DIGITAL CULTURAL DESIGNER – DCD

NATIONAL REPORT ICELAND

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Executive Summary

This report presents the results of surveys administered by the Icelandic partner of the project (NGO Cascade). The surveys were supposed to target different groups in order to assess, on the one hand, the degree of awareness of digital culture and Linked Open Data as well as the degree of efficiency of digital tools and resources that young people might use in order to learn or be more informed. On the other hand, the surveys also had the aim of investigating what still needs to be done in order to promote digital resources among youngsters.

We sent our questionnaires to young participants, cultural institutions (both to staff and directors), digital cultural providers and experts in Linked Open Data. We created five different questionnaires as shown in the following list:

1) Survey for youngsters (age: 15-29)

2) Survey for Museum / Archive / Library Directors

3) Survey for Cultural Institutions Staff

4) Survey for LOD Experts

5) Survey for Digital Cultural Providers and IT Professionals

The results from Iceland appear to be interesting although not so many participants have answered their respective questionnaires. This refers, in particular, to questionnaires 2-5, which targeted cultural institutions and experts. This is quite telling, as it is probable that a) institutions themselves are not aware of digital culture or Linked Open Data in Iceland despite the fact that they might provide various types of digital tools and resources, and b) it is necessary to introduce Icelandic institutions and their staff to digital culture and Linked Open Data.

Executive Summary in Icelandic

Þessi skýrsla sýnir niðurstöður kannana sem íslenski félaginn í verkefninu (Cascade NGO) hefur lagt fyrir. Mismunandi markhópar áttu að svara könnununum til þess að hægt sé að meta annars vegar meðvitund um stafræna menningu og tengd opin gögn og einnig það hversu áhrifarík stafræn tól og auðlindir geta verið fyrir unglinga sem nota þau til þess að læra eða kynna sér eitthvað. Hins vegar stefndu kannanirnar líka að því að varpa ljósi á það hvað á eftir að vera gert til þess að stuðla að stafrænum auðlindum meðal unglinga.

Við sendum kannanirnar okkar til ungra þátttakenda, menningarstofnana (til starfsmanna og stjóra), veitenda stafrænar menningar og sérfræðingar í tengdum opnum gögnum. Við bjuggum til fimm mismunandi kannanir eins og sýnt er hér fyrir neðan:

1) Könnun fyrir unglinga (aldur: 15-29)

2) Könnun fyrir stjóra safna / bókasafna / skjalasafna

3) Könnun fyrir starfsmenn í menningarstofnunum

4) Könnun fyrir sérfræðinga í tengdum opnum gögnum

5) Könnun fyrir veitendur stafrænar menningar og IT-sérfræðinga

Niðurstöður frá Íslandi virðast vera áhugaverðar þó að ekki svo margir þátttakendur hafa svarað sinni könnun. Þetta á sérstaklega við kannanirnar 2-5, sem voru lagðar fyrir menningarstofnunum og sérfræðingum. Þetta segir okkur mikið, fyrst mögulegt er a) að stofnanirnar sjálfar eru ekki alveg meðvitaðar um stafræna menningu eða tengd opin gögn á Íslandi þrátt fyrir það að þær veiti ýmsar tegundir að stafrænum tólum og auðlindum og b) það þarf kynna íslenskum stofnunum og starfsmönnum þeirra stafræna menningu og tengd opin gögn.

1. Introduction

The Digital Cultural Designer (DCD) project aims at promoting cultural education and developing the digital abilities of youngsters, so that they can make the best use of digital tools in order to learn and gather information. Another aim of this project is introducing young adults to the concept of open data and in particular of Linked Open Data (henceforth LOD), in such a way that they can interact with them based on their own needs and cross the open data bridge. The ultimate aim of this project is making sure that youngsters do not remain digital natives who are simply users of data, but rather data literates, who are able to interact with digital information in a more efficient way.

In the next chapters, we are going to take a look at the Icelandic data gathered by Cascade NGO through the five questionnaires listed in the Executive Summary. Each questionnaire will be observed separately. Finally, we will draw the final conclusions based on the data observed.

In order to analyze the results of the questionnaires, we will focus on each question that participants have been asked.

