Finding Strategies for Passing on Knowledge Across Generations of Archivists

SHARE THAT KNOWLEDGE !

Project update
FIAF 2022

film museum

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28-04-2022

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Project update FIAF 2022

- Presented at the FIAF symposium 2018, initiative of the Austrian Film Museum and Slovenska kinoteka

- Funded by the Federal Ministry Republic of Austria for Arts, Culture, Civil Service and Sport and FIAF

- 2019-2023

Working group

Archive affiliates

- **Austrian Film Museum** (Austria)
- **Academic Film Center and Alternative Film Archive** (Serbia)
- **BFI National Archive** (UK)
- **Cinémathèque québécoise** (Canada)
- **Cineteca Nacional de México** (Mexico)
- **Imperial War Museum** (UK)
- **J.H. Kwabena Nketia Archives University of Ghana** (Ghana)
- **Library and Archives Canada** (Canada)
- **Národní filmový archiv** (Czech Republic)
- **National Film and Sound Archive** (Australia)
- **Netherlands Institute for Sound and Vision** (The Netherlands)
- **Slovenska kinoteka** (Slovenia)
- **Thai Film Archive** (Thailand)

Expert advisors

- Research advisor on methods of qualitative research: Karen F. Gracy (Professor, School of Information, Kent State University)
- Group of experts

Research

Goal

- Develop strategies and methods of unlocking, articulating and sustaining the knowledge that archivists hold about the collections they work with

Objectives

- Conduct literature research and set up a theoretical framework for a qualitative research study of knowledge transfer
- Define the expert knowledge of audiovisual archivists
- Explore the methods of knowledge transfer within audiovisual archives
- Identify the challenges in transferring the expert knowledge of audiovisual archivists
- Formulate and disseminate successful strategies of knowledge transfer for audiovisual archives

Outcome

- Handbook for knowledge sharing within audiovisual archives
- Symposium

Research step 1

Survey

- April / May 2020
- 135 participants
- Broad and global insight in knowledge at risk, challenges, methods
- https://sharethatowledge.files.wordpress.com/2020/08/progress_report_august2020.pdf

Research step 2

Qualitative research

- Unexplored theme within the field of audiovisual archiving
- 'Archival ethnography': "a form of naturalistic inquiry which positions the researcher within an archival environment to gain the cultural perspective of those responsible for the creation, collection, care, and use of records."(Karen F. Gracy, 2004)
- Method aims at "**uncovering and collecting data on tacit knowledge, that is, unstated practices and norms shared among community members,**" (Gracy, 2004)

Collecting data

- 92 interviews with colleagues from 25 institutions worldwide
- Interviews provided by archive affiliates
- Interviews done as follow-up with a selection of survey participants who offered concrete knowledge sharing examples or ideas
- Variety: age, position, gender, tenure, nationality, types of institutions, expertise

Knowledge gaps

Complementing knowledge

Scope of knowledge and skills

Covid/lockdown

Turning points

First steps

Introducing changes

Colleagues leaving

Retrieving knowledge
Using knowledge
Verbal transfer
Written transfer
Locating knowledge

