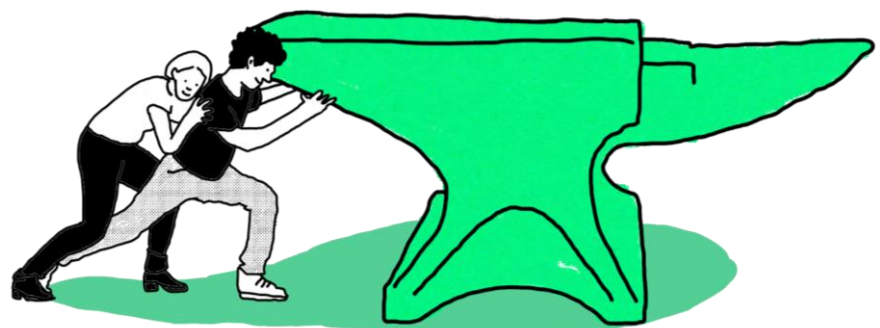# HƐPHÆSTUS

Heritage in EuroPe: new tecHnologies in crAft for prEServing and innovaTing fUtureS

Project No. 101095123

Deliverable 6.2

Creation and diffusion of craft histories

HEPHÆSTUS

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Scheduled updates

The Report is a document which evolves during the lifespan of the project and registers all relevant changes in the life cycle of the HEPHAESTUS project. This document will be updated every 6 months until the last month of the project.

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D6.2 v8	48

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About HEPHAESTUS

Working across the **regional craft ecosystems** of **Bassano del Grappa (IT)**, **Bornholm (DK)**, **Dals Långed (SE)**, and **Venice (IT)**, the overarching ambition of HEPHAESTUS is *to bring together cutting-edge technologies with traditional craft to co-create solutions in the form of a suite of tools, methodologies, and business models to make the future of European craft ecosystems socially, culturally, environmentally, and economically sustainable.* HEPHAESTUS will **test and evaluate solutions** co-created across the four regional craft ecosystems within a **"Future of Craft" Green Living Lab** situated in Bornholm, a Danish Island and regional municipality given the title of World Craft Region. Ultimately, the project sets out to create a **sustainable network** (especially including regional realities) of heritage sites, cultural and creative sectors, institutions, universities, local, regional and national authorities, enterprises, and other relevant stakeholders engaged in preservation of craft heritage that will take the project's results, further adapt and deploy them in a broader range of craft ecosystems, and ensure a long- lasting legacy of the HEPHAESTUS project. The work of HEPHAESTUS is organized around six work packages, each responsible for one specific objective related to the overarching ambition, namely:

Objective 1: Develop new **sustainable business models** for the craft sectors.
Objective 2: Combine **cutting-edge technologies** with craft materials and processes to research and develop new applications and solutions for the digitisation and innovation of the craft sector to improve sustainability and social innovation.
Objective 3: Explore visions for the role of **craft in the future**, integrating emerging technologies and contributing to the circular economy, by engaging craft communities in a participatory ideation process.
Objective 4: Develop a **lifelong learning methodology** and a set of innovative curricula to equip craft-makers with diverse skillsets for innovation.
Objective 5: Establish a **Green Living Lab** for testing the HEPHAESTUS innovations.
Objective 6: To design and operationalise a **bespoke dissemination, communication, and exploitation** strategy.

To achieve these objectives, the consortium includes prominent universities, business schools and a private organization selected for their proven knowledge and expertise on craft heritage, craft materials, and the use of digital technologies and cutting-edge technologies in craft, the proposed innovative and original contributions as well as their trustworthiness. . A unique value added brought to the consortium is represented also by the group of third parties, including craft makers and craft associations, as well as Museums and Municipality representatives, from each of the four regional ecosystems.

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1. Executive Summary

This report illustrates the methodology that Ca' Foscari University first experienced and then shared with the Hephæstus project partnership in order to build narratives about arts and crafts in Europe.

