



## 6 | The DCUM platform

"The library is a neutral place for activities, where the person and not the condition dementia is the focus point."

Participant in the Library Culture Club in Odense, Denmark

### 6.1 | Needs analysis: a summary

To gain a clear idea of the needs in the field from the start, **we consulted 74 respondents spread over four countries** (Belgium, Denmark, Spain and the Netherlands) **from different cultural areas**. Respondents were affiliated with different types of museums; libraries; civil organisations; learning, teaching and training institutions; home care organisations; end-users and civil society networks. Respondents reported a wide range of activities tailored to people with dementia, irrespective of stage. The activities were situated in different disciplines (e.g., visual arts, theatre, dance), different locations (e.g., museum,



Sonidos de la memoria choir (Spain), © Fundacion Instituto Gerontologico Matia-Ingema

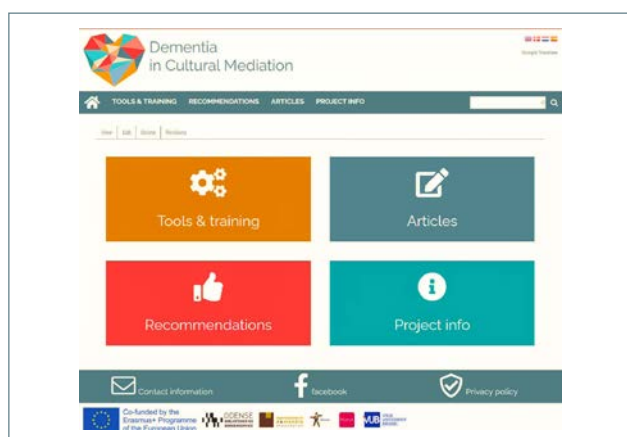
nursing home), targeting different senses (e.g. multisensory, listening, tactile expression) and using a variety of methods (e.g., role play, reminiscence, singing). Some activities took place individually (one on one) or in groups, but the majority occurred in groups where others were also involved (e.g., family members, primary school pupils, care givers).

**Respondents indicated different needs and wishes for the development of a toolkit for cultural mediators to work with people with dementia.** The reported needs and wishes related to different aspects of content and use. In terms of use, the toolkit we would create in this project should be free of charge, use an understandable language, preferably the native language, be user-friendly, and be attractive to encourage participation. The style should be concise, clear and coherent, and this both in text and video format. Some asked for simple and inexpensive activities, but **generally the focus is on good practices for inspiration that are also adaptable and flexible:** starting with knowledge about the target group's needs, to preparation, communication (strategies), recruitment (of people with dementia and partner organisations) and interdisciplinary methods.

The tips should focus on what to bear in mind (e.g. size of the group), what can go wrong and how best to react and how all this can be made sustainable. All in all, with the intention of making both the staff and the infrastructure dementia-friendly. Some respondents also gave their own tips, such as shake hands when entering and look at them to assess how someone is feeling, presence of professional staff at the activity, time to get to know each other and focus on the opportunities and strengths rather than on the problems.

## 6.2 | What did we create?

**A website full of inspirational tools with 30 videos in which a tool is explained and accompanying didactic training material free for download**




**an available in four different languages.** The DCUM website is designed as a toolkit containing tools free for use for cultural mediators in cultural activities with people living with dementia, healthcare professionals active in social-artistic activities, end-users interested to learn more on certain projects and policy

makers that want to move forward on this topic at a policy level.



### 6.3 | How to use it

The DCUM platform is a website and it has multiple of layers ranging from general advice on how to approach people living with dementia as well as didactic methods targeting the end user group as well as cultural mediators. **Going through the materials from the DCUM project the visitors will get a deeper, more detailed knowledge about how to create cultural activities for people living with dementia.** Using the platform, you will get good and reality tested advice and instructions, e.g. description of a cultural activity, the suitable number of participants to involve in the activity and the right settings for the activity.

