

Solidarity and volunteering in cultural heritage: Sharing experiences of volunteering in Ecomuseo Villa Ficana from an emerging professional perspective

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Summary The following contribution reflects upon the understanding of the act of solidarity in relation to heritage volunteering projects and emerging professionals. I will mostly draw upon my own experience as a volunteer in various projects, but I will also present some of the testimonies, experiences, and thoughts on the topic from other volunteer colleagues that participated in the projects with me in the projects of European Solidarity Corps and Servizio Civile Univer-sale.

Keywords solidarity, volunteering, heritage, Ecomuseo Villa Ficana

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Introduction: Vocation, solidarity, and volunteering

In the heritage field, vocation plays a pivotal role. This might be because of the deep personal feelings that can be created between the elements of cultural heritage and the communities that live and practise them. I understand the vocation of the heritage practitioners, professional or non-professional,¹ to be the protection of those personal ties. I believe that the vocation of these practitioners leads them to engage in the cause of protecting, not only their personal ties with their own heritage, but also with other people's heritage, which doesn't need to be particularly identified as their own. I see in this action a form of solidarity. Each one of us have our reasons to engage in an act of solidarity towards heritage. I consider the following elements as motivation for engaging in an act of solidarity: shared feelings, shared views and ideas, and a strong will to help others reach their objectives.

Before I present my experience as a heritage practitioner in projects in which solidarity was a central idea, I would like to present my personal definition of that term. I understand solidarity as a two-stage process. First, one must develop a connection towards a cause, action, or line of thought of an institution's mission. Usually, these are causes where unfairness and injustice play a special role in the reality of the people involved in those movements. This connection creates in ourselves a feeling of understanding and positioning towards a cause. In this first stage, I see solidarity as something intangible and very personal. Depending on our own reality and circumstances, we will be keener to see ourselves in others. This will create an intangible sense of shared reality and identification with the cause or institution. In this first stage, solidarity is represented as the act of sharing and acknowledging a cause but not necessarily by acting.

The more we see ourselves in others the easier it will be for us to help them. This is ultimately what, in my opinion, leads to the second stage: direct action. This last step involves a more personal and higher degree of responsibility towards helping other people's causes. In this step we are emphatically positioning ourselves and engaging through our actions towards one or other cause. The range of the involvement in this act of solidarity is quite broad and can go from simply retweeting or reposting something to physical actions through protests or volunteering.

In my opinion, one of the actions that shows the highest degree of solidarity towards a cause is volunteering. In her writing on volunteering and heritage, Margaret Graham defines the voluntary action as 'acts of active citizenship that provide some form of benefit to the community without reciprocal financial reward being the primary motivator'.² Constrained by work, studies, and other activities that reduce our leisure time, finding time to volunteer for a cause is not easy. This is why both stages, in my understanding of the act of solidarity, are not always completed and not everyone might be able to participate both due to lack of time, money, will, or motivation. Assuming that everyone is keen to practise solidarity is a generalisation and is probably not true. However, I believe that everyone at least once in a lifetime has the desire to support one or more causes, no matter political sides, the communities involved, or the situation in which solidarity might appear. The crucial moment to go from this first stage to act to the second stage is directly influenced by our circumstances.

Action means involvement, and this is only guaranteed by our availability and motivation to get involved. For example, I was able to actively participate in various volunteering projects because I did not have a full-time job that occupied most of my daily hours. I had enough economic resources to afford most of the expenses

that might occur during the project with the help of the project bursaries.³ Despite this, I was also using my savings to get through the month. Volunteering became then a huge economic effort that demotivated me and made me leave some projects earlier than I hoped. This situation made me ask myself the question: is volunteering a privilege?

Reflecting on my own experience, I now see that volunteering is a privilege. In my case, I was only able to support myself thanks to my savings from other jobs, the support of my family, and the projects' bursaries. Only after the projects did I realise how much the context and the surrounding circumstances in which I was raised influenced my availability to volunteer. I come from a Spanish middle-class family who never really struggled to make it through the month, and who always supported and encouraged me to volunteer. This enabled the decision to participate in projects until it became financially unsustainable. But in many other cases someone's circumstances might have made it impossible for them to even consider volunteering since they could not afford to do it.

