

**Preserving the Past —
— Securing the Future.**

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SUSTAINABLE TOURISM PRACTICES HANDBOOK

Sustainable Practices for the Cultural Heritage & Remembrance Tourism Sector

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FOREWORD

The ‘[Preserving the Past, Securing the Future](#)’ (PPSF) project aimed to create positive change within the remembrance and cultural heritage tourism sector, specifically relating to World War Two memory and history. To do so, it works on enhancing the awareness, skills, and knowledge of sustainable development and sustainable tourism practices among sector professionals so that we can drive this change. It also established a strong, interactive community of practice to promote sustainable cultural and remembrance heritage through cooperation and knowledge sharing.

The project has four main axes:

- **Research & Knowledge Sharing**

Identifying best practices and challenges in sustainable WWII heritage management through research, case studies, and peer exchanges. By learning from successful models, the project provides stakeholders with insights to improve their own sites and strategies.

- **Training & Capacity-Building**

Through expert-led workshops, hands-on training, and e-learning, the project equips WWII heritage professionals with the knowledge and skills to implement sustainability measures at their sites and within their organisations.

- **Developing Sustainable Strategies**

Working with stakeholders to create actionable sustainability frameworks, offering tailored recommendations, policies, and tools to help WWII remembrance sites integrate sustainable tourism practices.

- **Awareness & Community Engagement**

Through events, networking opportunities, and targeted communication, the project promotes sustainability in WWII remembrance and engages both professionals and the public in shaping a responsible future for heritage tourism.

The PPSF project took place from October 2024 through to October 2026 and was funded by the Creative Europe programme of the European Commission. This Sustainable Tourism Practices Handbook collects the key outputs, results and learnings from this time. From research on the current state of the sector to useful guidelines, tips, frameworks and practical tools, this handbook is designed to support you in your sustainability journey. With this project, we encourage you to join us in sharing stories of change—and driving it forward: preserving the past, securing the future!

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.



Bunkers at Juno Beach Centre on the Normandy beaches in France, an example of WWII heritage particularly exposed to the consequences of climate change — Juno Beach Centre, MMcHUGH

SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES FOR REMEMBRANCE HERITAGE



Project Partners

The following organisations composed the consortium of the Preserving the past, Securing the Future project:

LRE Foundation

LRE Foundation (the Netherlands)

An international, inclusive network connecting people and organisations dedicated to preserving and valorising the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of World War II, its memory and meaning. The Foundation's main objective is to make this history relevant and accessible, by working with a large variety of remembrance and cultural actors across Europe and North America, including 400+ partners and members, to present a diversity of stories related to WWII history and its memory. These actors include museums, interpretation centres, universities, tourism boards, local and regional governments, remembrance associations, war graves commissions, research institutes, the travel trade industry and more. The LRE Foundation initiates projects that bring added value to the WWII remembrance sector and memory transmission, and it was in this framework that the Preserving the Past, Securing the Future project was developed. These projects support the sector in conveying important lessons from WWII, namely that peace and living in peace cannot be taken for granted, the importance of mutual understanding and reconciliation, and the price of freedom.

[For more information, visit our website](#)



mascontour GmbH - Sustainable Tourism Consulting & Communication (Germany)

A global leading consultancy company in resilient and sustainable tourism development, in which both resilience and sustainability form a deep-seated company principle systematically applied in their activities. With an interdisciplinary network of national and international experts, they have been enthusiastically working on solutions to achieve innovative and responsible tourism and have 20 years of practical experience in tourism consulting. Mascontour provides consultancy and support from analysis through to the concrete implementation of measures, working with destinations, companies, and other types of tourism organisations. Their

work comprises all phases of the tourism cycle and they have successfully carried out projects on a local and national level across five continents in more than 60 countries.

[For more information, visit our website](#)



Juno Beach Centre (France)

The Canadian Second World War museum and cultural centre located in Normandy. Since 2019, the Juno Beach Centre (JBC) has been committed to a sustainable development approach, which takes the form of a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) plan structured around four pillars that incorporate an annual Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report (GHG): Moderation (Reducing environmental footprint and promoting the emergence of a circular economy); Engagement (Committing to visitors and staff); Preservation (Taking action to protect biodiversity); Collaboration (Working together with others). The actions undertaken as part of this 360° strategy relate primarily to the museum's infrastructure and operations, its programme of activities, its commitment to visitors and staff, biodiversity, raising public awareness, and the challenges of collaborating with other stakeholders in remembrance tourism.

[For more information, visit our website](#)



FONDAZIONE CAMPUS

Fondazione Campus Studi Del Mediterraneo (Italy)

Fondazione Campus delivers degree courses in the sciences of tourism, carried out by the University of Pisa, the administrative seat of the courses, the University of Pavia and the University of Applied Sciences of Italian Switzerland (Lugano), in collaboration with the Lucchese Foundation for Higher Education and Research. It has a well-established tradition of advanced management and business administration training, and in recent years has set up a Centre for Studies and Research, engaged in the varied field of the disciplines and problems of tourism. After almost 20 years of activity, Fondazione Campus has grown and today deals with university education, professional training and research in the areas of Tourism and Management, holding an important position in enhancing the professional development and capacities of future workers of the sector as well as promoting sustainable tourism practices.

[For more information, visit our website](#)

Sustainability in Remembrance Heritage

Tourism is a sector with a high impact on the environment, local communities and economies. It is therefore imperative that tourism evolves to reduce its negative impacts and meet the needs of more responsible and engaged travellers. As actors of the World War II remembrance and wider cultural heritage tourism sector, we have a responsibility to be engaged in tackling climate change. Just as we remember those who fought for freedom during the war, the challenge of its time, now we must fight the challenges we face today, namely climate change and social inequality. Furthermore, the cultural heritage sector tells how societies have adapted and thrived over time, of resilience, adaptation, citizenship and cooperation. Museums and memorial sites are places of learning, education. These reasons make it a natural fit for leading responsible change through sustainable strategies and practice to adapt to a changing world.

When we talk about sustainability, we talk about all aspects: environmental, social, cultural and economic. In order to make lasting changes and build a more resilient, sustainable sector, we must work together on all of these topics. This project, Preserving the Past, Securing the Future (PPSF) therefore analyses and supports the improvement of sustainability in the sector, its museums and memorial sites, in all senses.

The 'Preserving the Past, Securing the Future' approach

Both the project and this handbook are a product of cooperation, shared knowledge and skills, carried out according to a co-creation methodology. Sustainability in cultural and remembrance heritage cannot be addressed through a one-size-fits-all approach. Therefore, throughout this project we actively involved WWII heritage professionals from various countries across Europe, coming from museums and sites of varying size and situation, using a collaborative problem-solving approach. Working together, we discussed, developed, tested and challenged sustainable practices, taking into account the unique experiences and needs of the participants and their sites. This enables us to ensure the project and its outcomes are grounded in real-world experience and respond accurately to the needs and challenges of the sector.

Co-creation also encourages knowledge exchange between different countries and organisations, allowing participants to learn from one another, identify transferable solutions and build a shared sense of ownership of the project's results. This makes the Sustainable Tourism Practices Handbook and other project outputs more practical, relevant and thus more likely to be taken up and continued beyond the lifetime of the project.

Summary of the Needs Analysis

The PPSF Needs Analysis explored how sustainability is currently understood and applied within the World War II remembrance and cultural heritage tourism sector, identifying gaps, barriers and expectations among both sector organisations and visitors. Two complementary surveys were conducted between April and mid-July 2025: one gathered 48 valid responses from organisations and attractions, while the second collected 164 valid responses from individual visitors across different countries and age groups.

Organisations and Attractions

The survey of organisations and attractions revealed a **sector in transition**.

Sustainability awareness is developing, but its integration into organisational strategies remains uneven.

Around 63% of respondents rated their familiarity with sustainability between moderate and high, while one third reported low levels of familiarity. Around half of the organisations were already implementing some sustainability initiatives, particularly energy-saving measures, waste reduction and recycling, cultural preservation, inclusive accessibility and support for local supply chains. However, these actions are often implemented individually rather than as part of a structured sustainability strategy.

Formalisation remains one of the main gaps. Sustainability certifications are still uncommon, staff training is limited and many organisations lack systematic tools for measuring the impact of their actions. Smaller organisations, which represent a significant part of the sector, face particular constraints related to limited staff time, funding and specialist knowledge. The findings therefore highlighted the need for practical, adaptable and resource-efficient tools, together with peer learning and training approaches suited to organisations of different sizes and levels of experience.

Individual Visitors

The visitor survey showed a comparatively high sensitivity towards sustainability.



This data highlights an important communication and visibility gap. Visitors identified insufficient information, limited sustainable transport options, additional costs and accessibility issues among the main barriers to more sustainable cultural experiences.

Visitors also expressed clear expectations.

They value transparent and visible communication about sustainability measures, accessible and environmentally responsible services, participatory experiences and opportunities to contribute directly to improving the sites they visit.

Almost 90% were either willing, or potentially willing depending on the circumstances, to pay a small contribution supporting sustainability initiatives, provided that its purpose and impact were clearly explained.

