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|  | **DIPARTIMENTO DI SCIENZE AZIENDALI**UNIVERSITÀ DEGLI STUDI DI BOLOGNA |

**Evaluating the multidimensional activities of museums, libraries and archives**

1. **Aim of the research**

The aim of the research is to design a framework for the valuation and evaluation of the activities performed by museums, libraries and archives. The project is part of an agreement between the Department of Management and the *Istituto per i Beni Artistici, Culturali e Naturali dell’Emilia Romagna* (IBACN), which partially funds the post-doc grant.

The framework should acknowledge the multidimensional nature of cultural organizations’ performance, which comprises the dimension related to the use of resources, the dimension focusing on the relationship with visitors, and the historic/aesthetic dimension, that is the professional practices and criteria of collecting, preserving, restoring, and researching. The three dimensions largely differ in terms of logic or rationality. The visitor view thinks in terms of visitor effectiveness (the degree of satisfaction of visitors’ needs, whether explicit and conscious or not). The discourse of resource allocation, on the other hand, talks in terms of efficiency (a ratio between output and input). These two, in turn, are different from the professional discourse, which reasons in terms of professional effectiveness, that is, degree of achievement of (more or less explicitly stated) professional standards. Within this framework, there is no any ‘one best way’ to deal with these three measures of performance (professional effectiveness, visitor effectiveness, efficiency). Rather, there are trade-offs between them. An increase in one aspect is likely to have negative impacts on the other: increasing the level of protection will increase costs; reducing resources will reduce the quality of conservation and or the quality of the visit, in the end. How sustainability is achieved is to some extent open to a variety of potential trade-offs between the three dimensions.

The project aims at contributing to the debate on valuation and evaluation practices in the cultural field. It aims at complementing the view that equates the value of cultural heritage with its contribution economic growth. Although relevant and persuasive, economic impact only partially captures ​​the plurality of values ​​of culture. This has also been acknowledged in the recent Horizon 2020 call “TRANSFORMATIONS-08-2019: The societal value of culture and the impact of cultural policies in Europe”, which explicitly seeks for “new perspectives and improved methodologies for capturing the wider societal value of culture, including but also beyond its economic impact”.

1. **Research plan**

During the first year of the post-doc grant, the successful candidate will join a broader project concerning the creation of an Observatory on cultural heritage in the Emilia Romagna Region. Following an action-research approach, the candidate will first map the available quantitative indicators regarding Emilia-Romagna region cultural heritage. These indicators will be looked for at distinct levels, namely a) the regional administration-level (i.e. IBACN), b) the state-level (i.e. ISTAT) c) the supranational level (i.e. Eurobarometer). As a second step, the researcher will organize and join focus groups with experts from different heritage-related organizations (museums, libraries and archives). The aim of the focus groups will be to collect suggestions on their information needs and collect feedback on the suggested evaluation framework. Lastly, the candidate will test the framework in two selected Emilia Romagna provinces. This will foster reflections on the implementation feasibility of the framework and further improve it.

During the second year of the post-doc grant, the successful candidate will critically reflect on the research process and main findings of the first year. Second year-activities will include, but are not limited to, developing the framework further, applying it to other fields and/or investigating its theoretical implications, linking it to the broader academic debate on valuation and evaluation practices.

1. **Candidate’s profile**

The researcher is expected to have competencies in management and/or accounting research, share a substantive interest for heritage management as a field of studies, and be familiar with qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. The candidate should be fluent in Italian and English.

1. **Development Opportunities and expected outputs**

The researcher is expected to contribute to the research project through a research activity aimed at producing international publications. He/she is expected to develop and propose new research ideas that are not indicated in this document but that may become relevant during the research process.

By the end of the research grant, the researcher should be able to submit at least two manuscripts for consideration for publication. Ideally, empirical articles should be aimed at integrating the conversation on accountability change in arts organizations, and/or in the public administration and should be submitted to an international journal.

1. **Contact**

 For further information about the position, please contact Paolo Ferri, p.ferri@unibo.it