This tension makes me consider that not only is volunteering a privilege, but that practising solidarity in a European context may also be also a privilege. Putting the focus on young people in the field of heritage and assuming that they are keen to practise solidarity, do they really have the means to do it? Can they really afford to practise solidarity through volunteering?

Volunteering in heritage

My career in the field of heritage is still starting. Since I graduated in 2020, I have volunteered in more than six projects all in Europe, and ranging from short-term of one or two weeks to long-term projects of 12 months.⁴ In this publication I will focus only on those projects with the longest commitment. Most of my professional experience in the field of heritage has been through volunteering projects, a fact that I believe is no coincidence as I will explain now.

One of the running jokes that a history student will commonly hear at university in Spain, and as I got to know in many other countries, is that your degree certificate will look good on a wall next to your fast-food chain working uniform. Jokes like this can easily be extended to other specialisations in the humanities. The field of heritage is acknowledged as a multidisciplinary field where many of those specialisations play a relevant role. In Spain, archaeology, history and art history, anthropology, conservation, and other specialisations have been always seen as fields without a stable professional future, even to be discouraged by family and

Cultural employment, 2022

(% of total employment)

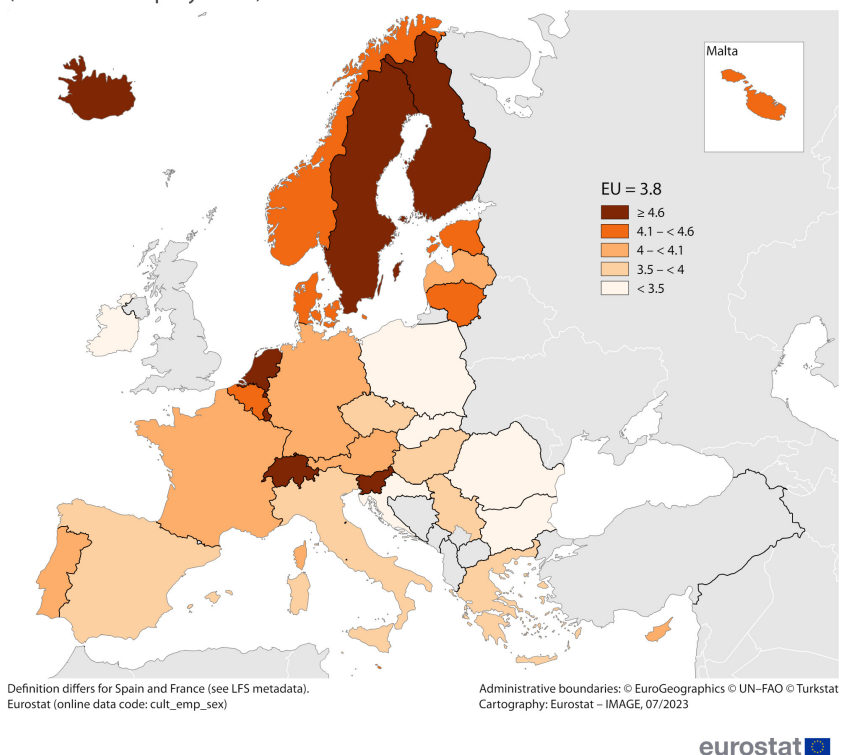


Figure 1 Graphic showing cultural employment in relation to total employment in countries across the EU, showing Spain and Italy as having low employment rates within the sector

friends. The jokes were not to undermine people that work in fast-food chains but to point out that supposedly there is no future in the field of humanities.⁵

The harsh truth that I have faced since 2020, both in Spain and Italy, is that the field of heritage is slowly being weakened by a lack of resources, high salaries, and fair opportunities for emerging professionals. I find it surprising how in these countries that are so well known for their cultural heritage can be behind the European average of people hired in the cultural sector, according to a study of Eurostat (See Figure 1).⁶ That same study illustrates how the cultural sector grew 4.5% but only as rebound effect after the decrease during the two-years gap of Covid-19 pandemic. Nevertheless, the pandemic in Europe has showed the

weaknesses of a sector, especially when talking about museums, which are still heavily dependent of tourism as showed by the 2021's survey of the Network of European Museum Organisation.⁷