Starting from the field research carried out as part of the project's activities, in fact, the team is collecting photographs, videos, narratives and creative materials useful for divulging in an unusual way the world of crafts related to the four ecosystems: Venice, Bassano del Grappa, Dals Långed and Bornholm.

The Craft Histories thus constructed will represent a unique way to approach the world of craft and discover it through the eyes of researchers who will have explored its different features and resources.

Disclaimer

This document reflects only the authors' view, and the European Commission is not responsible for any use that may be made of the information it contains.

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2. A process of getting to know craft

As it is emerging during the field research activities, craft unfolds in different ways in the four ecosystems identified within the Hephæstus project (Venice, Bassano del Grappa, Dals Långed, and Bornholm). Due to this specificity of theirs, the different places and sectors of craft need to be presented and narrated in a unique way, in order to make known in a non-trivial way their characteristics and what makes certain processes and contexts particular.

Craft Histories aim to tell stories of craft and about craft through the perspective of the researcher and of those who approach certain contexts with a critical, attentive gaze aimed at exploring and learning.

Through the research outputs (based on fieldwork) provided by the different consortium partners active in each of the ecosystems, the WIT Berry partner will create a strategy to communicate and tell these stories in an agile and contemporary way, capturing the depth of creative craftsmanship.

The multichannel strategy relies on the combined use of social media (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and X) and Hephæstus website to host such stories. These are organised by country so that the storytelling follows the exploration of the different ecosystems. Digital storytelling will build this narrative primarily through skillful copywriting that will reveal the person and community behind craft artefacts.

Each story will be told in words and images produced by the researchers and students who will explore the Craft ecosystems in an effort to capture their essence.

3. Crafting craft histories

The process of telling the story of how artisans make their crafts aims to generate strong social engagement in offering innovative and engaging content.

It becomes essential to define a narrative of craftsmanship: artisans become the core of a knowledge linked to the tradition of the places to which they belong; they do not only produce beautiful and functional objects, but through their making they build narratives about themselves and the sector to which they belong. There are codified approaches to craft storytelling, mainly related to the figure of the artisan and the ways in which they make their crafts, but what we propose through Craft Histories is to experiment with unconventional approaches.

3.1. Video storytelling

The power of unconventional storytelling resides in the use of images and concepts that express a personal and artistic perspective, transcending traditional notions of beauty. Companies normally use video storytelling for several reasons:

1. To create a collective or individual identity that enables recognition of lifestyles and work contexts;
2. To build a memory, ensure continuity of knowledge and orientation in behaviour;
3. To develop a culture of values and attitudes;
4. To more effectively communicate the company's activities and vision.

There are several expressive codes involved in the construction of the audio-visual product(s) that contribute to the definition of meaning, generating an immersive and engaging narrative, in particular e.g. image, words, music, sound, location and light.

Translating a story into images means finding answers to a series of questions: what to show or not show, what viewpoints to choose, and what emotions to communicate.

There is a documentary component, in which the constituent narrative and expressive elements are captured from reality, and an artistic component, in which the company employs collaboration with directors or video-makers.

4. Methodology and Guidelines

4.1. Setting up the criteria through craft experimentation

Ca' Foscari University has been experimenting with and testing a methodology for building narratives around Craft themes. To do so, it involved a class of students from Copenhagen Business School, visiting its premises in December 2023, to conduct a series of interviews with Venetian artisans.

We arranged a series of one-hour online interviews, moderated by Ca' Foscari researchers, between craftswomen (from the fashion, papier-mâché, and illustration sectors) and the students.

The main theme was the *multi-value proposition*, i.e., the definition of the value system which, through the framework of the business model canvas, defines, locates, and identifies the ways in which an organisation creates economic, social, and cultural values. In line with the research protocol carried out between the two universities, the students prepared an interview outline, which was then readjusted according to the characteristics of the craft organisation assigned to them. The craftswomen were immediately interested and the students were enthusiastic.

The second phase of the storytelling methodology consisted in a visit to the craftswomen's workshops, where the students conducted a second interview, much more focused on the artifacts and their making. On this occasion, the students took photographs and made video footage to capture the essence of the craft method and enhance the beauty and artistry of the workmanship (Figure 1).

