Co-creation Fund

O6.5.1 Awarding beneficiaries for their concepts

1. Introduction.

The Co-creation Fund was a fund set up to stimulate co-creation of content and cultural mediation applications based on the data and digital reproductions published by the Urban Innovation Actions funded Collections of Ghent project. The total amount of funding was € 200.000, while each individual project could maximum receive a grant of € 20.000.

In the first place this document is an official output for the project, so it serves as a report for the UIA secretariat. In addition, we have also interpreted it as a document that can also be used by other European cities if they want to get started with a fund in this way. So you can read how we have set up the fund to enable third parties to reuse data, how we approached it, what the results are and what our reflections are on our process. In that way we hope to enable the replication of our project results in other contexts or cities.

The Collections of Ghent project

The city of Ghent's museums and heritage institutions collect and preserve an enormous amount of cultural heritage. At the same time the citizens of Ghent possess a treasure trove of knowledge and stories which relate to these collections. For the Collections of Ghent project, the city and its museums and city archive collaborated with partners from the corporate, cultural, and academic world to bridge the gap between these collections and the Ghentian citizen by providing access to more-or-less 76,000 objects, stories and documents. The project wanted to go beyond simply sharing their collections by actively stimulating its reuse and co-curation by external parties such as citizens, companies, researchers, etc.

Challenges addressed

Cities all over Europe are digitizing their cultural heritage collections, but often lack the tools to utilise them for the purpose of engaging citizens. Data is often stuck within

institutional silos or is used on single-purpose digital platforms that do not reach new audiences because they lack an open infrastructure. In addition, citizens have few means to contribute to and participate in the creation and curation of our shared digital cultural heritage. However, cultural participation is essential to improve social cohesion and citizens' sense of belonging. In order to address this challenge, the Collections of Ghent project aimed to contribute to the transition of cultural heritage institutions into third places[1].

Solutions proposed

In order to leverage the full potential of digital cultural heritage, the Collections of Ghent project aimed to open up cultural data, making it usable, useful, and used. To create this open knowledge, the project established the necessary data architecture for making digital heritage available to different target audiences: technical and non-technical users alike, from citizens to developers. It also set up a shared data management plan which proposes a shared policy on subjects from data interoperability to rights management, which was essential to publishing these collections in a usable way. The project also conducted user-research to gain insight into cultural needs, thresholds, and opportunities regarding digitised cultural heritage in order to figure out which data to open up and in what ways to make them accessible.

The project's goal was to open up heritage data to increase the visibility of heritage collections and to increase inter-cultural understanding and dialogue. The ultimate goal was to leverage heritage collections to increase social cohesion.

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[1] A third place is a social environment seperate from the main social environments of the home (first place) and the workplace (second place). Examples include libraries, gys, cafes, clubs, parks, sidewalks, churches, etc. Ray Oldenburg (1989) argues these places are essential to estapblishing a sense of place and civil society, democracy and civic engagement.

2. What was the co-creation fund and how was it set up?

The project goal of Collections of Ghent was twofold:

- stimulate reuse of digital collections
- deploy digital heritage to connect citizens and increase social cohesion

Collections of Ghent is an open data project. Unlike many digital heritage projects which focus only on giving access to digital assets, the Collections of Ghent project's ultimate goal was to actively facilitate their reuse. Often the discourse around open data all too easily assumes that a broad range of reusers will naturally find their way to the data and reappropriate it without any further effort on the part of the heritage institutions. The project recognised that if heritage institutions want their data to be reused, they also need to communicate about their open data, promote their reuse, and most importantly, provide support to data-reusers.

Indeed, Mahey, M. et alii in their publication "Open a GLAM Lab" (2019) recommend setting up a permanent innovation lab in order to attract creative technologists, entrepreneurs, educators, artists, researchers, universities and schools or indeed anyone interested in using digital collections. Facilitation by the GLAMlab can go from providing general support to creating fellowships, grant programmes and placements all depending on the available expertise, budget and time[2]. With a project runtime of three years and dedicated budget from the Urban Innovations Actions grant, the project found itself in the unique position to provide both technical and financial support.

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[2] Mahey, M., Al-Abdulla, A., Ames, S., Bray, P., Candela, G., Chambers, S., Derven, C., Dobreva-McPherson, M., Gasser, K., Karner, S., Kokegei, K., Laursen, D., Potter, A., Straube, A., Wagner, S-C. and Wilms, L., with forewords by: Al-Emadi, T. A., Broady-Preston, J., Landry, P. and Papaioannou, G. (2019) Open a GLAM Lab. Digital Cultural Heritage Innovation Labs, Book Sprint, Doha, Qatar, 23-27 September, 2019, 35

While a hackathon is an interesting format for coming up with new applications making use of digital heritage, the solutions conceived during these short-duration creative sprints generally do not go beyond the ideational stage and if they do, they only deliver a prototype which generally is not ready yet to be used by end-users. Moreover the cultural sector already asks artists, little start-ups or companies to do things for free too often. The Co-creation Fund wanted to address this problem and provided funding to allow grant recipients to work on something for half a year to a year. This allowed them to go beyond just the ideation or prototyping stage.

Besides financial support in the form of maximum € 20.000 per project, several project members were charged with providing support where necessary by for instance creating brainstorming workshops and community meetups, workshops about how to use the project's technical infrastructure and liaising with the technical team in case of specific questions.

3. Practice

Setting up the Collections of Ghent Co-creation Fund

Why a Co-creation Fund in the Collections of Ghent project and why two separate funds?

The Co-creation Fund is a grant program offered by the Collections of Ghent project to citizens, companies and artists who want to reuse the digital collections. Since one of the core realisations of the project was a state-of-the-art architecture for linked open data publication of heritage data, it made sense that at least some of the co-curated projects of the grant program would serv   e for linked open heritage data.

At the same time, since the ultimate project goal was to increase social cohesion and engagement of citizens and bottom-up co-creation, we wanted to make sure that there would be a place for projects which reused the collections but did not necessarily have to make use of the digital infrastructure (ie. querying or calling the API endpoints). They accessed the collections through the Collections of Ghent portal with its intuitive visual interface. All projects however were required to make use of the collections data or reproductions in some capacity or another or create derivative works based on those resources.

The first grant program for "technological projects" had the requirement that all eligible projects had to make use of the linked open data architecture (namely the linked data event stream endpoint) which is intended for developers. Here we were open to all kinds of projects as long as they leveraged linked open data to somehow deliver a personalised or otherwise engaging form of access to the collections. We were also looking for projects which would make use of the promise of linked open data as a concept by linking our heritage data to linked open data from other sectors such as for instance mobility, tourism, education and beyond. These could include the development of new applications, data visualisations, the implementation of artificial intelligence, interactive installations and tools. The second grant program which we dubbed the "creative projects" did not have this requirement. This way we were able to attract not only developers but also people with other skill sets, such as people interested in creating stories, installations, events or public activities of any kind. We were open to propositions of any kind ranging from a theatre play, a performance, an interactive installation, a publication, a film, a podcast, a storytelling evening, a musical composition, etc.