Taken together, the findings show that the sector already has a significant base of awareness and practical experience but lacks support to move towards more systematic and measurable approaches. The Needs Analysis therefore identified several common priorities: practical and differentiated training; simple assessment and monitoring tools; stronger communication of sustainability actions; greater involvement of visitors and local communities; and increased exchange of experience between organisations. These findings directly informed the PPSF capacity-building activities and the development of the sustainable practices, tools and recommendations presented in this handbook.

The complete Needs Analysis can be found on the '[Resources](#)' webpage of the PPSF project website, under 'Reports & Articles'

Summary of the Market Analysis

The PPSF Market Analysis examined the current state, trends, and future potential of sustainable cultural and remembrance tourism in Europe, with a particular focus on World War II heritage sites to identify opportunities for strengthening sustainability within the sector.

Cultural and remembrance tourism represents one of Europe's most important tourism segments, combining educational, cultural, and economic values. Growing visitor demand demonstrates the continued relevance of heritage attractions, while increasing public awareness of sustainability requires destinations to balance visitor experiences with the long-term protection of cultural assets. The European Union, through its cultural policies and programmes, recognises cultural heritage as an important contributor to sustainable development, social cohesion, intercultural dialogue, and European identity. At the same time, sustainability has become a strategic priority, closely aligned with the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) Attraction Criteria.

The results highlight several important trends.

Following the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, tourism demand has exceeded pre-pandemic levels across most European countries, with cultural tourism remaining one of the main motivations for travel.

Visitor numbers at major remembrance sites such as the Anne Frank House and the Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial have steadily increased, demonstrating the continued interest in authentic historical experiences. However, this growth also creates significant management challenges, including overcrowding, pressure on heritage sites, commercialisation, and impacts on local communities.

The Market Analysis also demonstrates that **European countries adopt different approaches to remembrance tourism**. France has invested heavily in modernising remembrance sites through digital interpretation, immersive visitor experiences, and destination development. Germany, by contrast, places stronger emphasis on education, civic responsibility, and historical reflection, deliberately avoiding the commercialisation of remembrance or sensational forms of “dark tourism.”

These different perspectives underline the need for flexible sustainability approaches that respect national contexts while promoting common European values.

Digital transformation emerges as a key opportunity for sustainable development. Digital interpretation, multilingual information, virtual experiences, visitor management systems, and online educational tools can improve accessibility, enhance visitor experiences, and support more effective management of visitor flows while reducing environmental impacts. At the European level, these developments align closely with the European Travel Commission's priorities, which place sustainability, digital innovation, skills development, and destination management at the centre of future tourism policy.

Overall, the Market Analysis identifies seven major opportunities for future development:

- Growing demand for heritage tourism
- Stronger networking through European cultural routes
- Enhanced cooperation among attractions
- Application of GSTC Attraction Criteria
- Greater use of digital technologies
- Expanded partnerships with specialised tour operators
- Systematic learning from existing best practices

At the same time, two key challenges remain: accommodating different national approaches to remembrance and balancing the uneven geographical distribution of heritage attractions across Europe. Together, these findings provide a strong foundation for developing practical sustainability tools, training programmes, and management approaches that strengthen the long-term resilience, educational value, and competitiveness of Europe's cultural and remembrance heritage sector.

Opportunities

1

Profiting from ongoing interest

There is a sustained increase in demand for cultural and heritage attractions on the tourism side. The number of visitors rose continuously before the Covid-19 years and since the end of the pandemic figures have almost reached former highs again.

2

Highlighting many routes and sights – Network character

In the European Union, sites of cultural exchange and historical reappraisal are brought together in experience trails. These extend across individual countries and national borders. Particular emphasis is placed on networking and co-operation. Numerous routes have already been created in this way.

3

Emphasising cooperation and synergies

It remains to be clarified whether less favoured countries, such as those with fewer cultural heritage sites, can be more strongly involved in value creation. It is also advisable to strengthen the networking of the individual attractions in order to utilise synergy effects and promote sustainable transformation through a targeted exchange of knowledge.

4

Focusing on the GSTC Criteria for Attractions

It is recommended to align the sustainable management of cultural sites, particularly regarding their potential as tourist attractions within the European Union, with the Global Sustainable Tourism Council Criteria, especially their recently published Criteria for Attractions. GSTC criteria have proven effective over the years and are widely recognised as a valuable tool for achieving sustainability goals in the tourism industry, with a framework that cover a broad range of topics.

5

Discovering the potential of digitalisation for sustainability aspect

It should be emphasised that opportunities for digitalisation of individual cultural aspects, entire heritage sites, or routes should be utilised to enhance intuitive experiences, increase interest, and better manage visitor flows. However, this should be used carefully and in support of sustainability efforts.

6

Cooperating with known Tour Operators

Existing collaborations with tour operators in various tourism development efforts related to the presentation of cultural heritage in the European Union can be further expanded and strengthened.

7

Learning from Best Practices

Existing best practices within the European Union, particularly those related to cultural heritage and the Second World War, should be examined to learn from their experiences and adapt effective measures for achieving desired outcomes towards a sustainable transformation. For example, a list of Best Practices among ‘Cultural Routes’ can be found [‘here’](#)

Challenges

1. Acknowledging different approaches

The challenges and recognition of tourism’s potential are evaluated and approached differently across EU member states and smaller political entities. While presenting cultural heritage can be understood as an educational mission and a warning for future generations, it can also be seen as a valuable cultural asset capable of attracting travellers. The former approach cautions against the voyeuristic aspects of “dark tourism,” while the latter highlights the risks of “overtourism.” These differing perspectives could pose challenges for cooperation and the development of a unified strategy for the sustainable management of cultural sites.

2. Balancing uneven distribution of attractions

Hotspots of cultural activities are unevenly distributed across the EU. While some countries benefit more from tourism potential, others are less reached by tourists. However, it remains unclear whether the presence of memorial sites is sufficient as a reason to choose a destination or whether this is merely an additional criterion for organising a trip.

The complete Market Analysis can be found on the [‘Resources’](#) webpage of the PPSF project website, under ‘Reports & Articles’

Sustainable Practices

In this section is a selection of sustainable practices that museums and memorial sites can implement to foster environmental, socio-cultural and economic sustainability. The practices have been chosen and developed through collaboration with heritage professionals within the PPSF project. From sector research to specifically designed e-learning modules and expert-led capacity training workshops, the knowledge and experiences gained have shaped these practices to provide relevant and practical insights for stakeholders in varying contexts.

Environmental Sustainability Practice: Eco-responsible Events for Remembrance Organisations - Practical Checklist for Museums, Memorials & Interpretation Centres

Background

Events are essential tools for remembrance organisations to engage visitors, communities, educators, researchers, and stakeholders. However, conferences, commemorations, exhibitions, workshops, and public gatherings can generate significant environmental impacts through travel, catering, energy consumption, procurement, and waste. To address this challenge, PPSF partners developed an Eco-responsible Events approach that helps institutions reduce the environmental footprint of their activities while maintaining high-quality visitor experiences.

Why it matters

Remembrance institutions have an opportunity to demonstrate leadership by integrating sustainability into their operations and public activities. Eco-responsible events contribute to climate action, resource efficiency, and environmental awareness while supporting the sector's broader commitment to responsible management. They also help organisations align their events with visitor expectations and sustainability policies increasingly adopted across Europe.

How PPSF developed this practice

The Eco-responsible Events practice was co-created through exchanges among PPSF partners, who shared experiences and identified common environmental challenges related to organising events. Building on existing international guidance, including ISO 20121 (international standard for sustainable event management) and sustainable event management principles, partners adapted practical measures to the specific realities

of museums, memorials, interpretation centres, and remembrance organisations. The result was a simple and flexible checklist that can be applied to events of different sizes and formats.

Step-by-step implementation

- Assess environmental impacts of the event, including travel, catering, materials, waste.
- Set clear sustainability objectives during the planning phase.
- Select venues with good accessibility and environmental credentials.
- Minimise resource consumption through digital communication and reusable materials.
- Promote sustainable mobility options for participants and staff.
- Choose local, seasonal, and low-impact catering options.
- Implement effective waste reduction and recycling measures.
- Monitor outcomes and identify improvements for future events.

Challenges

- Balancing environmental ambitions with budget and operational constraints.
- Influencing visitor and supplier behaviour.
- Limited availability of sustainable products or services in some locations.
- Measuring environmental impacts consistently.
- Ensuring staff awareness and engagement throughout the event process.

Benefits

- Reduced environmental footprint and waste generation.
- More efficient use of resources and materials.
- Increased awareness among staff, visitors, and stakeholders.
- Enhanced institutional reputation and credibility.
- Opportunities for innovation and continuous improvement.
- Better alignment with sustainability policies and funding priorities.