After the pandemic, job opportunities were lacking and became even more unfairly paid for the level of education and professional formation that emerging professionals currently have. After having informal conversations with other emerging professionals, I found out that we shared a similar experience. All of them either have done unpaid or very low paid internships or worked in precarious jobs with the hope to get professional experience. This 'first professional step' is somehow seen as necessary in everyone's career. The problem appears when emerging professionals get stuck in it due to a lack of offers in more senior jobs, or like in the case of Spain, the immobility of the cultural heritage public sector (see Figure 2).⁸

This situation of the heritage field in Spain motivated me to participate in my first volunteering project in Italy. I couldn't find any offers home so I decided to look abroad. I must admit that my main motivation to participate in the project wasn't solidarity with either the place, the museum, or the community. It was to find a job opportunity and put my skills to work in a heritage site or a museum. I had just finished my specialisation courses in the Autumn 2019, just before the pandemic hit. As mentioned before, opportunities were even more limited after the pandemic, and after a friend's recommendation I found out the European Solidarity Corps and the volunteering project of the Ecomuseo Villa Ficanain Macerata (Italy).⁹

The European Solidarity Corps (ESC) are funded by the European Union and bring together volunteers, between 18 and 30 years old, and institutions.¹⁰ There are many projects all around Europe, most of them about social inclusion. The Ecomuseo project had a duration of 12 months, included housing, a three-month Italian course for all participants, and a monthly allowance that averaged the € 300 during the whole duration of the project.¹¹ To me, this project seemed like a better deal than most of the job offers that I was finding in the Summer of 2020. The chance of having a one-year experience working in a museum – in a foreign country and with housing and small allowance included – was reason enough for me to apply. In the case of ESC, the fact that housing is included is, in my opinion, a very important factor since this broadens the possibility of people with fewer economic resources to apply and participate. For these reasons, I saw volunteering at the Ecomuseo as an alternative to an internship where I would get first-hand experience as well as housing and compensation. In many cases, this was much better than an internship.

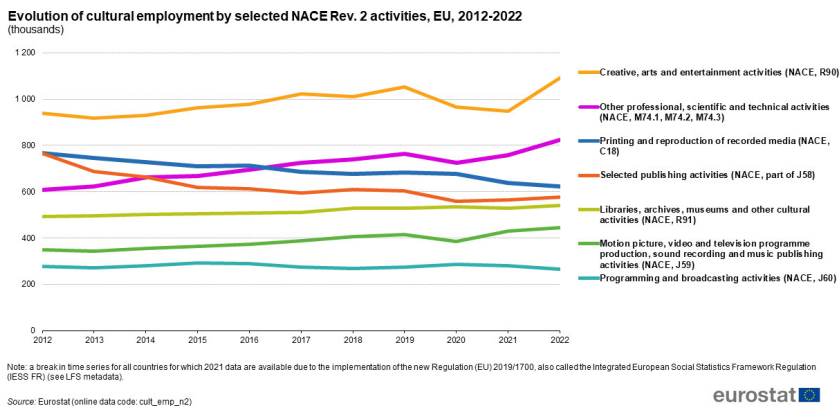


Figure 2 Evolution of cultural employment
in Europe 2021–2022, Eurostat

I wasn't sure of what to expect when I arrived in Macerata. In my mind, the goal was to get as much experience as I could. During my first year of volunteering in Villa Ficana our group consisted of six European volunteers from the ESC project and four Italian volunteers. This last group changed in the middle of the year since their project's yearly cycle had already started before we arrived. Along with the ESC project, the Ecomuseo also hosts volunteers from the Servizio Civile Universale (SCU).¹² The SCU is a volunteering programme funded by the Italian government like ESC where volunteers work for a year in different institutions and get a monthly allowance of €444.

The reality that I encountered in the Ecomuseo was that of a very small institution that survived thanks to the work of volunteers and local, regional, and European funds. The Ecomuseo is run by a local association called Gruca and has one part-time staff member and the yearly group of volunteers.¹³ The volunteers are the core and the main workforce of the institution. This model has its advantages and disadvantages. It is a precious chance for the volunteers to gain experience and have a first-hand experience in the heritage and museum sector since they organise and implement all the activities. On the other hand, the fact that the main workforce of the institution are volunteers that change every year slows the process of development of the Ecomuseo as an institution because new volunteers need to constantly adapt to the new reality of the institution and there is not a real continuity.