Steps

Define scope

The first step in setting up our fund was to determine the goals and intended outcomes of the projects we wanted to fund. This makes it easier for project proposals to be write with our goals in mind. We asked ourselves the following questions: What is the purpose of the grant program? How does it tie into the overall goal of our project or our institutional

mission? Specifically for the Collections of Ghent program we wanted to promote the (creative reuse) of digital assets we made available but it was important to not lose sight of the project's second goal, namely experimenting how this can contribute to increased social cohesion.

Preparation

Once we clearly defined our goals, we translated them into requirements for eligible submissions. These were compiled in a grant scheme regulations document which could be consulted by prospective project proposals. We also created a submission form and set a clear deadline before we launched our call for project proposals.

Write grant scheme regulations

We defined the scope of the grant scheme and defined which projects could be accepted so applicants had a clear idea what the intended purpose of the grant scheme was. For the Collections of Ghent project 'creative' grant program this meant that only projects who intended to make creative reuse of the collections in the form of derivative works were accepted. For the 'technical' grant scheme we required them to make use of the linked data event stream endpoint and explore its utility as a technology.

Define who can and who cannot apply

Sometimes it is necessary to make things explicit. Even though the Collections of Ghent project wanted to engage with private companies, purely commercial projects were not allowed. Given the project goal, so were projects which were not public in nature. We also excluded clearly religious or party political projects. Finally we excluded projects which were intended to fund the existing basic functioning of an organisation.

Define clear and actionable jury criteria

Projects were required to have a direct link with the Collection of Ghent. We encouraged prospective projects to make explicit the degree to which they would engage with, reuse or enrich the digital collections. We also indicated some factors which would determine our evaluation of the quality of the project proposal: the degree of feasibility, the detail of project planning and a clear definition of desired results, as well as a realistic and concrete budget.

We asked them to think about the societal benefit and relevance of their projets and make explicit the degree to which the project was expected to increase social cohesion and list a clear definition of target audiences. We gave extra considerations to projects with target audiences including people at risk. We asked them to state which methods they would use to make sure their project would be societally embedded in the neighborhood where the project would be executed and and in what ways they would include an element of participation. Obviously, the creative and artistic quality was important but here we made clear that for us this criterium would be interpreted as the degree to which the digital collections woul be employed in a creative or artistic way. Finally, we rewarded projects who included some degree of connection of cross-pollination in their project proposal. With this we meant the degree to which the project would include collaboration across disciplines, sectors and policy domains as well as approaches towards content, products, processes, methods and partners.

Define clear timeframe for execution and project reporting
In the Collections of Ghent project, cocreationfund project could start from June 17, 2022 at the earliest and had to be completed by April 2, 2023 at the latest, with reporting (financial and overall project reporting) delivered by May 31st.

Define other conditions to which the projects need to correspond
Because of the way of working of your organisation or a consortium of partners or the requirements related to your funding, there might be additional requirements that you need to include in the regulations. For the Collections of Ghent project we had to include the existing regulations of the Ghent municipality and European Union regulations. An example of these was that all projects needed to meet certain communication requirements. Projects needed to make use of different logo's such as the logo's of the city and Urban Innovation Actions.

Define project budget limitations
In the Collections of Ghent project, the upper limit for funding per project was €20.000.

After we launched our call for project proposals, interested individuals and organizations had a lot of financial questions. A lot of questions were recurring and pretty general, but some were very specific. Since we not only had organizations applying but also some

individuals, eligibility of costs was not so straightforward. We received many questions about how individuals could receive their grant and how this influenced their tax returns, for example. Also eligibility of hardware costs was something we needed to be very strict and clear about. In order to cope with recurring questions, we gathered them in a Q&A page on the project website. We also gave them a template for the financial report with very extensive financial guidelines on how to report and about eligibility of costs.

We recognised that some of the projects also needed support for finding partners. Some interested parties will have a fully worked out project plan while others might only have a general sphere of interest. For these individuals and organizations, the Collections of Ghent project organized a brainstorm event on the 18th of november 2021 where experts involved in the project were available for input and participants could meet and propose a collaboration.

Jury process

Step 1: Assembling a jury
Two separate and balanced juries were set up for the assessment of the different project applications. These were made up of the city of Ghent municipal service for strategic funding, several municipal services such as the Department of social cohesion and Welfare - community work, a representation of the heritage institutions, District09 and also external experts which could contribute from their own specific expertise. Their recommendations were subsequently submitted for approval by the mayor and the city's aldermen and the board members of District09.

Step 2: Receiving applications
On 13 March, we received 36 applications for the 2 calls: 29 applications for the regulation about creative re-use of digitised heritage and 7 for the regulation about technological re-use.

Step 3: Admissibility check

During the 2.5 weeks after the submission deadline, the admissibility check was carried out and questions were asked when substantial information was missing from the applicants.

Step 4: Preparatory work by jury members

From March 29, the jury members were able to view the applications. Online briefings were organised at the convenience of the jury members. Jury members were asked to determine if there were any projects to which they were too close to give an impartial judgement. Every jury member had to read about 8 files as a "first reader". We asked 2 jury members per file to carefully manage the file and also to complete an assessment template. All jury members had to read through the other 19 to 20 files at least once. In short, it was the intention that all jury members had read all the files, but that they carefully studied 7 to 8 of them and filled in the jury template for them in preparation for the face-to-face meetings of the jury.

Step 5: Preparation of jury meetings

In preparation of the jury meetings we received the completed templates no later than April 17th.

Step 6: Jury meetings

In the week of April 19th four jury meetings were held, where the advice on which applications were approved was prepared.

Step 7: Approval by the board of the mayor and aldermen and District9 management committee

The advice on which applications had to be approved by both the board of the mayor and alderman of Ghent and the management committee of the city's IT-partner and project initiator District09.

Step 8: Notify applicants

All 36 applicants received an official letter indicating if their project application was approved or rejected.

Execute, support and evaluate

After the approval by the board of the mayor and aldermen and the District09 management committee, the applicant received an advance of 90% of the allocated amount. The payment was made at the latest one month after their decision.