Resources

Some useful documents to help you are listed below. Aside from those marked external, they can be found in the 'Resources' - guidelines and articles are located in the 'Reports & Articles' sub-section, whilst practical templates are in the 'Project Toolkit':

- PPSF Eco-responsible Events Checklist for Remembrance Organisations.
- UNDP Sustainable Events Guidance.
- European Commission Green Public Procurement resources.
- GSTC Sustainability Criteria and tools.
- ISO 20121 Sustainable Event Management Guidelines (external document: [For more information, visit the website](#))

Real examples from partners & participants

During the PPSF project, several PPSF participants worked on how to introduce sustainability measures to their organisations during meetings, workshops, exhibitions, and commemorative events. One such example is the Mémorial du Débarquement et de la Libération en Provence – Mont Faron. Actions implemented during their event included: **reducing printed materials by printing a lower amount and adding additional checks to avoid printing errors, focusing on digital communication and reusing printed materials for marketing after the event, encouraging public transport use by participants of the event, using reusable exhibition components that could be re-used after the event, selecting local suppliers and sustainable catering options, and strengthening waste separation systems.** These experiences demonstrated that simple measures can significantly reduce environmental impacts while maintaining event quality.



Mémorial du Mont Faron, Var, France — Davric, WikiCommons

At the Juno Beach Centre the team incorporate eco-responsible event principles into educational and commemorative activities by **prioritising digital communication, reducing single-use materials, promoting sustainable visitor behaviour, and improving waste management practices.** Attention is also paid to the **respect of biodiversity** on the site during the event to limit the negative impacts of attendees. The Centre also explores ways to integrate **sustainability messaging** into visitor engagement activities, helping raise awareness while reducing the environmental impact of events.



Juno Beach Centre, Courseulles-sur-Mer, Normandy, France — Juno Beach Centre, P. Henry

Social Sustainability Practice: Community Engagement

Background

Remembrance institutions, museums, memorial sites, and cultural heritage organisations are not only places where history is preserved and interpreted. They are also important actors within their local communities. Their activities influence social cohesion, community identity, education, and civic participation.

For many years, cultural organisations primarily focused on preserving collections and delivering exhibitions. Today, there is growing recognition that sustainable institutions actively involve local communities in shaping programmes, events, exhibitions, and decision-making processes. Community engagement moves institutions from being places that tell stories to becoming places where communities share and create stories together.

Why it matters

Strong community engagement contributes directly to social sustainability by:

- Building trust between institutions and local residents.
- Increasing the relevance of exhibitions and programmes.
- Giving a voice to diverse and underrepresented groups.
- Strengthening local identity and sense of belonging.
- Encouraging intergenerational dialogue and learning.
- Creating long-term support for the institution.
- Generating social value beyond tourism and visitor numbers.

For remembrance institutions, community engagement is particularly important because many historical narratives are connected to local experiences, family histories, and collective memory. When communities are actively involved, remembrance becomes more inclusive, meaningful, and resilient.

How PPSF developed this practice

Throughout the PPSF workshops, participants repeatedly highlighted the importance of building stronger relationships with their local communities. During Workshop 2 at the Museum of the Second World War in Gdańsk, Poland, discussions focused on:

- Social sustainability
- Community participation
- Inclusion and accessibility
- Representation and diverse voices
- Human rights and democratic values

These exchanges demonstrated that community engagement can take many different forms depending on the mission, size, and context of each institution. As part of PPSF, participants reflected on practical ways to move from occasional consultation towards long-term partnerships with local stakeholders.

Step-by-step implementation

Steps	Implementation
Step 1: Understand your community	Identify the people and groups connected to your institution. Ask: • Who lives nearby? • Who currently engages with us? • Who is missing from our audiences? • Which groups could contribute valuable perspectives?
Step 2: Create opportunities for dialogue	Organise meetings, roundtables, surveys, or informal conversations to understand community interests and expectations. Listen before planning.
Step 3: Invite participation	Provide opportunities for local people to contribute to the institution’s work through: • Oral history projects • Community exhibitions • Storytelling initiatives • Volunteer programmes • Educational activities • Local events and commemorations

Step 4: Build partnerships	Develop long-term collaborations with: • Schools and universities • Community organisations • NGOs • Local authorities • Cultural associations Move beyond one-off activities and create ongoing relationships.
Step 5: Share responsibility	Where possible, involve community representatives in planning programmes and activities. Ask: • Can they help shape content? • Can they advise on representation? • Can they co-create projects?
Step 6: Evaluate and improve	Collect feedback from participants and partners. Regularly review: • Who participated? • Who did not participate? • What worked well? • What can be improved?

Challenges	Possible solutions
Limited staff and time	Many institutions have limited resources available for community work. Possible solutions: • Start with one small initiative • Build activities into existing programmes • Use volunteers and partnerships where appropriate
Reaching underrepresented groups	Some communities may not feel connected to the institution. Possible solutions: • Work with trusted local organisations • Bring activities into community spaces • Remove participation barriers
Moving beyond consultation	It can be easy to ask for opinions but difficult to share decision-making. Possible solutions: • Include community representatives in planning processes • Establish advisory groups • Develop co-created projects

Maintaining long-term engagement

Community participation requires ongoing effort and relationship-building. Possible solutions:

- Communicate regularly
- Celebrate contributions
- Demonstrate how community feedback influences decisions

Benefits



For Communities

- Greater sense of ownership and belonging
- Stronger connection to local history and heritage
- Opportunities to contribute knowledge and experiences
- Increased civic participation



For Institutions

- Stronger public trust and legitimacy
- More diverse and representative narratives
- New ideas, perspectives, and partnerships
- Better understanding of local needs



For Sustainability

- Increased social impact
- Stronger resilience through community support
- Improved relevance for future generations
- Greater contribution to democratic participation and social cohesion

Resources

Some useful documents to help you are listed below and can be found on the '[Resources](#)' webpage of the PPSF project website – guidelines and articles are located in the 'Reports & Articles' sub-section, whilst practical templates are in the 'Project Toolkit':

- UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially SDG 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities
- ICOM Museum Definition and Ethical Guidelines
- UNESCO Culture & Sustainable Development Resources
 - UNESCO PERSIST: community engagement guidelines
 - Civil society engagement in German world heritage sites (in World Heritage Review: Special Issue – World Heritage in Germany)
 - The Museum and the Community
- Council of Europe Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (Faro Convention)
- Stakeholder Mapping Guide

Real examples from partners & participants

Borgata Paraloup (Paraloup meaning 'sheltered from the wolves' in the local Occitan language), sits 1,360m up in the Stura Valley, and has been a stronghold of community resistance since 1943. A refuge for justice and freedom in the heart of the Alps, this hamlet was home to shepherds and flocks for centuries and, during the Resistance of WWII, was also home to the partisan band Italia Libera. Restored according to sustainable principles, with local materials, in keeping with the setting of the ruins and with only light and necessary interventions, Borgata Paraloup is now a cultural centre where everyone can experience a welcoming and sustainable community.

The site offers cultural, social and tourist services, hosting a restaurant, café and guesthouses, Digital Museum of Stories, film archives and co-working space, open-air theatre, artistic installations and residencies, as well as nearby partisan trails to explore. Several community focused initiatives are in place to enhance the social value of the project. These include youth education and gender equality programmes, such as a rural mobility programme and participation in the national programme 'Prime Minister school of politics for young girls'. Additionally, the site was part of a 'Rural Migrantour Paths of Recovery' project, working on tourist itineraries co-created with intercultural guides from a migrant background. It also offers residencies for artists as well as a free to enter museum and the "Anello forte: laboratory-archive for the memory of women" (Anello Forte meaning strong ring). The latter is a space dedicated to the memory of resistant women with videos and books available to visitors to tell the stories of the women who live or have lived in its valleys.

Additionally, Borgata Paraloup integrates the continuation of local agriculture and its traditions into the historical memory preservation. It created the first Land Association in the Stura Valley for collective cultivation and landscape protection and oversaw the return of shepherding to the valley for the first time in 50 years. Management of the restaurant, gardens and green areas is carried out with the inclusion of migrant citizens. These initiatives all work together to include various groups, including minority and often excluded groups, into the history and culture of the site, and demonstrate practices that support a strong community involvement across society.

[For more information visit the website](#)



Museum of the Second World War

The Museum of the Second World War in Gdańsk is a relatively young institution, established in 2008. Its current premises, one of the world's largest narrative exhibitions, were opened to the public on 23 March 2017. Community engagement at the museum has a rather unique character. It can be said that, in a sense, society itself helped create it. This is not only because the museum was financed with money from Polish taxpayers. From the very first months of its operation, at the turn of 2008 and 2009, the trust of people who gave their family memorabilia to the newly established institution was crucial. Heroes and witnesses of the Second World War also shared their stories with the museum, and some of them are presented in the exhibition dedicated to the experiences of civilian victims of one of the greatest catastrophes in human history.

Today, community engagement is one of the foundations on which the museum's programme is built. Cooperation with schools and non-governmental organisations, including scouting organisations and veterans' associations, as well as the development of volunteer and student internship programmes, is among its core activities. The museum serves not only as an educational institution that disseminates reliable historical knowledge and connects past events with contemporary challenges, but also as a centre for cultural events. Music concerts, theatrical performances and film screenings, held both in the halls and within the permanent exhibition, create an offer tailored to the needs of local residents.