During my volunteering at Villa Ficana, I've seen three cycles of ESC and SCU and have been a part of two of them. The groups are usually diverse, especially



Figure 3 Aerial view of the neighbourhood of Villa Ficana (Ecomuseo Villa Ficana)

the ESC. The volunteers from this programme usually come from different EU or non-EU countries included in the European Union funded projects. The ESC's only requirements are an age range limit (18–30) and to have a nationality from those countries.¹⁴ For these reasons the participants are usually in the early stages of their lives: fresh out of high school or university, taking a gap year in university, or starting their professional careers. Many of the SCU volunteers came from Macerata or the surrounding towns. Since the SCU is an Italian national project, most of its participants are Italian. However, anyone with an Italian fiscal number can apply. In my case and the case of two other non-Italian colleagues, we were able to apply without having Italian nationality. Most of the participants were usually enrolled in the local university and were volunteering to earn some extra income and work experience during their studies. The requirements for applying to the SCU projects are a bit higher. In my opinion this limited the range of people who could apply to the projects since the system favoured having experience in the sector and a specific level of education, which drastically reduced the options for those who didn't have it, contrary to the ESC project.

Sometimes during my time in the Ecomuseo, I had the feeling that I, the other volunteers, and even the institution itself were not participating in the



Figure 4 Interior Ecomuseo Villa Ficana (Ecomuseo Villa Ficana)



Figure 5 Interior Ecomuseo Villa Ficana (Ecomuseo Villa Ficana)

project out of solidarity towards the heritage, the community, or the site. In my case I stated that my main goal at the beginning was acquiring professional experience and using it as a starting point for a future professional development. In the case of the other volunteers, I realised that most of them were looking for something similar. In many cases, such as mine, participants didn't even know about the existence of the site until applying or even after a few days after they started to work. In the case of the institution, having volunteers was very beneficial because it carried almost no costs since both projects are funded from European or national sources. I could say that from the eyes of the institution, sometimes we looked more like interns than volunteers.

However, this feeling was always counter-balanced by the day-to-day activities. I always had the thought that if we were not doing the work that we were doing, probably no one would be doing them. This thought slowly started to gain importance in my motivation to work in the museum. Graham defines very well this thought by saying that 'at the heart of volunteering lies the worthy causes that volunteers support.'¹⁵ Moved by the 'worthy' cause of the Ecomuseo, I wanted to carry out as many activities as possible during my stay. I started to care about the site, the community, and the heritage attached to it. The more I did for the museum each day, the more I was willing to continue investing my time and effort. I quickly realised that this new motivation benefitted both the site and my original goal. In this way I started to feel solidarity towards that heritage.

Graham also points out that 'In cultural heritage, these worthy causes form the basis of a distinct code of ethics and values that guide organisational decision making.'¹⁶ In this sense, giving volunteers the chance to work has been always at the core goals of Gruca. One of the values that moved the directive of the running association was that of providing young people with a chance to experience 'meaningful volunteering'. The president of the association told me so when I asked him why he started Gruca. He mentioned how his 'not so rewarding experience as a volunteer' in Argentina moved him to start his own association. Thinking it through, I see now that the approach in the Ecomuseo was not only to promote heritage but to promote and provide volunteering opportunities to young people. Applying this code of ethics volunteering is at its centre creates the perfect context to facilitate engaging in an act of solidarity with 'worthy causes', as it happened in my personal case.

From my experience, I would say that volunteering does not always have to require 100% solidarity with the cause. I believe that solidarity in heritage can be

built during the projects through a process of understanding and caring about the site and its community. This allows for people, who arrive to a project without a strong sense of solidarity towards the reality of the site, to slowly develop it to the point of identifying with it and giving more than expected. This is what Thurley calls the *heritage cycle*, which is based on the idea that the more that we care about a particular heritage the keener we are to protect it and the more likely we are to promote it, work for it, and encourage other people to care about the site.¹⁷ The heritage cycle of caring and protection and links very well with the worthy causes of Graham's description.

The worthy causes are, in my opinion, the ones that start Thurley's heritage cycle and what makes it so easy to volunteer for heritage. Since personal feelings and ties towards heritage play a pivotal role in this field, I find it very easy for people to identify protecting heritage as a worthy cause and volunteer for it. This is because it is built upon a personal feeling of identity, even though at the beginning you might not care much about it. Once you embrace it as yours, you are more eager to protect it. This is another way of interpreting the two-stage process of the act of solidarity. First you will develop the solidarity connection or personal tie with the heritage, and secondly you will act in solidarity with the site through volunteering and by protecting and promoting it.