In order to support the selected projects, we created a team charged with supporting the projects. Responsibilities included:

- Organizing community events at regular intervals. These were intended to create a sense of community amongst the projects, make them aware of what each project was doing and facilitate possible collaborations or crossovers. For Collections of Ghent these meetings also served as check-in's to make sure the projects were advancing and if they were stuck in a rut, to help come up with solutions.
- Checking in for progress and communication opportunities
- Troubleshooting and liaising with other project teams for support (for instance accessing the linked data event stream)
- Project partner iDROPS created a handy toolkit with recipes and ideas to create participatory projects.
- The project's Cultural Data Lab organised activities to support projects in their work
  - 14/09/2021: webinar with SPARQL-querying demo
  - 06/02/2022: webinar on how the contents of the Collections of Ghent and the launch of its search interface
  - 10/03/2022: webinar for "technical projects" on how to access the Collections of Ghent data architecture linked data event stream endpoints

In May, the projects were required to submit a final report including a financial report and budget justification. After verification and approval, the balance of the remaining 10% of the budget was paid.

4. The awarded projects

In total 36 applications submitted a project to our call for proposals. Among these, 29 applied for the "creative reuse" grant. We selected 8. 7 applied for our "technological reuse" grant of which we were able to fund 5. Besides our limited budget, the main reasons why certain projects were not selected was that their project plan was not sufficiently detailed or feasible or that the project lacked a strong link with the Collections of Ghent.

Project title	Project title	Organisation type	Grant type
STR.AAT	Straffe Straten	self-employed	Creative regulation
De Zieke Steur	Schroot / Hoop	private limited liability company	creative reuse
Ruimtegruis	Ruimtegruis	unincorporated association	creative reuse
MUS-E Belgium	COLLECTIE RE-MIX	non-profit	creative reuse
Gentsekoop	1000 jaar Gentsekoop	unincorporated association	creative reuse
Mesh	re-use it	non-profit	creative reuse

vroemvroem	shopping centrum Malem	non-profit	creative reuse
IQRA	De Textielindustrie	unincorporated association	creative reuse
Gener8.ai (Skyhaus BV)	Interactieve photobooth:"Welke bekende Gentenaar wordt jij?"	private limited liability company	technological use
Ctrl alt	Collage van Gent	non-profit	technological use
imec - IDLab	LINKED ARTeveldestad	non-profit	technological use
Crashlab - Jan Everaert	De Gentse rol van het wc	one-person business	technological use
Nerdlab	Once upon AI	non-profit	technological use

Technical projects

Interactive photobooth: "Which famous Ghentian will you become?"

Partners:

Lucas Desard - Skyhaus BV (Gener8.ai)

Description:

The project aimed to build a physical photobooth with artificial intelligence technology to bring people into contact with the cultural heritage and historical figures of the city of Ghent. The photobooth used face-detection and AI face-swapping algorithms to

superimpose the user's face onto portraits from the Collections of Ghent. The photobooth consisted of a hardware solution with a touchscreen, a webcam and a computer.

Design sketch of the photobooth

A user of the application went through the following steps:

- user takes picture
- user waits for the application to detect a face in the photo
- user is presented with a list of portrait paintings to choose from
- face-swapping using an AI algorithm merges both images

Demo setup at the Coghent festival, photo: Sam Donvil, CC0

The project considered animating the new image and using this stage to inform the user about the original item from the collection. The project tested this avenue but decided that the available technology today is not mature enough to get qualitative results and feared this would diminish the user experience. Finally the project opted for a solution where the user could scan a QR-code to access information about the original image this way and download the resulting image and share their personalized artwork on social media.

The project also approached faceswapping technology with the necessary sensitivity. As some of the images in the Collection of Ghent contain colonial imagery and iconography, they made sure that these images would not be associated with users who were people of colour. During the project the installation was housed in the STAM city museum Ghent, the Collections of Ghent festival and will continue to travel around Ghent also after the end of the project. The application can be used in various settings as it also works without the hardware and can be used on a smartphone or computer.

URL's websites & social:

photobooth.gener8.ai/stam

https://github.com/MatthiasCami8/Photobooth

Collage van Gent

partners:

Ctrl Alt vzw / Crashlab

Description:

The project wanted to realise an installation which could help find out what the Ghent citizens favorite items in the collections are. What they came up with a software application which generated associations between the objects in the collections and an interface which invited citizens to pick out their favorites and contribute to a collaborative digital collage.

Using the Collage van Gent touchscreen, photo: Sam Donvil, CC0

As a first step, the project employed image recognition to generate annotations based on the images of items in the various collections. These descriptions would then be used to generate associations using language analysis. The resulting data web (+images) was shown on a touchscreen interface which invited the user to cut out a part of the images and add it to the collaborative collage. In this sense, the installation reassembled the collection using both artificial and human intelligence. The touchscreen was mounted on top of a table which housed a beamer which projected the collage on the wall. It also

housed a printer which gave the user a sticker which would allow them to look up their contribution and the original description of the object online. During the project the installation was housed in both the House of Alijn and the Industry museum.

Using the Collage van Gent touchscreen and printout with QR-code, view of the wall projection, photo: Sam Donvil, CC0

URL's websites & social:
https://www.instagram.com/crshlab/

Linked Arteveldestad

Partners:
- research group computervision IDLab vzw (Dieter De Witte & Steven Verstockt)
- IMEC

Description:
Linked ARTeveldestad wants to convince its audience that a museum visit is an experience and doesn't have to be a leisure activity which requires a lot of planning and research beforehand. The application allows you to visit Ghent, based on a specific interest, for example 'flowers'. The navigator will make sure that every part of your visit to the city will have a link to 'flowers': You might stroll through the 'Bloemekeswijk', pass by a

flowershop, be shown postcards featuring flowers from the collection of House of Alijn or a certain painting with a flower motif in the STAM city museum, finishing at café Fiordi, a flowershop converted to a trendy cafe.
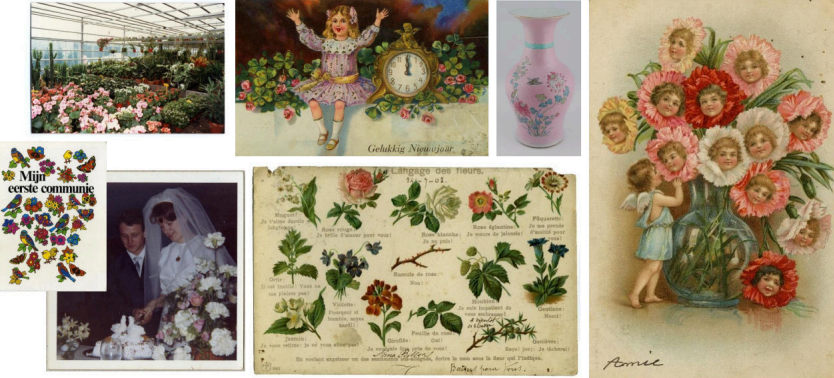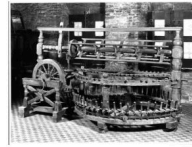

Text to image associations based on artificial intelligence: flowers

Image to image

Image to image associations based on artificial intelligence: chair (including surprising result of a chair-shaped bridge)

Image to text

Auteur: IDLab - Linked ARTeveldestad
🇧🇪 | ● ● ● ● ● | 👁 Publiek

title: bicycle
topic: De abt
type: osm - cafe -
beschrijving:
AI-beschrijving: many bicycles parked near many buildings on one side and a sun shines through the windows of another
an empty sidewalk in front of many buildings with bicycles parked on it
the view of a building with several bicycles lined up
sim_score = 0.3439

Bron: github

Image to text association based on artificial intelligence: bicycle

The routeplanner app works with an AI-engine, developed by Ugent-IDLab and makes connections between artworks of the museums of Ghent as well as points of interest in the inner city of Ghent based on textual and visual relationships. These data could then be connected to existing open data sources such as Open Streetmap. The project came up with 50 themes for textual queries and 60 reverse image queries. The results were often surprising and allowed for even more abstract queries around themes such as emotions.

