



# The generative role of cultural heritage. Developing new competences that promote community and individual well-being.

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## Introduction

In recent scientific studies, participation in various cultural activities has been shown to be related to psychophysical well-being.

For educational sciences, the most interesting aspect of culture is that it activates psychocognitive and social dimensions that mobilise images that trigger complex processes that are crucial to the development of transversal competences.

The new competences have a positive impact on well-being by improving the ability to deal with everyday psychological, social, and physical challenges. The abilities acquired through the enjoyment of activities related to cultural heritage promote processes of empowerment, democratic participation, social cohesion and active ageing.

## Context of the research and aims

The work is funded by the Italian National Recovery and Resilience Plan and is part of the expanded partnership CHANGES: 'Cultural Heritage, Active Innovation for Next-Generation Sustainable Society'. Spoke 9, in which the researcher work, define the processes by which cultural heritage – environmental, tangible and intangible - is shaped and renewed in today's world, as well as its potential impact on the governance of territories, participation, social cohesion, entrepreneurship, and sustainable tourism.

This research aims to define the competences that cultural practitioners need to improve the use of cultural heritage by users/publics and to promote their well-being.

## Hypothesis and research question

Competences related to well-being impact the work of cultural practitioners by improving their ability to consciously engage their audiences with cultural heritage.

What key competences should cultural practitioners use to promote pathways to well-being, i.e., cultural and community welfare?

## Method

**Epistemological approach to research:**  
*salutogenic, ecosystemic*

**Research strategy:** *mixed methods*

**Research methodology:** *case studies*

**Study sample:** *cultural practitioners*

**Research techniques:**  
*Questionnaires*  
*Ethnographic participant observation*  
*Semi-structured interviews*  
*Focus groups*

## Discussion and conclusion

Based on the literature review and the initial working hypotheses, interesting research scenarios can be derived in which knowledge in the cultural field will converge in several areas such as health, environmental and economic sustainability, social cohesion, education and technological innovation.

The theoretical work has highlighted the various types of benefits observed when groups and individuals consciously engage in cultural heritage and related activities. This not only leads to individual well-being, but also has a positive impact on the quality of interpersonal relationships, social belonging, pro-social and civic attitudes and active ageing processes.

Regarding studies on cultural welfare, there is no research on the contribution of cultural practitioners, who can play an important role in mediation, engagement, facilitation of cultural exchanges between groups. Over the next two years, the PhD programme will explore what key competences cultural practitioners need to promote pathways to well-being, cultural and community welfare.

## References

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