**Each partner has produced 6 videos on cultural activities for people living with dementia.** You can find all the videos on the [DCUM-website](#) . In the videos the cultural mediators and end-users tell about the activity and show footage from live events. The length of each video is about 3 to 5 minutes. In addition to the website the DCUM-project is present on **Facebook, Twitter and YouTube** where a lot of inspirational examples of

cultural activities and relevant information on dementia and culture are shared by the project partners.



Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/DementiaInCulturalMediation>



Twitter: <https://twitter.com/dcumproject>



YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCCLsCeNYAcuufXnXbPfutGw>

## 6.4 | A short navigation through the DCUM website?

At <https://www.dementiainculturalmediation.eu>, the European cultural mediators are welcomed by a site full of colors that symbolize the diverse palette of culture. **The website structure has a universal and stylistic design that reflects the project's 3 intellectual outputs: Tools, Didactic Training Material and Recommendations.**

- The **Tools** are presented videos that convey content, approaches and reflections on different methods of involving people living with dementia in cultural activities. In most videos, a local cultural mediator describes how the cultural method and activities can be planned and carried out, as well as some best practice advice to interested viewers. The tools are categorized within the cultural areas such as: Music, Literature, Theatre, Physical activity, Visual arts and Nature.
- The **Didactic Training Material** has been prepared to supplement the videos. For each of the videos, an extended didactic description has been created containing good advice and points of attention. The didactic material supports the professional cultural mediators during their inspirational process, the practical planning and hosting of cultural activities and implementation of the tools in their own practice. The Didactic Training Material can be downloaded and shared in the professional network of the cultural mediators.
- The website also contains this digital publication with a set of **recommendations** based on the project's experiences and development of cultural mediation for people living with dementia.

## 6.5 | Transferability beyond the project in partner countries and at a European level

The main purpose of the DCUM-project has been to improve the life of people with dementia through participation in cultural activities from the local care home to the local museum or library. These initiatives take place in multiple locations, in different groups



'Playful Mind' - (The Netherlands) - Zainal Palmans, two participants and videographer Janneke Annema, © HANNN

and at all possible levels in society. The activities can to a very large extent be angled and adapted to different groups. **The DCUM-platform is built up to support the sharing of local activities and to inspire all cultural mediators across the partner countries and outside the project consortium.**

All videos are recorded in local languages of the presenting cultural mediator and the subtitles of the videos are accessible both in English and local languages of each project partner country. The expanded effort on language increases accessibility and transferability of the tools as the use of the toolbox is not limited by the language skills of the cultural mediator.

Dementia is a universal condition not limited by borders, languages, or other human created boundaries. **The cultural activities found on the DCUM-platform are developed in local contexts of the partner organisations and lifted to a more universal level through the combination of videos and affiliated training material containing more details on the activity and tips for local planning of cultural activities.** The method of the DCUM-project was sharing good practices between organisations and on the practical level between cultural mediators. During the project the cultural mediators have tried out new activities in their local contexts based on the good practices presented by other cultural mediators. Through the DCUM-platform this set of methodologies and artistic practices is extended beyond the project participants and made available and adaptable to any cultural mediator or organisation outside the DCUM-project.

The ambition of the DCUM-project was to move from local cultural activities towards a European and international level through sharing good practices. **The diverse professional expertise among the five partners has enabled the project to disseminate and promote the project development and results on different local, regional and European levels.** The combination of a local dissemination strategy and a common strategy results in an integrated dissemination approach. The common dissemination actions have mostly focused on the digital channels, primarily through presence on social media and the project's website.

In addition to the digital channels, the project collaborates with local experts and people of knowledge on culture and dementia including end-users, through the association of a reference group. **The task of the reference group is to act as advisors and ambassadors of the project and its results both nationally and through their very diverse European and international networks.** The platform is structurally and substantively designed for universal use, and it is therefore relevant to other European organisations like museums, civil society organisations, schools and universities, libraries, healthcare institutions, care homes, ...