The resulting images and points of interest in the city are then added to the routeplanning application RouteYou. The routeplanner proposes routes generated according to certain parameters to create a satisfying experience for users.The main target audience of the app is Ghentian curators and guides as the app will simplify and support their work. They used Google Image Search to look for images connected to these points of interest.
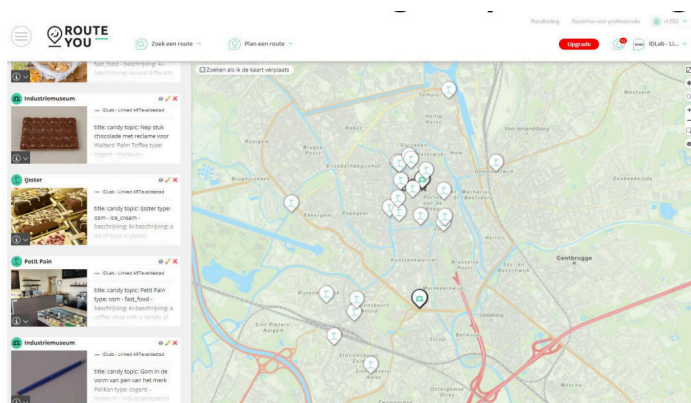
RouteYou interface with images and route

Project leader Dieter De Witte showcasing his application at Coghent festival

De Gentse rol van het wc

Partners:

- Wouter Devriese

Description:

The project 'De Gentse wc-rol' or the Ghentian toilet paper roll aimed to use the linked data offered by the Collections of Ghent digital infrastructure in a funny and surprising way. The result is an installation which generates unique printed toilet paper rolls based on connections between objects in the Collections of Ghent. Each roll receives a print with a unique timeline which links objects from the collection both semantically and chronologically.
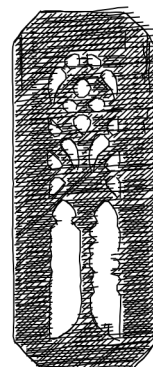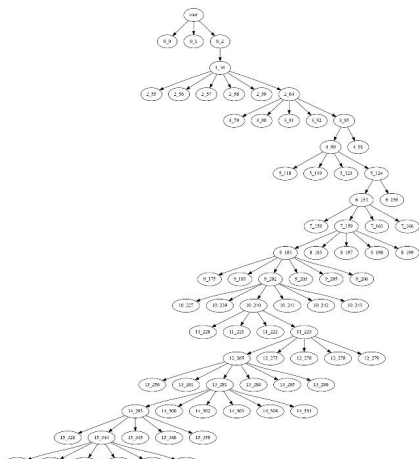
Visualisation of timeline and demonstration of a conversion of images into line-art

The installation starts by generating semi-randomised paths through the collection based on the descriptive metadata about the museum pieces. For each decade metadata is used to link to an associated object for the next decade. The resulting timeline consists of both this connecting metadata point and an image of the object. For this to be possible the software has to convert a normal reproduction with colour and many details to a simplified lineart drawing which can be drawn onto the paper by a mechanical arm and pen. One of the biggest challenges of the project was the difficulty to print on toilet paper. The project insisted to continue on this medium in spite of its inherent difficulties because it did not want to lose the absurd premise of the project and its conversation starting potential.
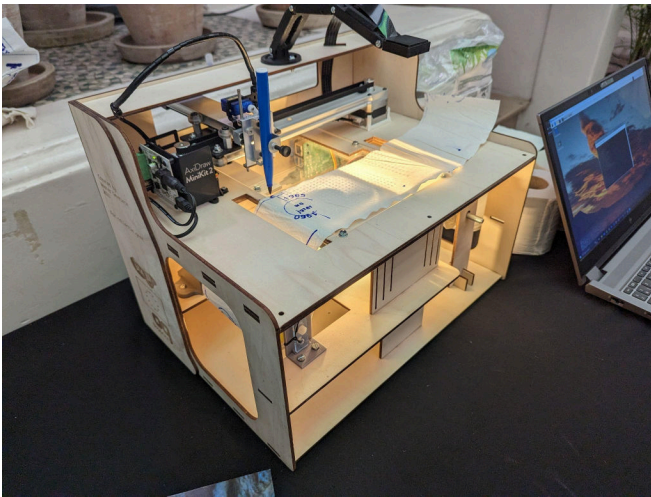
Toilet paper roll printer, photo: Sam Donvil, CC0

The installation can be replicated by anyone with access to a makerspace with a lasercutter and some hardware.
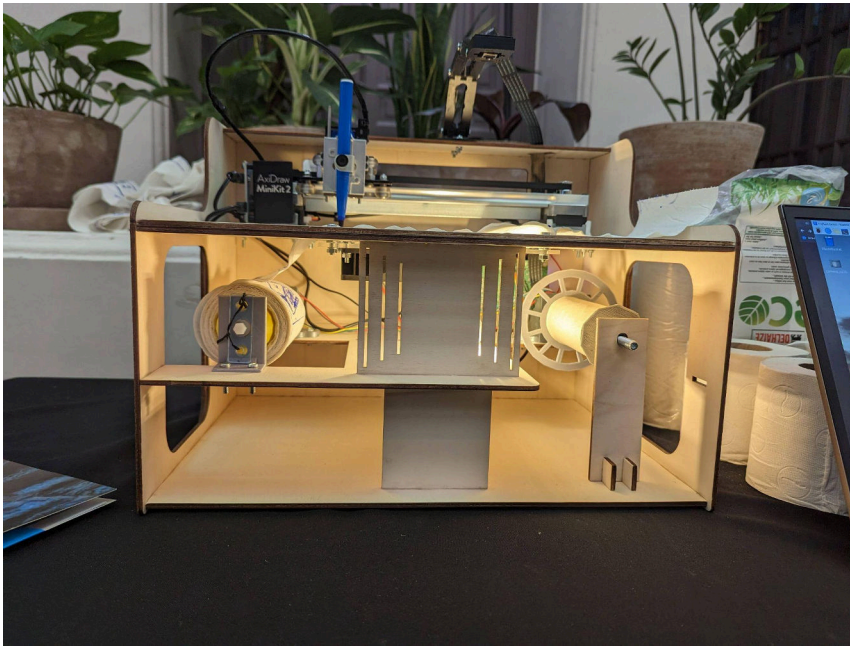
Back of the toilet paper roll printer, photo: Sam Donvil, CC0