Figure 1 - Photographs taken as part of the students' visit to the workshops of female artisans. In order, the workshop of Lara Perbellini Atelier, Atelier 23, and Atelier Volante

Before making the visits to the laboratories, the students were involved in a short training phase by Ca' Foscari University, in which they were introduced to various storytelling techniques. The students then assembled the collected audio and video material in a series

of slides and short films, which were then shown to the other students, crafters and researchers. The craftswomen were delighted with the result (Figure 2 and 3). The videos made by the students will be posted on the Hephæstus website on the landing page dedicated to the Venice ecosystem.
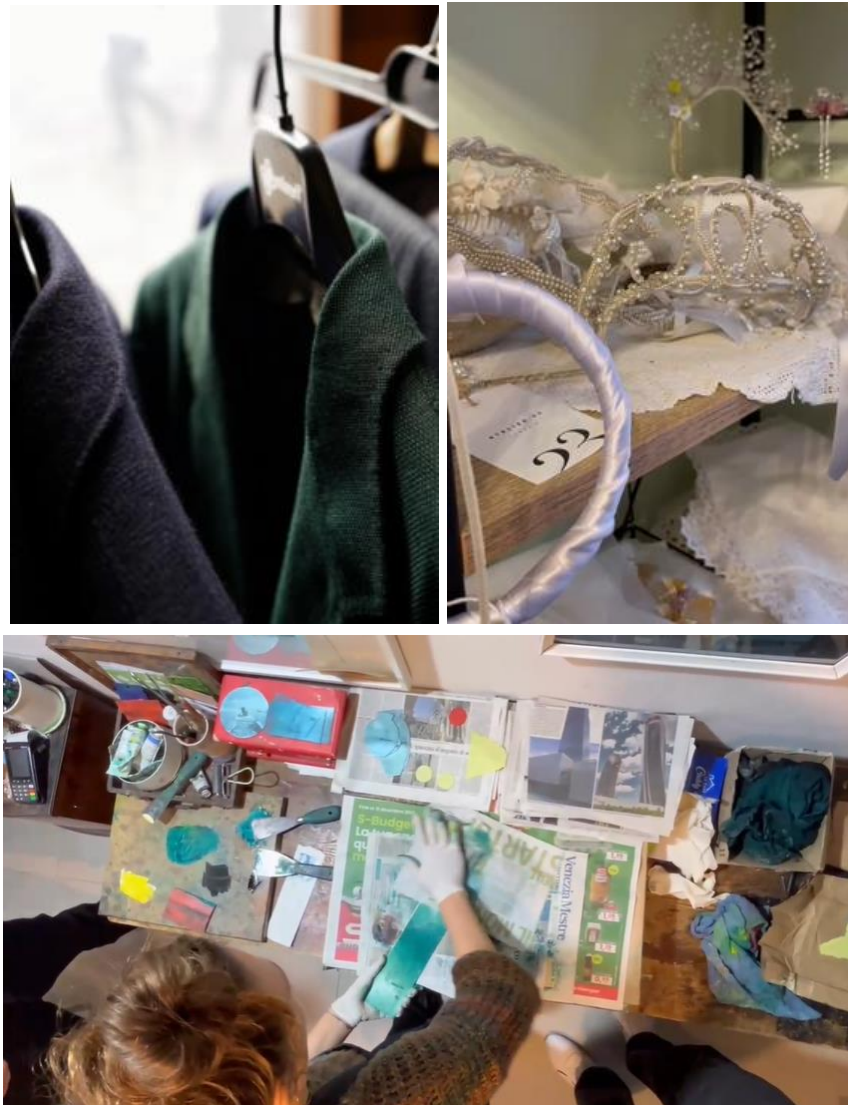

Figure 2 - Some frames from the CBS students' videos

Figure 3 - A picture made during a visit by CBS students to Vanessa Milan's workshop

4.2. Specific suggestions for making craft histories

The methodology invites each partner, when involved in research activities, events, workshops, fairs, focus groups and seminars, to make photographs and short videos trying to tell in a personal way their perspective on craftsmanship.

