reused in two ways: the Fashion Time Machine, an educational game for exploring fashion history, and redesigned historical patterns for making personalised garments inspired by fashion heritage.

SPEAKER

Stijn Van den Bulck is a pattern maker at MoMu – Fashion Museum Antwerp, with more than ten years' experience in the fashion world. He organises the museum's Pattern-a-thons, digitises their results and documents the patterns and data of historical garments, all from a tailor's point of view.

From Museums to Screens: Music and Sports in Olympia

Ethnologisches Museum & Museum für Asiatische Kunst, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin (DE) · REEVALUATE project, Pilot 2

In Pilot 2, cultural heritage moves from museums to screens, from screens into a sound space, and back to the people. The talk focuses on musical heritage and its connections with sport: a new exhibition format presents ethnomusicological sound recordings alongside digitised artefacts, opening up new narratives and contexts. The pilot is a collaboration between FFP (Vienna), the Olympic Museum (Thessaloniki) and the Media Department of the Berlin museums, whose Berlin Satellite on music and sport includes an "Ode to Cultural Heritage in Transformation".

SPEAKER

Dr Deniza Popova is a music ethnologist, singer and researcher working between Germany and Bulgaria. She studies musical traditions, historical sound recordings and the relationships between music, cultural heritage and social practice, with long-term fieldwork on traditional music in the Rhodope Mountains combining research, singing and audiovisual documentation. Her interests include Byzantine church music, musical transmission and listening as a form of knowledge. For the past two years she has worked on REEVALUATE.

Funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union under Horizon Europe, grant agreement No 101132719. Views and opinions expressed are those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Research Executive Agency. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

SPEAKERS AND TALKS

Session 5 · Looking Ahead

Thursday 12 November, 16:15–17:15 · Policy, sustainability and next steps

Looking Ahead: policy, sustainability and next steps

Closing session of the INT-ACT Final Conference

ABOUT THE SESSION

The final session is a roundtable discussion with participants on what INT-ACT's results mean for policy and for the sustainability of living heritage initiatives, and what comes next once the project ends. It opens with an intervention by the European Commission and closes the conference at 17:30.

European perspective

Intervention by the European Commission

INTERVENTION

A short intervention by the European Commission on the European perspective on policy and living heritage.

Funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union under Horizon Europe, grant agreement No 101132719. Views and opinions expressed are those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Research Executive Agency. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.