The museum is continually improving its efforts to make the institution more accessible to excluded groups. This means creating a dedicated offer, including, among others:

- workshops and lessons for vulnerable children with severe learning and physical disabilities.
- curator-led tours for people with hearing disabilities.
- respite zones, a visitor-friendly wayfinding system throughout the building and exhibition, and provision of walking supports to reduce physical barriers.
- new and innovative solutions such as the Non-Visual Communicator navigation system and the Easy-to-Read visiting path.

These solutions have been created with the participation of advocates representing specific groups of people with disabilities to ensure they are respectful and effective.

The museum advocates democratic values and stands up against fascism, the language of violence and exclusion, and increasing populism. Cyclical workshops, expert-led conferences and networking activities together form the Resistant to Crisis programme. This aims to create a strong, consistent, and resilient community in times of misinformation and the threat of hybrid warfare. Another aspect of fostering social resilience is reflecting on transgenerational, post-war trauma. Through tools that transform the museum visit into a form of therapy, it strives to safeguard the emotional and mental health of the community to which it belongs. For more information, [visit the website](#)



Volunteer-led tour of the Museum of the Second World War in Gdańsk exhibition, Poland — G. Jędrzejewski

Economic Sustainability Practice Example: Diversifying Income Sources for Museums, Memorials & Interpretation Centres

Background

Many remembrance institutions, museums, memorials, and cultural heritage organisations depend heavily on a limited number of income sources, such as public funding, entrance fees, or project grants. While these funding streams remain important, relying too heavily on a single source can create vulnerabilities.

Changes in government priorities, economic downturns, fluctuations in visitor numbers, or reductions in grant funding can significantly affect an institution's ability to deliver its mission. For this reason, economic sustainability is not only about increasing revenue. It is about building a resilient and balanced funding model that supports the institution's long-term purpose while protecting its independence and ability to adapt.

Why it matters

Diversifying income sources helps institutions:

- Improve financial resilience and stability
- Reduce dependence on a single funder or revenue stream
- Increase flexibility to innovate and launch new initiatives
- Strengthen long-term planning capacity
- Support investment in sustainability, accessibility, education, and community engagement
- Demonstrate sound governance to funders and stakeholders

For remembrance institutions, financial resilience is particularly important because their mission often depends on preserving historical sites, collections, testimonies, and educational programmes over the long term. Diversifying income is not about becoming more commercial. It is about creating a stable and resilient financial foundation that allows remembrance institutions to protect the past, serve their communities, and fulfil their mission long into the future.

How PPSF developed this practice

Economic sustainability was one of the key themes explored during the third PPSF workshop in Lucca. Participants discussed the challenges faced by remembrance institutions, including:

- Dependence on public funding
- Rising operational costs
- Uncertainty about future grants
- Limited staff capacity for fundraising
- Balancing commercial activities with remembrance missions

During the workshops, participants shared examples of organisations that had successfully broadened their funding base through:

- Membership schemes
- Educational services
- Events and venue hire
- Corporate partnerships
- Donations and fundraising campaigns
- International cooperation projects
- Visitor experiences linked to responsible cultural tourism

The discussions highlighted that successful diversification is not about commercialising memory, but about creating a stronger financial foundation to support the institution’s mission.

Step-by-step implementation

Steps	Implementation
Step 1: Assess Current Income Sources	Map all existing sources of revenue and identify potential risks. Questions to ask: • What percentage of income comes from each source? • Which sources are reliable? • Which sources are vulnerable? • Are we overly dependent on one funder? • If one of our main funding sources disappeared tomorrow, how resilient would we be? • Which income opportunities are most aligned with our mission and values? • Are we investing enough time in building long-term partnerships?
Step 2: Identify New Opportunities	Consider income streams that align with the institution’s mission and values. Examples include: • Grants and project funding • Membership programmes • Individual donations • Corporate sponsorships • Educational programmes • Guided tours • Venue rentals • Conferences and workshops • Retail and museum shops • Digital products and online content • Crowdfunding campaigns

Step 3: Build Partnerships	Develop collaborations with: • Tourism organisations • Local businesses • Universities • Foundations • Municipal authorities • Community organisations Strong partnerships can generate both financial and non-financial resources.
Step 4: Strengthen Fundraising Capacity	Assign responsibility for fundraising activities. Actions may include: • Creating a fundraising plan • Training staff in proposal writing • Monitoring funding opportunities • Building relationships with donors and partners
Step 5: Develop Visitor-Based Revenue Responsibly	Look for opportunities to increase value rather than visitor volume. Examples: • Special guided experiences • Educational workshops • Family programmes • Themed cultural events • Sustainable tourism packages with local partners The goal should always be compatible with the site’s mission and visitor experience.
Step 6: Monitor and Review	Review income diversification annually. Monitor: • Income by source • Funding trends • Financial risks • Return on investment for fundraising efforts Adjust the strategy as needed.

Challenges	Possible solutions
Dependence on Historical Funding Models Many institutions are accustomed to relying primarily on public funding.	• Gradually test new income streams • Start with small pilot initiatives • Learn from peer organisation
Limited Staff Capacity Fundraising and partnership development require time and skills.	• Assign clear responsibilities • Build fundraising into existing roles • Seek volunteer or expert support • Collaborate with partners

Balancing Income Generation and Mission

Some institutions may worry that new revenue activities could compromise their credibility.

- Establish clear ethical criteria
- Choose partnerships aligned with institutional values
- Ensure all activities support the educational and remembrance mission

Uncertainty of Grant Funding

Project-based funding is often competitive and temporary.

- Combine grants with other income sources
- Develop long-term partnerships
- Collaborate with relevant sector networks to leverage their expertise and secure valuable support and partnerships.
- Create unrestricted revenue streams where possible

Benefits



For Communities and Visitors

- More consistent programming
- Improved visitor services
- Stronger educational and community initiatives
- Better preservation of heritage assets



For Institutions

- Greater financial security
- Improved capacity for long-term planning
- Increased resilience during economic uncertainty
- More opportunities for innovation



For Sustainability

- Increased organisational resilience
- Reduced vulnerability to external shocks
- Stronger capacity to invest in social and environmental sustainability initiatives



For Staff

- Reduced financial pressure
- More stable working environment
- Greater confidence in future planning

Funding Opportunities

- Creative Europe
- CERV (Citizens, Equality, Rights and Values Programme)
- Erasmus+
- Horizon Europe
- Interreg
- LIFE Programme
- EEA and Norway Grants
- National heritage funds and cultural foundations
- Lottery funding
- Specialised Foundations (e.g. European Cultural Foundation)

Resources

Some useful documents to help you are listed below and can be found on the '[Resources](#)' webpage of the PPSF project website – guidelines and articles are located in the 'Reports & Articles' sub-section, whilst practical templates are in the 'Project Toolkit':

- Business Model Canvas template
- Guide on EU funding for tourism: Mobility and Transport
- Stakeholder Mapping Guide
- Standards on Fundraising of the International Council of Museums
- A Social Return on Investment

Real examples from partners & participants

At the Juno Beach Centre, ticket sales represent on average 60% of general income and the shop 40%. Since the museum has reached 100,000 annual visitors, this income covers 100% of the operational costs of the museum. Each visitor coming through the door is the result of a chain of actions (programming, marketing, communication, sales). This requires diverse partnerships with actors, notably in the tourism industry, and with educators and communities in France and Canada. Visitor numbers impact shop revenues, but here again diversification is necessary (online shop, special partnerships, targeted communication towards the local population, etc.).

For investments, events programming, temporary exhibitions and special projects, the JBC depends on other sources of income.

- Grassroots fundraising with programmes like 'Sponsor a Flag, Sponsor a Brick, Sponsor a tree, Sponsor a video'.
- A website with a major section dedicated to donations.
- Corporate fundraising.
- Working with networks in the sector to combine expertise and gain support and partnerships.
- Subsidy from Canadian Veterans Affairs for the JBC Young Canadian Guides programme.

In 2023, thanks to its strategy in the field of sustainable development, the JBC received €600,000 from EU ERDF funds in order to implement a wide range of investments meant to reduce the museum's carbon footprint, facilitate its social engagements and respect and protect biodiversity.



A young guide at Juno Beach Centre gives a tour of the bunkers to visitors — Juno Beach Centre G.Wait

RESOURCES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

2.

Case Studies

As part of the Market Analysis of the PPSF Project, summarised previously in this handbook, a comprehensive study was conducted to identify and compile best practice Case Studies in sustainable cultural tourism. The primary objective of this research was to examine how existing projects and initiatives successfully integrate sustainability principles, including:

- **Environmental Responsibility:** Reducing ecological impacts through conservation, resource efficiency, and green infrastructure.
- **Cultural Heritage Preservation:** Safeguarding and promoting historical, architectural, and intangible cultural assets.
- **Socio-economic Benefits:** Empowering local communities through economic opportunities, inclusivity, and equitable resource sharing.