Prior to the collection of videos and photos, it is necessary for partners to have artisans sign a **GDPR consent** release authorizing, in accordance with current regulations, their institution to publish the collected materials on Hephaestus website and social platforms.

The videos should capture, on the one hand, the distinctive characteristics of handicrafts, the specifics of the different techniques and materials, and, on the other hand, the workshops' and craft enterprises' social, political, urban and cultural contexts. For this reason, it might be useful to take photographs and video footage during or immediately after an e.g., interview with an artisan, so to complement the conversation with the sensorial perceptions of being in the workshop.

Images should try to capture the specificity of a craft enterprise: its artefacts as well as the individual artisan's peculiar skills and knowledge. In what ways, both the product and the maker, are tied to their context? To what extent is tradition present, and to what degree is it both challenged and upheld?

The researcher's gaze should be that of the genuinely curious visitor thus to keep the recorded material spontaneous and true to the crafters' stories.

We suggest keeping the craft histories a fertile place for insights and reflections on the workshop's atmosphere, location and context: what makes the experience of the visit or fieldwork relevant from the point of view of the person making it? What impressions, emotions, words, sounds, and images linger in the researcher's idea after the visit experience? The narratives are open to personal artistic and empirical experimentation.

4.3. Guidelines for Craft Histories Realisation

Craft histories will take the form of short-form videos, up to 90 seconds long. Video clips and photos can be paired with music and posted online. They should be a nimble and interesting way of capturing the depth of craft creativity. They need to:

1. Focus on the **process of "knowing" artefacts** through the life and social contexts of their creators;
2. **Capture the atmosphere of the context** and details, highlighting the protagonists and objects of the craft world.

Considering that researchers are not necessarily video professionals, we recommend:

- Make videos preferably in a **vertical format** (more suitable for Instagram's reel format);
- Schedule interviews: **divide the roles** and determine who, during the visit to the craft organisation, will ask the questions and who will shoot the video or photographic material (Figure 4). Also decide who will focus more on the people, who will focus on the details, and who will instead try to capture the atmosphere.

Identifying a **triggering statement or question** is essential to foster the conversation with artisans. For example: "Introduce yourself through an object that identifies you" or "Tell us about the process of making your crafts" or "Tell us about your creations in relation to the social context of the city".

Figure 4 - Students making Craft histories during the interview with the craftswoman Laura Perbellini in Venice

Three conditions are necessary for optimal video and photo realisation:
- **Equipment**: phone with camera in good condition (tripod/stabiliser and microphones are welcome).
- **Location**: preferably film the workshop, workshop entrance, and possibly the store (minimise ambient noise and/or highlight sounds produced within the workshop).
- Establish an **essential storyboard**.

For example:
1. Environment/opening workshop door or another clip to give atmosphere;
2. Craftsman with fixed camera gaze, micro-movements;
3. Fixed camera interview (use only a few seconds) and then only narration voice;
4. Cover images during narration;
5. Closing video with craftsman's name, ecosystem, and project information.

Other key characteristics are:
- **Duration**: Assume a total of 60/90 sec. For an IG reel, 30 sec is the ideal time, you can invite the audience to learn more in the caption or website.
- **Writing**: You can draw from the research notes and prompts a short text to use in the video as an accompaniment.
- **Editing the video**: We recommend using the CapCut app, which is very intuitive and easy to use via smartphone.

It is also recommended to take **at least three photographs** of:
- The workshop and tools;
- Craftsman's work table;
- Raw materials (detail);
- Hands making (detail);
- Glimpse of the town/country;
- The craftsman's community/team;
- People entering the workshop.

In general, a short video showing the craftmaker's actions with narration voice and interview excerpts with background music is sufficient.