URL's websites & social

https://devriesewouter89.github.io/CoGhentToiletPaper/

Once upon AI

Partners:

- Inspirational speakers Make-a-thon:Jan Everaert & Joni De Borger (Crashlab/Ctrlalt vzw)
- Kopergietery: facilitation of the make-a-thon
- Makerfair Gent: exhibition
- 35 participants of the make-a-thon

Description:

Nerdlab is an experimental lab for young people with a focus on technology. This means that instead of proposing a specific application for the co-creation fund, they chose a general theme to explore with their community of young people: the GTP-3 language recognition model. After several experiments the goal was to arrive at an interesting application of artificial intelligence on text associated with the Collections of Ghent. Their

choice for GTP-3 turned out to be well timed as throughout the project run-time, chat-GTP became a widely discussed topic in wider society about the future of artificial intelligence.

Once upon AI prototype at Ghent Maker Faire

In the initial project startup phase, Nerdlab organised a make-a-thon weekend with 35 participants from all over Flanders. The participants were challenged and inspired to come up with their own concepts. At the end of the weekend, the teams presented 6 prototypes. In the following stage, Nerdlab organised weekly build-days. A diverse team was formed with current and new team members to come up with a joint final-concept. The prototype was first shown at the Ghent Maker Faire after which the team fine-tuned the web-application of the final product.

Demosetup Once upon AI chatbot interface at Coghent festival

The resulting application 'Once Upon AI' used artificial intelligence to generate a personalised walking tour in Ghent based on data from the Collections of Ghent. An interactive website functions as an interface which allows users to ask questions to a chatbot. The collection items are then mapped on a map of the city of Ghent.

URL's websites + social

- https://twitter.com/NerdLab9000
- https://www.facebook.com/Nerdlab
- https://www.instagram.com/nerdlab9000/
- https://github.com/nerdlab-be/OnceUponAI

Creative projects

Straffe straten

Partners:
- Urban think tank STR.AAT
- Laura Zuallaert: recordings handcam
- Tom Hoflack: recordings drone images
- Fien Lauwers: montage
- Emma Petillion: copywriting
- Merel Vanoverbeke: design
- Huis van Alijn and Archief De Zwarte Doos: searching for archival footage
- Bij De Vieze Gasten: point of departure for interviewees
- Buurtwerk betrokken wijken: point of departure for interviewees
- Bie Hinnekint: connection with WZC Heiveld
- Wijkregisseurs: point of departure for interviewees, interesting locations

Description:
'Van wie is de straat?' (or 'Who owns the streets?') is a collaboration between urban think tank STR.AAT and documentary maker Laura Zuallaert. The documentary shows unique experiences in the neighborhoods, streets and public spaces of Ghent. The story of Ghent is characterised by ups and downs: picturesque scenes mixed with important challenges.

The documentary managed to capture some recurring themes such as the importance of social connection, the need for a feeling of safety and the impact of the car as the dominant mode of transport and main vector for urban planning. By connecting new images with material from the Ghent archive collection, the documentary managed to show both the beautiful moments and difficult challenges citizens of Ghent face on a daily basis.

In order to compare the current situation with the past, archival footage and images from the Collection of Ghent were juxtaposed with video shot by the documentary filmmakers. This juxtaposition also provided a point of departure for the interviewees to share their stories and experiences.

Screening Van wie is de straat during Coghent end festival, photo: Sam Donvil, CC0

As shooting footage for the project was time consuming, the project had to make some choices on what to focus on. Constructing a clear narrative from everyone's subjective experience also didn't always prove possible. For instance, the experience of inhabitants of the Rabot area compared to inhabitants of Luchteren are very different. On the other hand neighborhoods that were previously not scheduled turned out to be very interesting (Burgse Poort and Malem). Sometimes the inhabitants of a particular neighborhood were harder to reach than those in others. Another challenge was that it was difficult to predict in advance if there would be archival footage to illustrate the stories they recorded.

In terms of target audiences, it was easier to reach the elderly than teenagers or children. Whereas obviously older people have a better idea about how the neighborhood changed throughout the years, the project wanted to make sure to also include young people as users of the public space. A nice touch was the inclusion of another co-creation fund project Studio Malem.

URL's websites & social:
- **https://www.instagram.com/de_str.aat/**

Schroot/hoop

Partners:

- Aifoon
- De Zieke Steur
- Stijn Dickel
- Kringwinkel Ateljee
- Design Museum Ghent
- Victoria Deluxe
-

Description:

Ten seemingly replaceable and functional objects are saved from the junkyard by capturing their story and their 'soul'. Do you throw out a worn-out coat which kept you warm throughout many winters, without flinching? Or those pepper- and saltshakers which are passed down in your family throughout the generations? What if those objects could speak? Would you still bring them to the dump? These questions are the startingpoint of Schroot/Hoop, a new fiction-podcast which allows ten seemingly replaceable objects abandoned at the city dump to tell their story. The makers hope that by saving these objects, they are able to capture living heritage, because every object has a story and also for junk there is still hope!

Podcastmakers Pieter Blomme and Wederik De Backer and sound artist Stijn Dickel spent several days in the charity shop Ateljee to collect objects and their associated stories. They didn't just interview the person donating the object but captured the sound which the object makes. Based on 10 of the donated objects they wrote fiction stories where the objects themselves tell their story to the listener, recorded with actors from theatre troupe Victoria Deluxe. The sound recorded by Stijn Dickel was then integrated in these stories. Because Victoria Deluxe has actors of all ages and backgrounds and walks of life, they were able to grasp the opportunity to have an actress of Spanish origin to narrate the story about the Spanish dress.

In march and april 2023, with the help of scenographers of the Design Museum of Ghent these stories were placed in their DING Vitrine popup display case where the objects collected by the project were placed alongside of objects from the museums collection. Speakers mounted on the window of the popup exhibition space played the sounds of the objects and captured the attention of passers by in the Drabstraat. To come full circle, the objects were also displayed in the charity shop Ateljee, where they added QR-codes to the display so people could listen to the stories.

URL's websites & social:
- www.schroothoop.be
- https://twitter.com/aifoon
- https://www.facebook.com/aifoon
- https://www.instagram.com/jouwrelaas/
- https://www.designmuseumgent.be/nieuws/2023/schroot-hoop

Ruimtegruis (cosmic debris)

Partners:

- Ruimtegruis theatre troupe

Description:

Items from the Collections of Ghent are literally brought to life by actors. The performance was performed in various neighborhoods in Ghent.