Throughout the capacity building programme of the PPSF project, participants also visited two Case Studies: Juno Beach Centre, Courseulles-sur-Mer, France, and the Museum of the Second World War, Gdańsk, Poland. Participants had the opportunity to join a Study Visit to each site to see in person the environmental, socio-cultural and economic sustainability practices these sites are working on.

Listed below is a summary of some of the Case Studies included in the PPSF Market Analysis, outlining their sustainability work and the fields of action in connection with the Global Sustainable Tourism Council Attraction Criteria. You can also read more about the two Case Studies visited in the project. These, along with many more Case Studies, can be found on the 'Resources' webpage of the PPSF project website, in the 'Case Studies' section

1.

Case Study 1.

Sustainability Action: Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum, Poland

Guided Tours for Individual Visitors

Individual visitors may tour the Memorial independently or in organised groups with a guide.

Entrance to the Museum, to both Auschwitz I and Birkenau parts, is possible only with a personalized entry pass booked in advance. Reservations can be made at visit.auschwitz.org or on the spot at the cashier. The number of entry passes available is limited.

Due to the huge interest, visitors are kindly requested to book in advance at the website visit.auschwitz.org, as well as to arrive at least 30 minutes before the start of the tour. Larger luggage should be left in vehicles in the car park. Before the visit, please read the rules of visiting and the opening hours of the Museum.

HOURS OF THE VISIT CAN BE RESERVED ONLINE: [VISIT.AUSCHWITZ.ORG](https://visit.auschwitz.org)

[Read more...](#)



Groups at the...

Online guided tours

The online guided tour lasts about two hours and is divided into two parts – in Auschwitz I and Birkenau. The guide's narration is conducted live. Additionally, the educator uses multimedia materials, archival photographs, artistic works, documents, and testimonies of Survivors. Interaction with the guide and asking questions is also possible.

GROUPS / SCHOOLS / PRIVATE TOURS

The tour for groups is available in 7 languages (English, French, German, Hebrew, Italian, Polish, and Spanish). Bookings can be made after logging in via a form available on visit.auschwitz.org.

[Learn more about "Auschwitz in Front of Your Eyes" platform.](#)



Website: <https://www.auschwitz.org/>

Description: Holocaust memorial using sustainable preservation methods and efficient visitor management.

Place: Oświęcim, Poland

Year: Established as a memorial in 1947.

Field of Action: Sustainable heritage preservation, educational tourism, and eco-conscious management.

GSTC Criteria:

A1. Sustainability Management System: Comprehensive management ensures sustainable operations to preserve the site's integrity.

A3. Monitoring and Reporting: Tracks visitor impact to make adjustments that maintain the site's long-term preservation.

B1. Economic Benefits for Local Communities: Engages local businesses in services like guided tours and hospitality.

C1. Protection of Cultural Heritage: Maintains Holocaust-era artifacts and infrastructure to preserve historical authenticity.

D1. Conserving Resources: Uses resource-efficient methods in maintenance and visitor facilities.

2.

Case Study 2.

Sustainability Action: Anne Frank House, Netherlands

The Anne Frank House creates lesson materials and organises workshops about Anne Frank, the Second World War, the Holocaust, antisemitism, prejudice, and more. Our material is geared to young people and professionals. Browse through our educational material.

Select a language to see products available in your language

Select

Teaching materials | Anne Frank & Antisemitism

→ Show all



Video | Who was Anne Frank?

This short video introduces students to Anne Frank and the historical context of her life.

Anne Frank, antisemitism, Holocaust, second world war



Digital lesson | Anne Frank

This lesson introduces students to Anne Frank and the history of her time.

Anne Frank, antisemitism, second world war



Antisemitism Scenario Cards

These scenario cards help your students discuss different forms of antisemitism in a safe way.

antisemitism, citizenship, Holocaust, prejudice

Website: <https://www.annefrank.org/>

Description: Preserves the Anne Frank house using energy-efficient technologies and virtual tours to reduce physical impact while promoting Holocaust education.

Place: Amsterdam, Netherlands

Year: Opened as a museum in 1960.

Field of Action: Green museum practices, sustainable visitor management, and historical education.

GSTC Criteria:

A2. Legal Compliance: Adheres to environmental and accessibility laws in its operations.

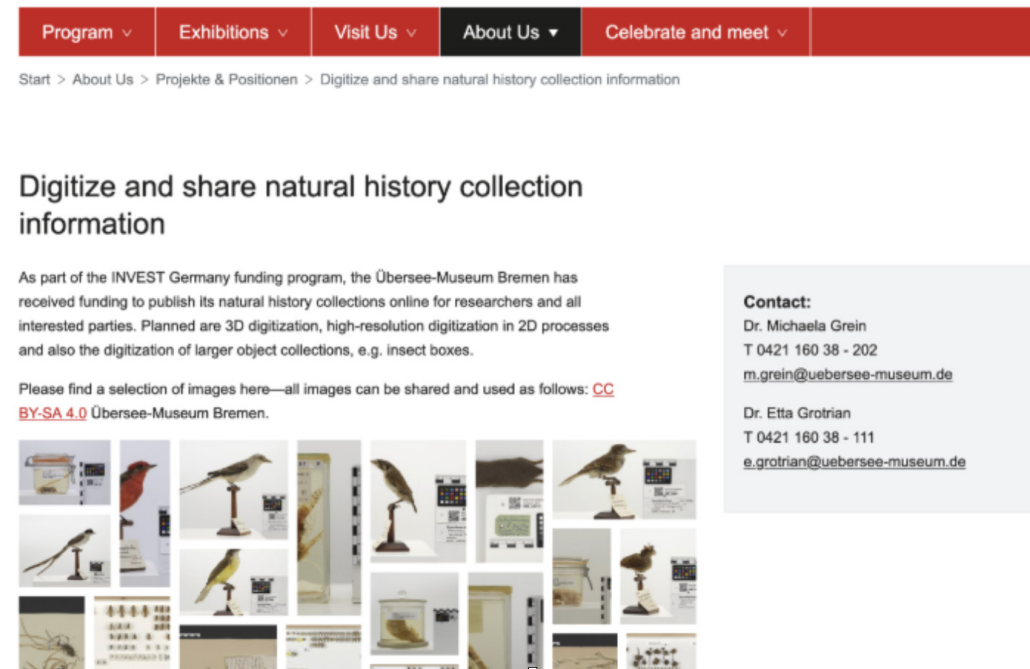
A6. Promotion of Sustainability: Incorporates energy-efficient systems and digital exhibits to educate visitors on sustainability.

C1. Protection of Cultural Heritage: Maintains the house and its artifacts, emphasising their historical significance.

D1. Conserving Resources: Reduces resource use through virtual tours and energy-efficient systems.

3.

Case Study 3. Digital Transformation: NEO Collections Project



Website: <https://www.uebersee-museum.de/en/about-us/projekte-positionen/the-neo-collections-project/>

Description: Initiated in December 2019, the NEO Collections Project is a collaborative effort between the Übersee-Museum Bremen, the Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe Hamburg, and the National Museum in Stockholm. The project aims to explore innovative ways of engaging with museum collections both online and on-site. By digitising collections and developing user-centered, explorative, and open approaches, the project enhances accessibility and fosters public interaction with cultural heritage.

Place: Bremen and Hamburg, Germany; Stockholm, Sweden.

Year: 2019–2023.

Field of Action: Digital transformation, cultural heritage preservation, public engagement, and international collaboration.

GSTC Criteria:

A1. Sustainability Management System: Implemented structured digital strategies to preserve and present collections, ensuring long-term accessibility and engagement.

A4. Stakeholder Engagement: Fostered partnerships among museums, digital experts, and the public to co-create and share knowledge.

A5. Visitor Management: Developed user-centered digital platforms to facilitate interactive and educational experiences for diverse audiences.

B1. Economic Benefits for Local Communities: Enhanced the cultural

4.

tourism appeal of participating cities by offering innovative digital experiences.

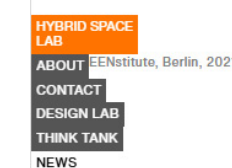
B3. Community Empowerment: Encouraged public participation in the exploration and interpretation of museum collections, empowering users to contribute to cultural narratives.

C1. Protection of Cultural Heritage: Digitised and preserved artifacts, ensuring their longevity and wider accessibility.

C2. Visitor Interpretation: Provided interactive and explorative platforms for audiences to engage deeply with cultural content.

D1. Conserving Resources: Reduced the need for physical travel and resource consumption by offering digital access to collections.

Case Study 4. Digital Transformation: “Hybrid is the Future!” Workshop



What are engaging, inclusive, and sustainable hybrid formats and spaces for art and culture?

Workshop Hybrid is the Future! at dive in “New Forms of Participation and Interaction”, the digital cultural innovation program initiated by the German Federal Cultural Foundation, Bundeskulturstiftung.