Documenting context

Presentation/ publication

Documentation access

Documentation clarity

Formalizing practices

Documentation practice

Management awareness

Thinking of future

Knowledge appreciation

Becoming aware

(in)transparency

Organizational situation

Educational opportunities

Creating learning/sharing opportunity

Between departments

Culture of sharing

Naturally sharing and learning

Expert knowledge

Interdisciplinary knowledge

Navigating workplace

Collection knowledge

Particular systems

Knowledge at risk

Tacit knowledge

Understanding of background

Necessary knowledge

Getting a sense

Understanding of value

Generational presumptions

Learner attitude

Sharer attitude

Personal blockade

Becoming confident

Sharing enthusiasm

Cross-generational understanding

Technology (dis)comfort

Knowledge sharing junior-senior

Knowledge sharing ex-colleagues

Handover

Collaborative sharing effort

Method combination

Method variety

Individual sharing effort

Sharing and comparing

Difficult to share

Doing it yourself

Adjusting knowledge

Routine

Exposure

Knowledge coming with time

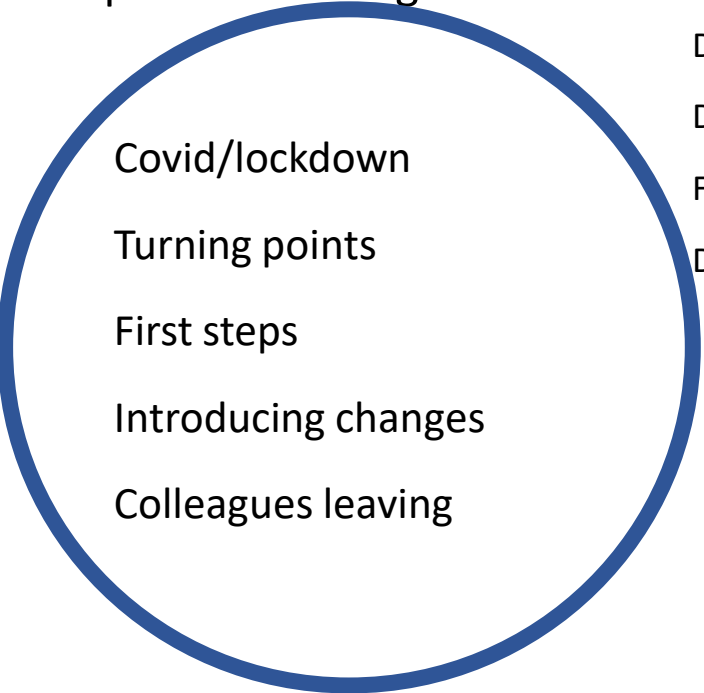Entering knowledge – individual

Entering knowledge – organized

Learning through theory

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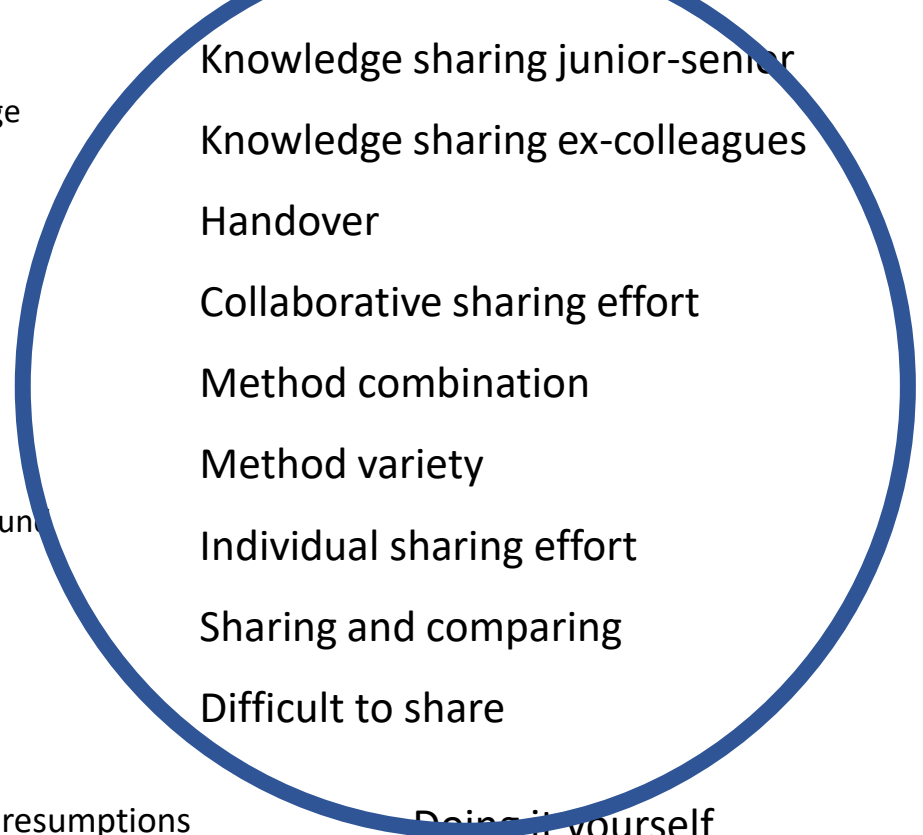
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Final results: beginning 2023

Handbook

- Roadmap with different starting points: type of knowledge at risk or missing, particular challenge or situation
- Knowledge sharing strategies for entire staff: individual, organizational, managers and archivists
- Range of methods from „easy to implement" to „dedicated efforts"
- Combination of methods for different types of knowledge

Symposium 2023 at the Austrian Film Museum in Vienna

- Collaboratively solving knowledge-sharing challenges / „testing" the handbook
- Best practice examples from colleagues

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www.sharethatknowledge.com