The project used the Collections of Ghent portal to look for interesting objects which could be the starting point for fictional stories. They subsequently went looking for look-a-like objects to use on stage. The performance also integrated archival footage, 3D-reconstructions of the Ghent urban environment.

The objective of the project was to make the performance as participatory as possible. It turned out to be challenging to find volunteers willing to commit to the project for the better part of a year. The original idea was to include citizens with their story or expertise related to the history of Ghent. In the end the project limited these interventions to only 2 people. The stage performance integrated a VR environment of the Zuid area which is now a park but used to be the location of the inner city train station as well as a 3D reconstruction by the working group history and geography of the area around Dampoort which used to be the site of a Spanish fortress.

URL's websites & social:

https://www.ruimtegruis.be/

Collectie remix - Mus-e

Partners:

- MUS-E vzw (3 workshop leaders: Katelijne De Corte, Maaike Devreese, Sara Plantefève-Castryck)
- Schools: BS Klimrek, BS De Panda, BS Henri D'Haese, BS Sint Paulus and Tectura Groenkouter
- Exhibition space: SANTO (Gentbrugge)

Description:

Three visual artists invited children and teenagers from 8 different classes at different schools to a journey to remix the digital reproductions of the Collections of Ghent in a playful, experience-focussed way and connecting them to their urban environment. They started by visiting the Collection of Ghent project partner institutions (Design Museum, Industriemuseum and Huis van Alijn).

Exhibition Collectie Remix at the Collections of Ghent end festival, photo: Sam Donvil, CC0

They used the Collections of Ghent portal as the starting point to find inspiring materials. Sometimes an intermediate visit to the physical museums these items came from served to deepen the understanding of the objects that had initially interested them. Then the children were introduced to different techniques and media, from linocut to clay to painting, collage to even textile.

The project was able to reach 160 children and teenagers, their teachers, neighborhood, and through the exhibitions also the wider Gentian audience. The artists leading the workshop found it hard to keep the students attention on the collection. They enjoyed looking through the collection using search terms on the Collections of Ghent portal but beyond that it proved difficult to look more closely at the collection. Some of the students were rather young to interest themselves for heritage. Reaching out to classes with children who just arrived in Belgium with a limited knowledge of Dutch proved difficult.

URL's websites & social:
- https://www.facebook.com/MUSEBelgium
- https://vb4l.weebly.com/

- [Henri D'Haese school](#)
- [Klimrek](#)

1000 jaar Gentsekoop

Partners:

Gentsekoop

Description:

25 local Ghentian businesses discover a remarkable and personalised story which links cultural heritage from the Collections of Ghent to their business, building and/or neighborhood. The idea is to contextualise existing businesses in a broader history of what place the local economy took in people's lives and a reappreciation of it in our current society.

Tamis Homekitchen

Bij Tamis Homekitchen kun je elke week van woensdag tot vrijdag doorlopend van 11u30 tot 19u huisbereide gerechten afhalen. Gaande van verse soep, dagschotels met bio vlees/verse vis/vegetarisch/veganistisch over het slaatje van de week tot wraps, desserts en apero lekkers.
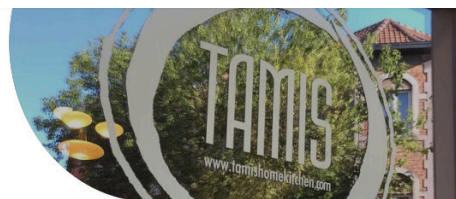
Alles is vers bereid met lokale en seizoensgebonden producten. Daarnaast kan je er ook terecht voor catering en culinaire activiteiten in de vorm van lezingen, proeverijen en workshops.

Handelaar	Handelszaak
Tamara	**Tamis Homekitchen**
Adres	
Spiegelhofstraat 21	Opgericht in
Website	**2020**
tamishomekitchen.com	

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Deliveroo in de 19de eeuw: geen probleem

Geen goesting om te koken vandaag? Dan haal je toch gewoon iets af, of beter nog: je laat het brengen. Scrollen en klikken tot jouw eten aanbelt aan de deur. Dat ze daar in de jaren stillekes nog geen apps voor hadden, dat moeten we niet uitleggen. Maar toch gaat de cultuur van kant- en klare maaltijden al lang mee in Gent.

We hebben vandaag bijna allemaal vier kookplaten, een oven en een microgolf, maar die staan daar soms niets te doen. Vroeger zat dat wel anders. Heel wat Gentenaars hadden wel hun eigen potje willen koken, maar ze huurden een kamer zonder keuken. Tot een eind in de 20ste eeuw moesten de meeste huurders het doen zonder gas of elektriciteit.

Het was dus elk voor zich tenzij je een hospita had – de voorloper van de kotmadam – die voor het warme eten zorgde. Maar dat was dan weer duurder en dat kon niet iedereen zich veroorloven. Het gevolg? Koude gerechten, vooral brood, waren dagelijkse kost. Wie iets warms tussen de kiezen wilde, moest de stad in.

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De traiteurs bezorgden niet alleen de exclusieve diners, maar ook de borden, de glazen en het bestek

Herbergen, restaurants, hotels en andere gelegenheden boden wel warme maaltijden maar dat was voor de doorsnee Gentenaar veel te duur. Jan modaal vond wat warms bij de braderijen: kleine koterijen die worsten of 'triepen' en gebakken orgaanvlees verkochten, wellicht gecombineerd met brood. Die bestonden al sinds de middeleeuwen. Net zoals we vandaag frieten of kebab bestellen, eigenlijk.

En voor de betere klasse? Die hadden hoe dan ook personeel om voor hen te koken. En als het iets meer mocht zijn, dan was er al in de 18de eeuw een geschikte oplossing: de koks aan huis. Zij zorgden voor de échte gastronomische hoogstandjes. In Gent kon een tiental koks worden ingehuurd, elk met hun specialiteit en recepten. Gepocheerde kwarteleitjes, iemand?

In de 19de eeuw begon de cateringbusiness echt te draaien. De spijsleveraar, traiteur of tafelhouder zorgde niet alleen voor luisterrijke feestdiners maar ook voor de borden, de glazen en het bestek. Zo kon je vermijden dat jouw eigen kostbare porselein een oortje kwijtraakte. Grote namen in Gent waren traiteurs zoals Vandernoot aan de Zonnestraat en Urbanowiez aan de Vogelmarkt. Ze grossierden in exclusieve diners maar het kon ook gewoon een plat du jour zijn, afgehaald of aan huis besteld. Niet zo anders als vandaag!

Reclame voor Urbanowiez, een Gentse traiteur die zowel dagschotels als feestmalen leverde, ook aan huis

While initially the project intended to supply the related images and stories by searching through the Collections of Ghent portal, it soon became clear that for many businesses they wanted to work with, they couldn't find any material there. They supplemented by objects from private collections, from guides, from sympathisers and the business owners themselves.