I see solidarity as circumstantial and very personal and, for that reason, I tried to compare my experience with that of my colleagues. To facilitate the exchange of ideas I proposed two tools. Firstly, I created a form with a list of general questions about solidarity, volunteering, and its relationship with heritage and heritage projects.¹⁸ I shared it with my former colleagues and all the volunteers that had participated in the ESC and SCU projects in Villa Ficana. Secondly, I set up three online meetups. Sadly, the response to both proposals was very poor. I reached out to more than 65 volunteers.¹⁹ The online form was the most successful proposal, but only with 10 responses out of the 65. The interest of participating in the online meetings was very low with only 3 out of 65 people. Because of this I decided to not do the online meetings.

The voice of other volunteers

Despite the low number of responses I think it is worth sharing a summary of the thoughts of those who replied to the form. The first questions on the form served to capture the general background of the respondents. The majority belonged to an age group ranging from 24 to 28 years old, had a major university degree,



Figure 6 Volunteers in front of the Ecomuseo visitor's centre making a dramatised guided tour (Ecomuseo Villa Ficana)

European origins, and an interest in heritage. Given the fact that both projects discussed in this contribution are European and youth-centred, this came as no surprise. From those who responded, 9 of them had either a bachelor's or a master's degree and were older than 23 years old. In the projects that I've participated in, I saw many other volunteers, including myself, represented by these parameters.

My first two questions were directed to the personal understanding of the former participants about the concepts of solidarity and volunteering. About the idea of solidarity, the general understanding related it to the act of helping others, acknowledging and emphasizing with their situation, and ultimately connecting with them. About the act of volunteering, the respondents described it as 'giving a hand', 'dedicating your time', and 'helping others'. It was always associated with not getting any financial contribution or compensation for it. Just in one case, volunteering was described as a sort of internship, similar to how I saw the Ecomuseo project when I applied to it.

I found it interesting asking them about the relationship between the two concepts to see if we shared any ideas. To this question, a respondent said 'only if you feel solidarity you can start volunteering' which related to my understanding of the two-stage process in solidarity. Interestingly, this respondent also pointed out this notion as a very 'European and white' type of thinking. This brought me back to the circumstances of volunteering and made me wonder if this specific participant understands volunteering as a privilege associated with the living standards of western societies, which allows people to use their free time to

18. How would you compare your motivations when doing volunteering in a heritage project?

10 respuestas

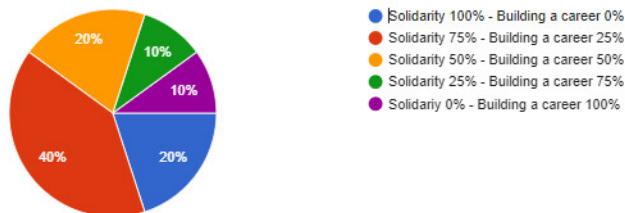


Figure 7 Chart showing how volunteers compared their motivations for volunteering

volunteer. Expecting a response like this, I also asked if they saw volunteering as a privilege. The responses generally defined volunteering as a privilege. The main reasoning behind was its relation to having the economic capability and free time to afford participate in the project.

The two projects presented in this contribution demand a long-term involvement and a similar workload to a part-time job. The compensation that a volunteer receives is less than what an average part-time salary could provide. For this reason, I was also interested on knowing about the economic demands of being a volunteer and if the economic support was enough for them. Most of the respondents replied that 'the bursary was not enough for them to cover their basic expenses during the projects'. Half of the participants placed the use of their own economic resources in a scale of 50% or higher in comparison of what the economic bursary of the project was offering them. In addition, to the question of whether they can afford to be volunteers, the majority replied negatively. In this sense, I find the work that we were doing in the Ecomuseo was closer to that of a starting junior professional position than a volunteer position. Our daily tasks as tour guides, event organizers and exhibition and project designers required a level of responsibility that matched, in my opinion, that stage of the professional career and not a volunteering position.