Hybrid Workshop The Future is not Digital. Hybrid is the Future! @ Kulturstiftung des Bundes, HoloLab – dive in Program for Digital Interaction, Berlin, 14 October 2021

Website: <https://hybridspaceclab.net/hybrid-is-the-future-at-kulturstiftung-des-bundes/>

Description: As part of the “dive in. Programme for Digital Interactions” initiated by the Kulturstiftung des Bundes, the “Hybrid is the Future!” workshop was conducted to explore innovative hybrid formats for art and cultural practices. The workshop speculated on hybrid spaces that combine physical and digital elements, aiming to develop engaging, inclusive, and sustainable cultural experiences. It emphasised co-creative processes and the fusion of various artistic disciplines to foster new forms of public engagement.

Place: Berlin, Germany.

Year: 2021.

5.

Field of Action: Digital innovation, cultural participation, interdisciplinary collaboration, and sustainable development.

GSTC Criteria:

A1. Sustainability Management System: Developed structured methodologies for hybrid cultural programming, reducing the reliance on physical infrastructure.

A5. Visitor Management: Used digital formats to expand audience engagement while minimising the carbon footprint of cultural events.

B1. Economic Benefits for Local Communities: Encouraged new business models for digital and hybrid cultural participation, supporting local artists and institutions.

B3. Community Empowerment: Strengthened digital inclusion by ensuring that cultural experiences are accessible to diverse audiences.

C2. Visitor Interpretation: Created immersive and participatory cultural formats, bridging physical and digital interactions to enhance audience engagement.

D1. Conserving Resources: Reduced resource consumption by shifting parts of cultural programming to digital platforms.

Case Study 5.

Sustainability Action: Museum of the Second World War in Gdańsk, Poland

Website: <https://www.muzeum1939.pl/en/>

As previously mentioned, the Museum of the Second World War in Gdańsk was established in 2008. Its current premises, one of the world's largest narrative exhibitions, was opened to the public on 23 March 2017.

Despite not having had its permanent premises in its early years, the museum was actively involved in education, research, publishing and historical tourism. Although it operated from only a few small offices, it actively contributed to Poland's cultural landscape and, through international cooperation, to the wider European cultural landscape.

Challenge: The year 2024 marked a new beginning in the museum's history: a return to its original purpose - to serve as a place for meetings and debates for experts and audiences from around the world. This also meant restoring the coherence and quality of the original permanent exhibition.

At the same time, many different activities that had been carried out by the museum over the years aligned with sustainable development principles. However, these had been organised independently and without

coordination. There was therefore a need to strategise the various policies, continue good practices and initiatives, and introduce a new, coordinated approach.

Action: creation of a sustainable strategy

Step 1: First, the museum conducted an inventory of the activities that had already been undertaken. Department by department, they reviewed what had already been achieved and created an inventory of previous achievements and good practices.

Step 2: The museum then focused on consolidation and sharing of knowledge, including through joining the Green Institutions Alliance of the Tri-City (Gdańsk-Sopot-Gdynia) and Pomerania Region, participating in the PPSF training programme, and the grassroots establishment of the Museum's Green Team.

Step 3: Next came the publication of the Museum of the Second World War's Sustainable Development Strategy, development of the Museum's Green Guide, and two training sessions for the entire team (156 employees).

Step 4: Finally, they implemented monitoring, further study visits, training sessions and evaluation — this is still currently underway.

Results: The results of the sustainability activities carried out under the museum's sustainability strategy include a 7% reduction in paper consumption, a 12% reduction in electricity consumption, and a website that is over 66% more efficient in terms of its digital carbon footprint.

Other initiatives introduced include a recycled packaging bank, a clothes-swap programme, the Museum's community garden, and the production of canvas pouches from material recovered from a temporary exhibition, accessibility and soft mobility improvements— as well as dozens of other initiatives that continue to make a positive impact on the sustainability of the museum, and which are now coordinated under one common strategy.

Don't forget the power of people!

Throughout this experience, the key lesson highlighted by the museum is that the most important factor is the human factor. In the words of the museum

“ Training, theoretical knowledge and certification are all very important. However, it turns out that when you give your team the space and freedom to act, their creativity can surprise even the most experienced manager! ”



6.

Case Study 6.

Sustainability Action: Juno Beach Centre (JBC), France

Website: <https://www.junobeach.org/sustainable-development/>

At Juno Beach Centre (JBC) there is above all an awareness and strong commitment from management to sustainability at the museum. Faced with the challenges of mass tourism, climate change and the fragility of their sites, they wanted to take action rather than simply endure the consequences. Museums and memorial centres have unique strengths and an essential role to play in raising awareness of sustainable development, drawing on their strong ties to their local communities, their openness to the world, and their ability to make learning accessible and engaging. Thanks to their first greenhouse gas assessment in 2020, JBC were able to develop a strategy that has been translated into concrete actions, all driven by a common goal: decarbonisation. This takes many forms, through actions related to infrastructure and operations (reducing energy consumption, promoting the circular economy, managing incoming and outgoing flows, reuse, recycling, etc.), as well as their visitor offer (facilitating low-carbon mobility, organising sustainable events and exhibitions, etc.). By building on a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) approach, the museum has broadened its strategic priorities to include a social commitment to visitors and staff, the preservation of biodiversity, and collaboration among different stakeholders to promote a collective approach to responsible tourism. Throughout this process, they involve their entire team, as well as partners and visitors, guided by one motto: “They fought to protect our country and our freedom. Let us now work together to safeguard what they defended.”





Challenge: Reducing the carbon footprint generated by the transport of JBC visitors (between 70-80% of the JBC’s global carbon footprint). Knowing that 70% of the visitors are international and the majority travel by plane, the problem is systemic and the JBC has limited room for manoeuvre.

Action: Encouragement of Soft Mobility.

- The creation in 2021 of a Low Carbon Rate granting 33% reduced price on museum rates for visitors travelling by train, bus or bicycle.
- A policy decision to absorb the loss of revenue resulting from the reduced fare in order to encourage the use of sustainable transport and, in doing so, tackle the causes of climate change.
- Development of a bicycle parking area equipped with a range of services
- Creation of a dedicated cycle path providing access to the museum
- Certification Label Vélo

Results: After two years of implementation and observation at the Juno Beach Centre, Normandy Tourism took over and expanded the initiative, which now involves more than 120 sites across Normandy. From 2021 to December 2025, the Juno Beach Centre recorded a total of 7,502 low-carbon fares, with visitors arriving primarily by bicycle (70%), train (20%) and bus (10%). Across Normandy, since 2024, 17,000 low-carbon fares have been recorded, with an average breakdown of 60% by bicycle, 30% by train and 10% by bus.

“ **When an entire region embraces the initiative and rolls it out on a large scale, the whole territory contributes to the decarbonisation of tourist mobility — Juno Beach Centre** ”



Low Carbon Rate entrance ticket at World War Two Museum Gdańsk, Poland

Amplifying Impact

At the level of a single institution, an initiative like JBC’s Low Carbon Rate may seem modest, yet it contributes to a collective effort to change visitors’ travel habits. This example shows how originally small practices can be quickly expanded to amplify impact. In this case it led to multiple actions:

- Normandy Tourism implemented and expanded the initiative across tourism sites in the region.
- The scheme also inspired other organisations and regions, such as Lyon and La Cité des Sciences in Paris (sustainable mobility fare), which have since introduced similar schemes.
- Whilst working together within the PPSF project, the Second World War Museum in Gdańsk followed JBC’s example and introduced a special rate for visitors arriving by bicycle, alongside improving its bicycle facilities, such as parking and repair centres.

These examples are evidence of the positive impact of the initiative locally, regionally, and finally internationally, that an initiative can make, thanks to the right conditions of cooperation and willingness to share experience and knowledge.

When an entire region embraces the initiative and rolls it out on a large scale, the whole territory contributes to the decarbonisation of tourist mobility.

Working Together to Make Improvements

The partnership between the JBC and the Normandy Region to implement the Low Carbon Rate also highlighted a shortcoming in the Cœur de Nacre area – the inter-municipal authority within which the JBC is located: bus services were designed solely for school transport. Discussions were therefore initiated with Cœur de Nacre Tourisme (CNT) to improve this.

Consequently, for the summer of 2026, the Normandy Region and Normandy Tourism made several changes:

- Drawing on previous experience with the attempted ‘D-DAY route’, which connected various memorial sites on the D-Day beaches but encountered some issues, the route was transformed into the summer route 125.
- Promotion of intermodal travel across the region via provision of bicycle transport to maximise support for sustainable transport, the link between the two local train stations – Caen and Bayeux – and three bus routes (120, 121 and 101).
- Development of a ‘Door-to-door service between Paris and Courseulles-sur-Mer’ for the 2026 summer season, a combination of train and bus services by SNCF (French railway service).

Thanks to cooperation begun for one particular initiative (the Low Carbon Rate), multiple stakeholders became involved and were able to make demonstrable improvements to local mobility.

Additional Case Studies

These are examples of some organisations in the sector making strong progress to improve their environmental, social and economic sustainability, however it is not an exhaustive list. To see more examples of good practices in a variety of contexts and countries, take a look at our Case Studies section of the [‘PPSF project website’](#).