URL's websites + social

- https://gentsekoop.be/
- https://www.instagram.com/gentsekoop/
- https://www.facebook.com/gentsekoop

ReUseit

partners:

- Industry Museum (in collaboration with Armina Ghazaryan)
- Nerdlab
- Autonomous design course
- Open design course
- Golnesa Rezanezhad Pishkhani (artist)
- Darin Ramic Mazalovic (artist)

- Gabriela Alarcón (artist)

Description:

Re-Use It is a project which by creating useable derivative works under a free license, stimulates creative reuse of the Collections of Ghent.

In a first stage the project selected a number of objects from the Collections of Ghent and turned them into vectorised images which were more useable than the original. These images were made available under a free license so others could in turn use them.

In a second stage, the project lead organised a series of workshops with various target audiences and media to stimulate the reuse of these vectorised images.
Graffiti workshop: Vectorised drawings are more usable than the original reproduction of an object to reuse in various media. For instance, Micaela Vigliano, a visual artist from Argentina, led a graffiti workshop which turned the vector images into stencils which could be used to do traditional graffiti on walls or to decorate bags. Overlaying the different stencils allows to create a tapestry of different colors and textures.

Texturas de un mural que quedó por Gante, Bélgica. Photo from Instagram account aish-lola

Interdisciplinary artist Golnesa Rezanezhad Pishkhani was invited to reuse the project's designs in embroidery.


Symbolen uit de collectie hergebruikt in een project van Alitheia-Belhiza Ocak

In the Industriemuseum, the project organised a letterpressing workshop with Armina Ghazaryan where participants were presented with various printing techniques.

Letterpress workshop Industrie Museum.

The students Autonomous Design from the Ghentian art school KASK were asked to think conceptually about the reuse of the collections. During this workshop the project used both

traditional and digital techniques to explore the collection. The students of the Open Design Course also from KASK and Mesh vzw placed the focus more on open data and open source. The Collections of Ghent served as a point of departure to talk about the importance of the principles of open source.
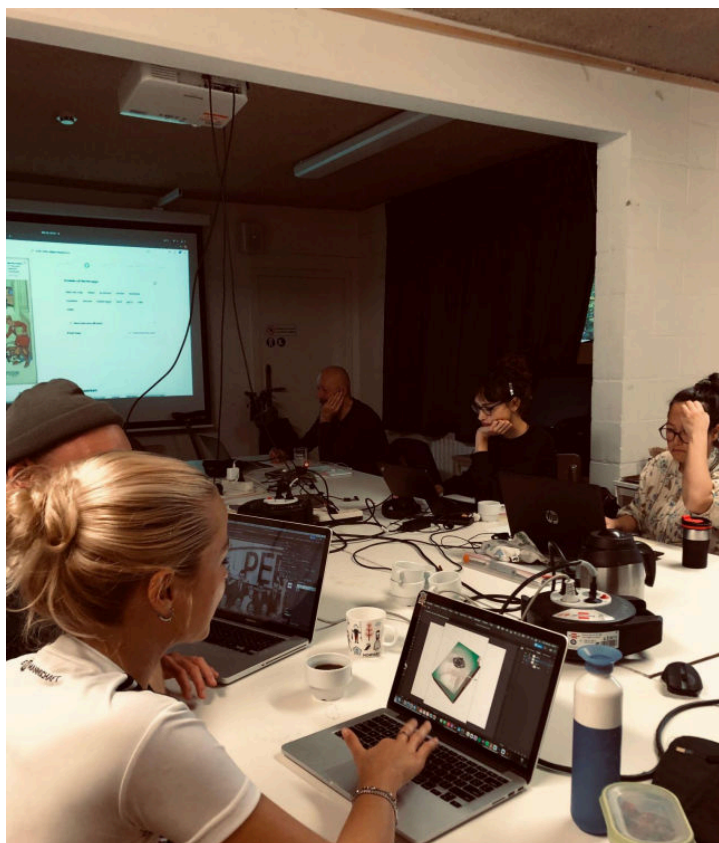
Workshop with studenten of Autonome Vormgeving at KASK art school

Project booth at Collections of Ghent end festival: photo: Sam Donvil, CC0

Shoppingcentrum Malem

Description:

Malem is a post-war planned neighborhood which used to contain lots of small neighborhood stores which were gradually outcompeted by large supermarkets. The project Shoppingcenter Malem's premise was that along with those small stores, the social fabric of the neighborhood also deteriorated as they served as places where people could have social encounters. Shopping Centrum Malem as a project wanted to recreate the old Malem neighborhood with its plentiful neighborhood businesses. By actively including the present inhabitants in the project the project itself was a connecting factor to increase

social interconnectedness. Young and old, original inhabitants and newcomers are connected in looking at the past, present and future of their neighborhood.

In a first phase they connected young and old in reconstructing 12 stores. Their initial goal of temporarily reconstructing the stores proved too difficult to realise as these spaces are currently occupied as residential units and that the people there needed the space and often even close the shutters in order to cut down on heating costs. They continued by inviting the local children to imagine which kind of shops they would like to see in their neighborhood and visualise them by building maquette's. These were then used in mini-exhibitions. Eventually they were able to temporarily occupy a space with a temporary shop..

Shoppingcentrum Malem free store exhibition flyer

The project managed to connect Ghentians in several ways. They noticed that even an older couple dealing with limited mobility became curious and decided to come by to have a look. Since, they returned more or less weekly during the course of the project. While the neighborhood has some tensions between the autochthonous inhabitants and new arrivals, the project provided a space where both communities could meet. This created opportunities for long term connections. For instance, the temporary shop was staffed by a team of two women from both communities and over the course of the project they became fast friends.

Participants of the Shoppingcentrum Malem project

URL's websites & social:

- www.shoppingcentermalem.be
- https://www.facebook.com/StudioMalem

Textielindustrie

partners:

- IQRA (Idries Bensbaho)

Description:

'De Textielindustrie' is an investigative documentary which introduces the viewer to the labour migration history triggered by the textile industry in Ghent in the second part of the 20th century and the various heritage institutions relevant to it. The story is told from the personal perspective of Idries and Sidi, both descendants from immigrants who came to Belgium to work in the textile industry. It also features a testimony from a former textile labourer with this migration background.

Shooting in the Industriemuseum

The resulting documentary can be viewed as a guide for all Ghentian young people with a migration background to find out more about the history of their family as well. Both the functioning of and the various relevant people working at the heritage institutions are

featured. The film also wants to raise awareness with autochthonous Ghentians about this part of their city's history.

Idries Bensbaho en Sidi El Omari with Guy Dupont at the city archive of Ghent

Finding people from the first generation of labourers proved more difficult than expected. It was hard to track down the right people but once they were contacted it soon became clear that they were often hesitant to share their story on camera. Some of these people feared for a long time to lose their citizenship once their contracts at the failing Ghentian textile industry were terminated. The team behind the documentary intends to continue their search for more testimonials and extend the documentary further.

