Journeys to Participatory Digital Preservation:

Challenges for the Gold Museum as a Public Museum Engaging Communities with Geopark

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**Abstract – Using the Gold Museum in the Shui-Chin-Chiu Geopark as an example, this research simulated user journey maps to unpack usability issues and related problems in participatory digital preservation. This is in response to the Taiwanese government attempts to integrate digital content across museums.**

**Keywords – Community-Engagement, Geopark, Sustainability, Participatory-Digital-Archive, Museum-Communication**

**Conference Topics – Community**

# Introduction

The participation of community members in the digital preservation process can potentially change the policies and decision-making system in a museum. The community-based exhibit has been in museum practice since the 1990s [1], but museums have been improving community engagement strategies. For example, the Gold Museum in Taiwan has been a member of the Chiufen-Chinkuashih-Shueinandong Geopark (a.k.a. Shui-Chin-Chiu Geopark) since 2020 [2]. Before this, the Gold Museum has been practising a participatory budget, allowing local people to proffer their opinion on budget distribution since 2016. These new strategies bring new challenges to digital preservation, and this research aims to detect them by simulating user journey maps.

# Background

It is possible to conduct digital preservation in a geopark. Successful cases have been seen in Britain, such as the Shetland Museum and Archives. Located in Geopark Shetland, a global geopark in Scotland, the Shetland Museum and Archives annually welcomes 83,000 visitors [3] and has built an online catalogue. Its online catalogue currently contains more than 100,000 entries and still growing [4].

The Gold Museum has digitised its collection since 2010 [5], [6] as well. Until 2020, the Gold Museum had 3D scanned 12 contemporary metal crafts [6] and digitised 1,045 items with 2,907 images and 192 historical documents, including 20,375 pages and 25 individual pictures [5].

However, the preservation in the Gold Museum is a governmental instituted process. These created a delicate situation for the Gold Museum to participate in the Shui-Chin-Chiu Geopark. On the one hand, developing a participatory archival platform in the Gold Museum is difficult with limited funding. On the other hand, the Gold Museum needs to follow national policies, delivering digital collections to the public via the Consolidated Cultural Archives System (CCAS) [6, p. 19], which has poor usability [7], [8]. This arrangement might be why the Gold Museum only authorised seven cases to use their collection from 2018 to 2020 [5], [6], [9].

# Methodology

This research adopted the DCC curation lifecycle model [10] to illustrate how controversies developed while the museum balanced the need to engage with the public and follow the policies. In terms of detecting potential challenges in usability issues, this research borrowed the persona created by the National Archives to simulate user journey maps.

# Conclusion

This study is a pilot study in my PhD research. By scoping the problem with user journeys, this study provided a basis to understand users from the source community and the role of the museum. The result will continue to be examined in subsequent interviews. The observation from this study can assist museums in avoiding risk and conflict while developing a socially sustainable digital preservation plan. Specifically, this study discovered a range of subjects for museums to communicate with stakeholders and investigate in user research. In this way, the museum can effectively respond to conflicting requests from the local communities and the governmental agencies in the context of a geopark.

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