Visitor Numbers and Demonstrating Value of Sustainable Practices

Juno Beach Centre, mentioned earlier as a Case Study, is a museum that has been working with a sustainable development approach since 2019, with measurable results achieved by the Greenhouse Gas Emissions Report and regular Corporate Social Responsibility reports. They are therefore frequently invited to speak and share the museum’s experiences at meetings, round-table discussions, training sessions and so on, organised by institutions, private or public bodies, and partners from the worlds of tourism, culture and business.

“In our professional world, there is one question we are almost always asked by our peers: Can you quantify the increase in visitor numbers following your sustainability initiatives, and consequently your turnover? But is this really the best way to judge the quality, relevance and value of our actions and our results? The answer is undoubtedly yes, but not exclusively. By broadening our perspective, we can identify other benefits, particularly in the results of the remembrance tourism sector.”

Nathalie Worthington, Director of the JBC

This brings into focus a key discussion when working on sustainability, how do we demonstrate the value and impact of this work? As JBC says, using less water or electricity and managing waste more effectively do not directly attract more visitors. Obtaining the ‘Tourisme et Handicap’ label by promoting inclusion does so but does not necessarily increase revenue (as entry is free). Nor does working together to improve staff well-being at work; in fact, it is often initially a financial burden. Supporting carbon sinks in forests through the National Forests Office is also not likely to increase visitor numbers or generate revenue.

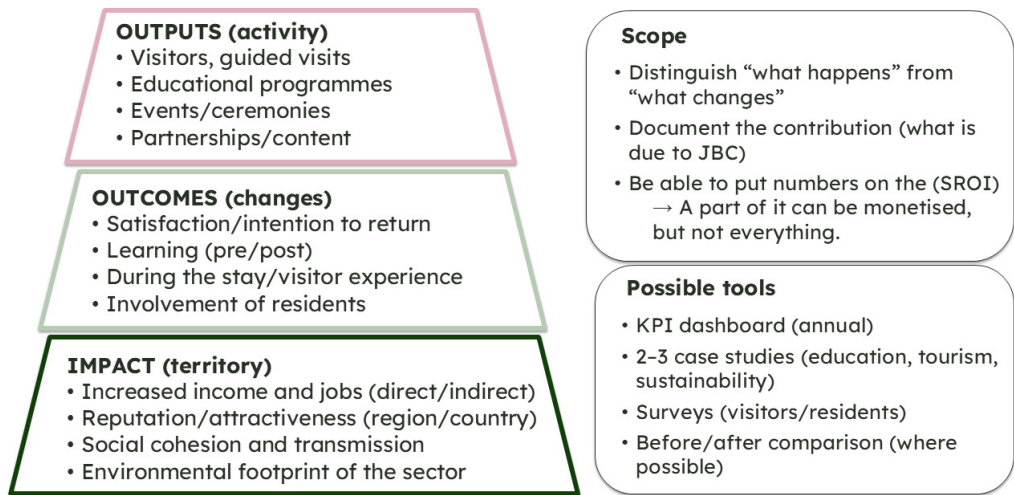
The wealth generated by sustainable initiatives cannot be measured solely and directly in terms of visitor numbers – and therefore in money.

Another way of estimating value

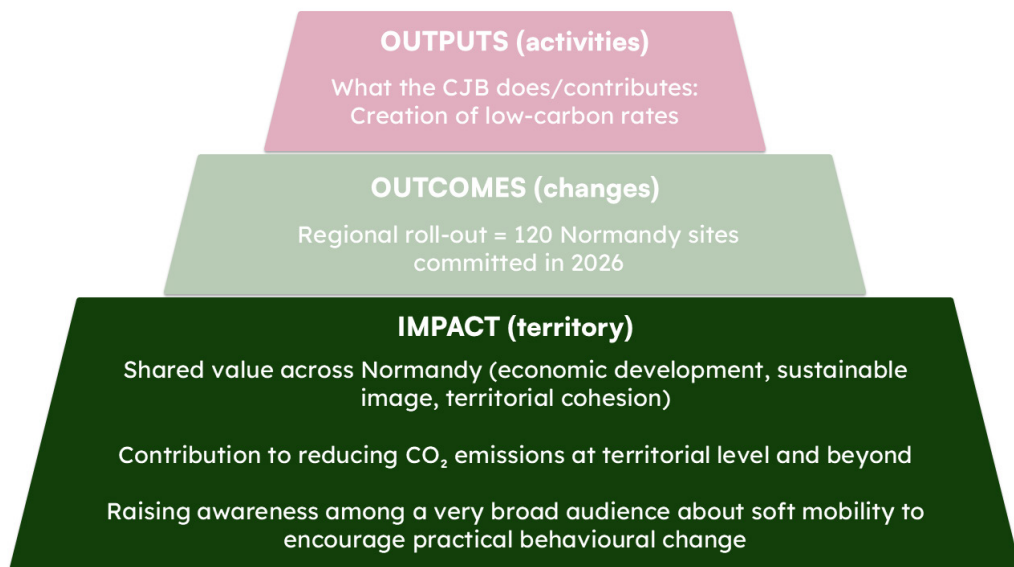
Following discussions held within the PPSF project, Paolo Eugenio Corti (Fondazione Campus Studi del Mediterraneo) proposed a model to the Juno

Beach Centre for analysing the value created (economic, social, cultural, tourism-related and environmental). One of the analytical elements in this model is the ‘pyramid of evidence’ (see below). This tool is read from top to bottom, and by applying these steps to particular sustainability practice, it is possible to analyse and document the contribution of this initiative to the regional impact.

Measurement: Pyramid of Indicators (Output → Outcome → Impact)



Here we take the example of the Low-Carbon Tariff, mentioned previously in this handbook as a Case Study. This practice offers a reduction of -33% on museum rates at JBC for visitors arriving by train, bus or bicycle. This was introduced by the museum and after two years of implementation and observation, taken on by Normandy Tourism and expanded, now involving more than 120 sites across Normandy.



Interpretation: At the top is the **output**: the creation of the Low-Carbon Tariff by the JBC. Below that is the **outcome**: the change brought about by

the creation of the **output**. At the very bottom is the **impact** on the region, analysed in terms of shared value.

Following the creation of the Low-Carbon Tariff by the JBC (‘contribution by a stakeholder’), the Normandy Region adopted and developed it at a regional level, going on to inspire other regions and European partners. The primary value lies in the scaling up of the impact across the following areas:

- **Economic:** Attractiveness for the CJB, the Inter-municipal Tourist Office and the local economic ecosystem (restaurants, shops, transport operators). Complementarity with local policies on the development of cycle paths. The Low-Carbon Fare is in line with initiatives led by the Department and the Region, which fund the construction of cycle paths across the area. It also brings economic benefits to the construction sector.
- **Environmental:** Encouraging a reduction in car use (75% of visitors to the D-Day beaches travelled by car in 2022 , and a broader contribution to the decarbonisation of transport, with the potential resulting positive effects on the climate (Example: A return journey by train from Paris to Courseulles emits around 4.91 kg of CO₂eq, compared with around 73 kg of CO₂eq by a petrol or diesel car emits around 4.91kg).
- **Social:** To facilitate travel for tourists and local residents. To make sites of historical remembrance and tourist attractions accessible by public transport and thus to a wider audience. To raise awareness of sustainable transport among tourists and local residents.
- **Image:** Positioning the CJB and Normandy as a stakeholder/region committed to combating climate change (in line with Sustainable Development Goals 11 and 13 and the SNBC, France’s National Low-carbon Strategy).

“ The value of a sustainable initiative is measured by its ability to bring about observable change and to spread that change beyond the organisation that initiated it. When a local initiative is taken up, scaled up and integrated into a regional dynamic, its value becomes economic, social, cultural and environmental. The challenge is then to make this value visible and to document each stakeholder’s contribution to the collective impact. ”

Paolo Eugenio Corti, Fondazione Campus

By extending the examples of soft mobility given above to other JBC initiatives, we can identify six blocks in the value chain proposed by the model. The first column lists the six dimensions/blocks of the value chain. In the middle are some examples of initiatives at the JBC, and on the right is the value created by these initiatives:

Dimension	CJB initiatives	Value created
A. Attraction & access	CSR project, low-carbon fare, new bus line 125, door-to-door service in the local area.	Increased profile for Normandy, improved accessibility to memorial sites.
B. Experience & content	Exhibitions, educational programmes, ceremonies.	Preserving remembrance and educating visitors (remembrance) whilst doing its bit to combat climate change.
C. Expenditure & services	Ticket office, shop, general services.	Economic activity for the JBC and for local businesses.
D. Supply chain & skills	Local jobs, responsible procurement, sustainable investments.	Support for the local economy and job creation (direct and indirect).
E. Community & citizenship	Free admission and reduced rates available under certain conditions, event programmes often free of charge, regional cohesion.	Commitment and pride in local and international belonging (France–Canada) and intergenerational transmission.
F. Environment & Sustainability	A widely shared CSR project to inspire other stakeholders, reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, soft mobility, renaturation projects.	Decarbonisation of transport, preservation of Normandy’s landscapes. Raising awareness amongst a wide audience about climate change and its local, national and international environmental impacts.