The last group of questions regarded the portraying of solidarity in the heritage projects. For most of the respondents, solidarity was 'always present' during their projects, especially when they worked with local communities. Some of them also pointed out that solidarity was not always directed to the communities they were working with but to their fellow volunteers. I believe this last topic is quite relevant when talking about the ESC projects since usually the groups are

33. Do you see volunteering as a privilege? Please, explain further building upon your own experience.

9 respuestas

I think it definitely is a privilege, most people cannot afford to provide services even for altruistic reasons, for long periods of time, they need to also benefit from it somehow. Only people sitting at a comfortable level of living can take some time off their main goals in life to provide free services for a cause.

full time volunteering is for younger ages, 18-25. Then you have to be more skeptical what is really worth it to share your time with.

I don't think that someone who doesn't have another economic support could afford being a volunteer, since it's a part time job but it's not payed as a normal part time job

Yes

Yes because I was a volunteer in a city different from my home town, so I had a lot of expenses

Yes, having money and time. Meaning no responsibilities that will not let you focus or do things. Responsibilities take energy, time and money.

Figure 8 Extract from survey responses

formed by people coming from other countries and contexts. Creating links of solidarity between volunteers could help them overcome any issues they might have in that new context. In this sense, the feelings of 'belonging' and 'building something' were the two main feelings that respondents highlighted from their projects.

As a final note for the survey, I would like to highlight that for most of the respondents their personal ideas about the concept of solidarity didn't change after participating in these projects. Also, most of them see solidarity as something necessary in the field of heritage. One respondent described solidarity as the 'adhesive', which brings people together when it comes to protect heritage, especially that of communities with less economic resources or who are paid less attention to.

Conclusions

I truly think that solidarity and volunteering go hand in hand, with the latter usually being the result of the former. I believe this view is shared by those who have responded to my survey. However, I cannot help to think what the rest might have replied to those questions. My previous chats with some of those volunteers tells

30. Where would you range your expenses during the project in comparison with the bursary?

9 respuestas

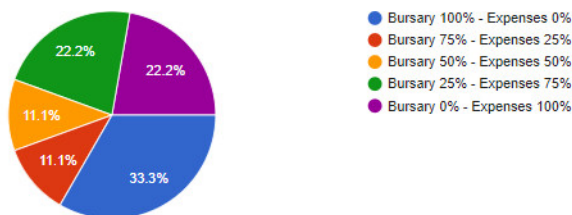


Figure 9 Chart showing relationship suggesting at the personal economic cost of volunteering

me that most of them would have had similar thoughts on the matter. From the limited responses and my personal experience, I can tell that emerging professionals are eager to practise solidarity in the field of heritage. Most of us understand the necessities, flaws, and opportunities that this field has, and we are willing to take action towards its better development.

As the last part of the survey suggests, young people are keen of create a sense of belonging towards a site, a community, or a cause related to the heritage field without any financial compensation. They are willing to fight for those 'worthy causes'. I would like to highlight again the term 'adhesive' as I believe this represents what volunteering and solidarity could mean for heritage projects. The term reflects how having the chance to take action can easily create links between people and heritage realities, even if they didn't know anything about them from the start. This will ensure the survival and transference of that heritage from person to person. I could argue that circumstances really play a vital role in volunteering, especially when we are talking about the European context. I believe the results of the survey and my experience open the doors to the question: In today's European context of volunteering and practising solidarity in a site as the Ecomuseo Villa Ficana, is a privilege only affordable to some?

In my opinion it is, and I showed my case as well as some of my colleagues' stories as an example. In conclusion, I believe that solidarity and volunteering in heritage play a key role in the survival of certain sites, stories, and communities. But in today's European context we do not have an open and accessible structure that allows everyone to participate in projects like the Ecomuseo. It is still very much dependant on a persons' economic capabilities rather than their willingness to help. In this sense, if we would like to reinforce the relevance of volunteer-

ing in heritage, we would need to turn this reality upside down with tailor-made programs where the responsibilities and roles are clear within the institution. Where volunteering is economically accessible and promoted as a selfless and solidary act and not to fill the professional needs of an institution. Only then we would be creating an environment where people could identify and access to volunteering.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the efforts of the participants of the form, the volunteers and staff of Ecomuseo Villa Ficana, and the editorial and feedback team of Culture Caleidoscoop for their support on my work on this piece.