4.4. More creative content based on craft

Creative content is not strictly related to photo or video making. Partners can also consider short research reports, drawings or sketches made during fieldwork, insights and reflections obtained while exploring craft ecosystems as part of Craft Histories (Figure 5). In keeping with the art-based spirit of Hephæstus, the team can prepare content that best represents the richness of artistic craftsmanship and the multiplicity of materials, processes, and practices that make up its most authentic essence.
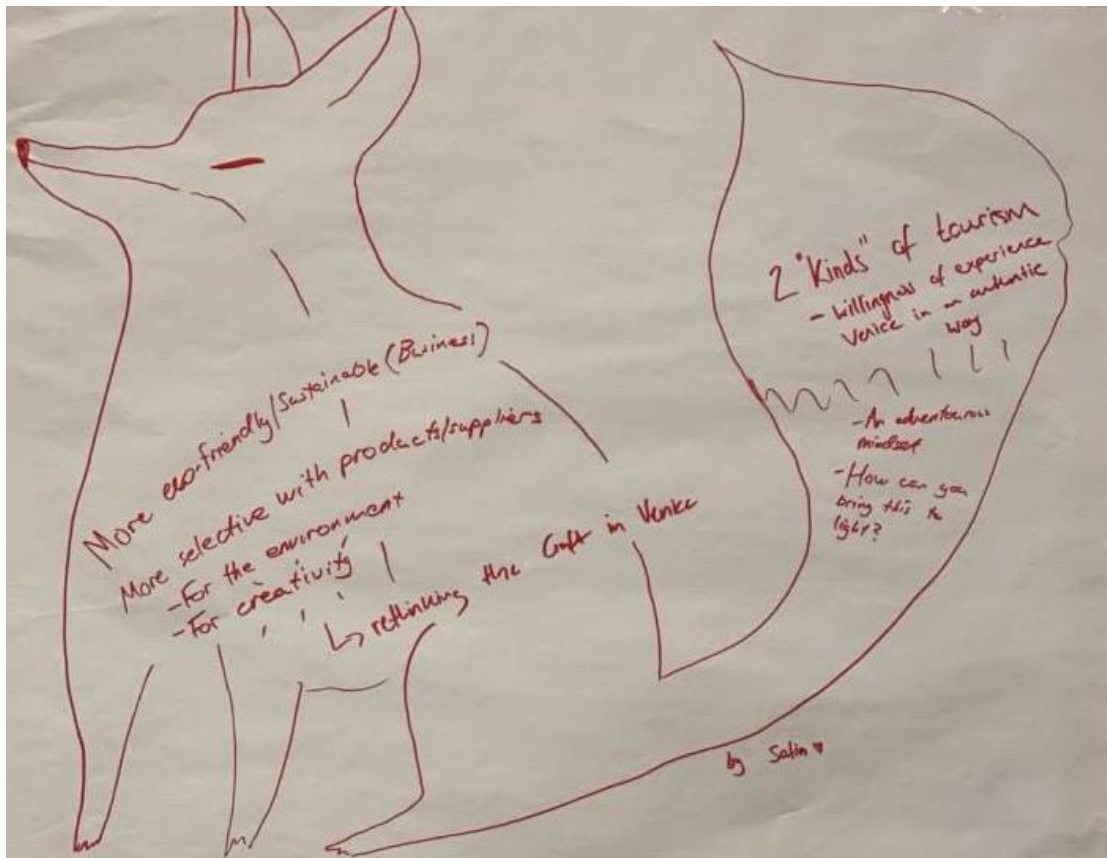
Figure 5 - A drawing made by a craftswoman during the workshop held in Venice dedicated to Craft Histories

5. Web publishing instruction

Once the content is defined, partners should send it to the partner in charge of communication for it to be published on the project website and related social channels. The content submission form is available in the Annexes and downloadable from the Microsoft Teams platform made available by Copenhagen Business School for exchanging and saving all work materials from the various work packages.

Annexes

Information about videos – craft histories

Title of the video	
Short description of the video – to be added to Vimeo as description (what the video is about…)	
Name of the artist / craft maker	
Type of the art / craft	
Name of the author of the video- if several people – please list all of them	
Are there any credits to be attributed to the video – images, music, anything – please list then	
Is there anything else you would like to add to the video as references?	