As explained by Paolo Corti, these examples demonstrate varying levels of maturity and scope. Some schemes, such as the Low-Carbon Tariff, already have data available to document their implementation, use and uptake. For other effects, particularly certain economic, social or regional benefits, the impacts identified at this stage are probable contributions, the extent of which will need to be documented by additional indicators. However, this model is a strong way to clearly show the impact and value of sustainability practices. Whilst the monetary contribution may not always be clear, it can be seen from the examples above, and with other sustainability practices and policies, they there is fact-based benefits that come with implementing these approaches, not just for the organisation doing so, but for the whole sector.

Preserving the Past, Securing the Future Project Resources

The ‘Resources’ webpage of the PPSF project website has been developed through the project and is continuously expanded and updated. The webpage includes several sections:

Reports & Articles

A collection of documents detailing existing sustainability efforts and frameworks within the WWII remembrance & cultural heritage tourism sector. This includes sustainability guidelines, international Charters, book chapters and more that share knowledge and insights on environmental, socio-cultural and economic sustainability.

Case Studies

In addition to the Case Studies outlined above, online you can find a wider selection of examples taken from the field to inspire. These feature museums and heritage sites from a wide range of countries and contexts who are implementing impressive sustainability strategies and practices, and how they are doing this.

Project Toolkit

A practical toolkit of templates, worksheets, checklists and more, curated and created throughout the project’s training programme to be used by individuals and groups for fostering sustainability at your museum or site. This includes a variety of tailor-made communication materials to spread information about sustainability in the WWII remembrance & cultural heritage tourism sector.

Take a look at the resources available [here](#):



In addition to these resources, you can also access and complete the e-learning modules created in the PPSF project. These introduce the topic of sustainability in the remembrance and cultural heritage tourism sector, focusing on environmental, economic and socio-cultural sustainability (one module per topic).

These are available [here](#):



AWARENESS RAISING

3.

Key Recommendations

Sustainability in remembrance heritage is not only about protecting sites and collections. It is about ensuring that museums, memorials, and remembrance institutions remain socially relevant, economically resilient, environmentally responsible, and capable of strengthening democratic values, community wellbeing, and historical understanding for future generations.

This section outlines the 10 key recommendations, compiled throughout the PPSF project, for what is needed to foster sustainability in the remembrance and cultural heritage tourism sector. These span multiple themes and aspects of remembrance work, both internally (relating to the organisations operations) and externally (regarding visitors and network), for practice and policy. Each recommendation includes key actions to implement, and the relevant finding observed in the PPSF project. Combined with the insights and practical tools outlined in this handbook, these recommendations provide a roadmap to sustainability, to build a more aware, resilient sector.

1. Governance & Sustainability Management

Recommendation: Integrate sustainability into core management and decision-making processes.

Key Actions

- Develop a sustainability policy and action plan
- Assign sustainability responsibilities to staff members and align the full staff
- Establish measurable sustainability objectives and indicators
- Monitor and review progress regularly
- Include sustainability considerations in strategic planning, procurement, events, exhibitions, and partnerships

PPSF Finding: Many institutions are committed to sustainability but lack structured systems to move from ambition to implementation.

2. Social Sustainability & Community Engagement

Recommendation: Move from consultation to active community participation.



A temporary exhibition at the Museum of the Second World War in Gdańsk, Poland composed of art pieces created by a local school group of children with disabilities for a competition connected with safeguarding their mental health — LRE Foundation

Key Actions

- Involve local communities in exhibitions, events, and interpretation
- Develop co-creation and oral history projects
- Strengthen partnerships with schools, associations, universities, and civil society organisations
- Create opportunities for volunteering and civic engagement
- Ensure diverse and underrepresented perspectives are represented

PPSF Finding: The most successful examples presented by participants were institutions that actively worked with their communities rather than simply serving them.

3. Accessibility & Inclusion

Recommendation: Embed accessibility as a core principle rather than a separate initiative.



A rest area for visitors to relax and contemplate at the Museum of the Second World War in Gdańsk, Poland — LRE Foundation

Key Actions

- Apply universal design principles
- Improve physical, sensory, and cognitive accessibility
- Provide information in multiple formats and languages
- Work with disability organisations to review services and facilities
- Implement ISO 21902 (Accessible Tourism for All) where relevant

PPSF Finding: Many institutions reported accessibility improvements as one of the most achievable and impactful sustainability actions.

4. Education, Democracy & Human Rights

Recommendation: Position remembrance sites as spaces for democratic learning and civic dialogue.



Visitors to Juno Beach Centre (Normandy) arrive and enter the first part of the exhibition with an immersive, educational and emotive video introduction to the history covered at the museum — Juno Beach Centre Ph.Delval

Key Actions

- Link historical interpretation to present-day challenges
- Promote critical thinking and media literacy
- Integrate human rights, inclusion, and democratic values into educational programmes
- Support peace education and active citizenship

PPSF Finding: Participants consistently highlighted that remembrance institutions contribute far beyond heritage preservation by strengthening democratic resilience and social cohesion.

5. Environmental Sustainability

Recommendation: Reduce operational impacts while maintaining high-quality visitor experiences.

Key Actions

- Implement more eco-responsible events
- Reduce energy, water, and waste consumption
- Promote sustainable mobility
- Use sustainable procurement principles
- Introduce climate action plans

PPSF Finding: Most environmental improvements can begin with simple operational changes before major infrastructure investments become necessary.

6. Economic Sustainability

Recommendation: Diversify income sources to improve long-term resilience.

Key Actions:

- Reduce dependence on a single funding source
- Develop fundraising strategies
- Strengthen partnerships and sponsorships
- Explore memberships, donations, educational services, and responsible tourism products
- Build staff fundraising skills

PPSF Finding: Economic sustainability emerged as one of the biggest concerns among participants, particularly regarding dependence on public funding.

7. Measuring Impact Beyond Visitor Numbers

Recommendation: Demonstrate social value, not only visitor volume.

Key Actions:

- Measure educational impact
- Monitor community participation
- Track volunteer engagement
- Assess contribution to democratic awareness and wellbeing
- Explore Social Return on Investment (SROI) approaches

PPSF Finding: Many institutions struggle to communicate their broader societal impact despite generating significant social value.

8. Digital Transformation

Recommendation: Use digitalisation strategically to support sustainability goals.



Interactive visitor experience for varying ages and languages at Juno Beach Centre, Normandy — Juno Beach Centre, Ph.Delval

Key Actions

- Improve digital accessibility
- Offer multilingual interpretation
- Develop online educational resources
- Introduce digital visitor management tools
- Use digital technologies to reduce resource use and improve visitor experiences

PPSF Finding: The PPSF Market Analysis identified digital transformation as one of the strongest opportunities for future development.

9. Certification & Sector Standards

Recommendation: Develop sustainability standards that better reflect the specific realities of remembrance institutions.

Key Actions:

- Explore sector-specific sustainability frameworks
- Adapt Global Sustainable Tourism Council Attraction Criteria to remembrance contexts
- Develop practical self-assessment tools
- Encourage voluntary benchmarking and peer review
- Create sustainability guidance tailored to museums, memorials, and WWII heritage sites

PPSF Finding: Participants expressed a need for more specific sustainability guidance and certification frameworks that recognise the unique educational, commemorative, and social missions of remembrance institutions.

10. Future Policy Priorities

Recommendation: Recognise remembrance institutions as contributors to sustainable development.

Considerations for policymakers:

- Support sustainability capacity-building
- Facilitate access to funding for sustainability transitions
- Recognise social value beyond tourism revenues
- Encourage accessibility and inclusion standards
- Promote sustainability indicators for cultural heritage organisations
- Strengthen links between remembrance work, democracy, education, and community wellbeing

PPSF Finding: Participants emphasised that remembrance institutions should be recognised not only as cultural and tourism assets, but also as contributors to education, social cohesion, democratic resilience, and

community well-being. To reflect this broader societal role, more supportive policy frameworks and funding mechanisms are needed.

The PPSF project has laid important foundations for integrating sustainability into the management and development of remembrance sites and museums. Through joint research, practical exchange and institutional cooperation, it has initiated concrete processes, strengthened capacities and provided participating institutions with a clear framework for continued action. The end of the project should therefore be understood not as the conclusion of this work, but as the transition from pilot to broader implementation, and this handbook as a call to action for stakeholders in the sector to work together to implement realistic, measured and successful sustainable practices within their organisations.

Communication Materials

Enhancing the sustainability of our sector to ensure a resilient, meaningful future requires us to work together, to share our knowledge and resources and encourage each other to do better. Engaging as many organisations in this work as possible by sharing the outputs and resources of the PPSF project is part of that – so let's communicate!

In the 'Resources' page of the PPSF project website, in the 'Project Toolkit' section, you can find a selection of communication materials. These feature useful information and insights to share on your own communication channels to help raise awareness further among the sector and encourage others to act too.

Let's spread the message for a more sustainable sector!

[Take a look at the PPSF Resources here](#)



Project Partners

LRE Foundation

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