Notes

- 1 This differentiation is meant as an inclusion of those individuals whose main professional field is not related to heritage and might engage with the field in other forms, for example, volunteering.
- 2 M. Graham, 'Volunteering as Heritage/Volunteering in Heritage' in *Volunteering as Leisure/Leisure as Volunteering: An International Assessment*, ed. R. A. Stebbins, 1.^a ed. (UK: CABI Publishing, 2004), 18.
- 3 Most of my volunteering projects that I did offer a minimum economic bursary or other small compensations during the project. Usually, these funds were intended to cover the basic expenses of the participants.
- 4 European Solidarity Corps (ESC) and Servizio Civile Universale (SCU) at Ecomuseo Villa Ficana; European Student's Association for Cultural Heritage (ESACH) (ongoing); European Heritage Volunteers (EHV) at Tematin Castle (Slovakia) and the Ore Mountains World Heritage Site (Germany and Czechia); and lately the Asociación de Jóvenes Profesionales por el Patrimonio Cultural (AJPC) (ongoing).
- 5 I personally have heard comments like this from university professors during my undergraduate degree.
- 6 Accessed 17 November 2023. https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Culture_statistics_-_cultural_employment#Cultural_employment_.E2.80.93_current_state_and_latest_developments.
- 7 'Follow-up survey on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on museums in Europe. Final Report', Network of European Museum Organisations, January 2021, <https://www.ne-mo.org/>

- fileadmin/Dateien/public/NEMO_documents/NEMO_COVID19_FollowUpReport_11.1.2021.pdf.
- 8 Accessed 17 November 2023. https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php?title=Culture_statistics_-_cultural_employment#Cultural_employment_E2.80.93_current_state_and_latest_development.
- 9 The Ecomuseo Villa Ficana is a house-museum located in the raw-earth neighbourhood of Villa Ficana in Macerata (Italy) and centred in the tradition and folklore of the Marche region. Volunteers are in charge of organising and implementing guided tours, exhibitions, and events with the lead of the part-time staff. For more information on Ficana: <https://www.ecomuseoficana.it/>.
- 10 For more information about European Solidarity Corps: https://youth.europa.eu/solidarity_en.
- 11 The ESC projects usually include housing and a small allowance, around €11 per day for the volunteers, and are carried out in European countries. The bursary also covers the travel expenses to and from the country where the project is taking place.
- 12 Accessed 17 November 2023. <https://www.ecomuseoficana.it/ecomuseo/volontariato/>.
- 13 GRUCA Onlus is a local non-profit organisation from Macerata that focuses its activities on promoting cultural heritage, environmentally friendly initiatives, and sustainable development. Since its creation, it has been deeply involved in volunteering projects and since 2016 runs the Ecomuseo Villa Ficana: <https://www.gruca.it/>.
- 14 Countries covered by ESC https://youth.europa.eu/solidarity/countries-covered_en
- 15 Graham, 20.
- 16 Ibid.
- 17 Simon Thurley, 'Into the future: our strategy for 2005–2010,' *Conservation Bulletin* 49 (2005): <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/conservation-bulletin-49/cb-49/>.
- 18 The Google Form was anonymous and open for participation to ESC and SCU volunteers. I decided to make it anonymous to facilitate the expression of opinions. For this reason, I will not refer to the participants by name and only quote their responses.
- 19 I honestly thought that both proposals were going to spark much more interest in past volunteers because it was a chance to share their experiences and meet other fellow participants. This belief was also supported by many informal conversations with past volunteers who mentioned that their volunteering year had been one of the best experiences of their lives because of the chance to live abroad, meet new people, see new and places, and especially bond with other volunteers. On the other hand, I also believe personal and professional tensions between some volunteers and management might have played a role in not participating in anything related to the Ecomuseo.

About the contributor

Miguel has a degree in history with a specialisation in heritage management and museum studies. Currently he is specialising in World Heritage studies. Since 2020, he has been part of many different volunteering projects in heritage all around Europe. He is an active part of Asociación de Jóvenes Profesionales por el Patrimonio Cultural and European Students Association for Cultural Heritage, two young professional heritage networks. He is interested in the role of young professionals in the field of heritage as well as civic involvement in heritage projects. LinkedIn: [Miguelsenrahermana](#)