5. Evaluation and reflection

The overall project goal of the Collections of Ghent project was twofold. Firstly, to open up digital collections and stimulate their reuse, and secondly to investigate how this reuse might increase social cohesion in the city of Ghent. The Collections of Ghent Co-creation fund specifically was intended to offer a financial stimulus for a diverse range of reusers, ranging from citizens to students and people from the creative sector to companies, etc. It was hoped that this financial stimulus would allow them to deliver project results that would go beyond the ideational or prototype phase.

While certainly one goal was to use some of the projects as validation by developers of the technical infrastructure (ie. machine enabled access to the heritage data as linked open data data through data-endpoints) put in place during the project, we also wanted to attract profiles that wanted to reuse the collections in creative ways and had skills other than coding. Thanks to our decision to separate the fund into two seperate ones, jury's targeting either 'technical' and 'creative' projects, we were able to attract a well-rounded set of projects which deployed the collection data and images in different ways.

The tech projects

In terms of validation, the project wanted to find what developers' reaction to the Linked Data Event Stream (LDES) technology would be. Some of the advantages of the LDES technology are that it is able to store the evolution of a historically dynamic dataset, it also allows for 'federated' querying meaning that the data can be queried together with other linked open datasets and thirdly it uses *Linked Data Fragments* which allow large queries which normally require a lot of processing power to be broken down into smaller queries, sharing the load more evenly between data user and data publisher.

The 'technical' projects had the basic requirement that they would have to use the Collections of Ghent database endpoints to retrieve the data. They all complied, however, because many of the projects employed machine learning which required large datasets to train an algorithm, it made sense to download a large set of data or images and store them locally instead of retrieving data through API-calls to the Collections of Ghent database every time the application was used. This was the case for *Collage van Gent, De Gentse rol van het WC, Once upon AI* and *Linked ARTeveldestad*. In this sense, none of these projects provided validation for LDES as a more lightweight technology for serving data. The reason why the project Interactieve photobooth: *welke bekende Gentenaar ben jij?*, which did not use machine learning also downloaded the images locally, was to avoid long load times.

None of the projects worked around this topic of historical change in heritage datasets and since the data has only been published in a LDES for a short amount of time, the dataset does not yet provide a good case-study for these kinds of applications. As a consequence we were not able to validate *Linked Data Event Streams* as a technology through the co-creation fund technical projects. In general however, the feedback from the developers of the projects was that they did not need all the novel features of the LDES technology and found it relatively complicated to work with. It might also be the case that they found LDES simply unfamiliar territory as it is still an experimental technology and hasn't found widespread adoption. The projects did provide some use-cases for heritage collections as linked data. *Linked Arteveldestad* and *Once Upon AI* did combine the Collections of Ghent linked data with other sources of linked data such as Open Street Map.

Whether the applications will be used in the future by the heritage organisations of the Collections of Ghent consortium remains to be seen. From the projects side, this is certainly possible and some of the projects could be deployed as is without any further development (Interactieve photobooth, Collage van Gent). The final version of Linked ARTeveldestad was still in the prototype stage but since the project fits in the general work plan of IDlab as a publicly funded research organisation, there is a high likelihood that it will be developed further.

The creative projects

The requirement for the 'creative projects' was to reuse the images from the Collections of Ghent portal in some capacity of another and all of them did so. However, one obvious challenge was the late delivery of the Collections of Ghent portal which made it impossible for the prospective grantees to browse the collections as they were writing their project. The project took steps to remedy this as much as possible by organizing presentations and private meetings about the contents of the collections with staff from the respective heritage institutions. Even when the portal was online and the grant recipients could browse the collection, they often struggled to find items that related directly to their subject. This is of course also due to the diverse nature of the collections and the Collections of Ghent project was aware of this from the start.

We also got the feedback that the portal interface lacked features that allowed easy and productive browsing. This is ofcourse often a consequence of the limited descriptive metadata of the images. A lack of descriptive metadata is a challenge most heritage institutions face and improving the data manually is very labor intensive. Many of the 'technical' projects however showed how machine learning will in the future be one way to move forward and generate descriptive metadata using machines which will in turn improve search performance. The project 'Once Upon AI' gave both correct and clearly incorrect interpretations of collection pieces. In this sense this more 'playful' project exposed the challenges machine learning still poses. The project Linked ARTeveldestad was a bit more straightforward and aimed for quality usable descriptive metadata and gave some very promising results by unleashing machine learning on data, text and images. Nevertheless, projects like 1000 jaar gentsekoop, did eventually find the content they were looking for with help from their network and the institutions. It might be the case that even with a more performant search portal, there is still lots of value to be gained from complementing this by giving users access to actual people working at the institutions.

The cocreation fund as a format

The cocreation fund format allowed the project to engage at the highest level of participation on the citizen participation ladder model by Sherry Arnstein used in the

project's Cultural Datalab framework[3], meaning that it was our way to involve citizens and allowing them to do whatever they wanted with the collections without steering the development of the projects in a certain direction or framing the process to influence project outcomes.

We have sometimes wondered whether the effort of setting up a co-creation fund and distributing 200,000 euros once, is in proportion to the profit for the project and its goals. Despite the amount of administrative and organizational work, we are very satisfied with the added value that the co-creation fund has created for the project as a whole. Ideally, we should be able to give such subsidies to interested parties for a few more years. Then the rules and the framework that was put in place around it would have paid off even more than just this one time.

The project proved that it is difficult to determine to what extent opening up collections contribute to social cohesion. However, the impact assessment (O4.4.1), shows how cultural heritage and neighborhoods strengthen each other reciprocally and that technology and the project based nature of the intervention had a catalyzing effect on this dyadic relationship. The main strengths lie in a strengthened neighborhood identity, an increased sense of belonging and sense of ownership, and the development of new interactions regarding the definition, curation and consumption of (local) cultural heritage. Since all of the projects had public demonstrations or events, they brought people together by making them reflect on their shared heritage. There is anecdotal evidence from Shoppingcenter Malem where the projects' activities provided meeting points for people who would otherwise not interact. Both documentaries, Straffe Straten and Textielindustrie provide the content and the storytelling power to achieve greater understanding between Ghentians from different backgrounds.

Finally, as a format, a co-creation fund, compared to the hackathon, delivers applications which are past the ideation stage. All of the awarded projects delivered a useable product, experience or performance in some way or another. Furthermore as we were able to fund several projects at the same time, there were project crossovers (ie. the Shoppingcentrum

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[3] https://organizingengagement.org/models/ladder-of-citizen-participation/

Malem project was featured in the Straffe Straten documentary, Wouter De Vriese from De rol van het Gentse wc-papier was invited by Nerdlab as a speaker).

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