2. Questionnaire for youngsters

KEY FINDINGS

- Youngsters use most frequently video devices and sometimes also wikis and internal databases. These are also the most useful tools, according to the participants involved.
- Youngsters believe data are still not quite open and connected across institutions, but at least they are accessible from home or through their mobile devices

2.1. Characteristics

2.1.1. Age

17 youngsters in total have participated in the survey. Only one participant in the youngest group took part. The other two age groups have the same amount of participants (namely 8 per group).

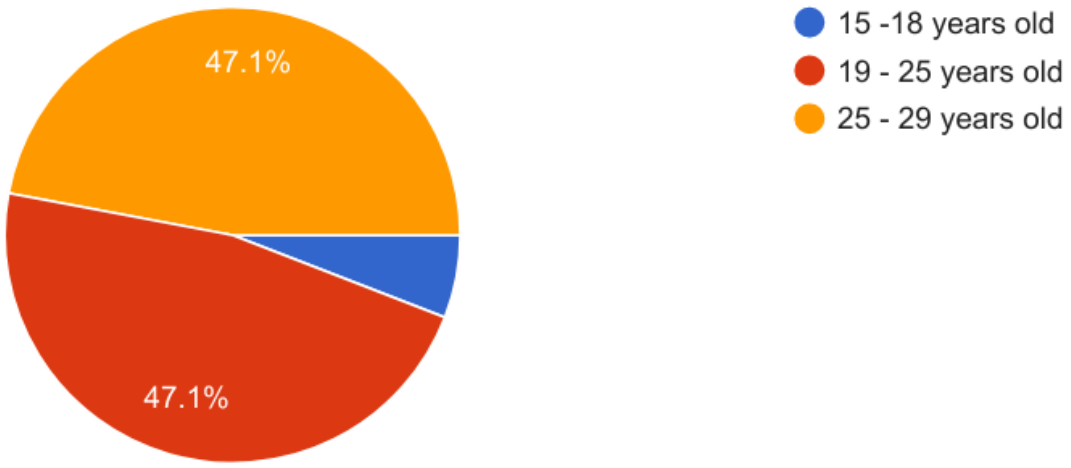

Figure 1: Age of participants

2.1.2. Sex

Only 15 participants answered this question. The majority of participants were girls (66,7%, 10 participants). Male participants were 33,3% (5 participants).

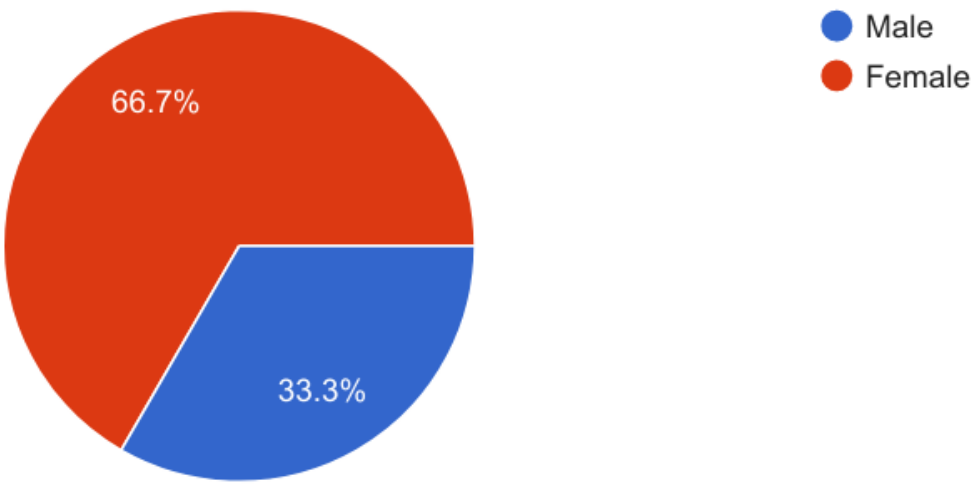

Figure 2: Sex of participants

2.2. Awareness on Digital Culture

"3. How often have you accessed or used the following digital resources provided by museums, libraries and archives?"

The answers to this question are shown here below. They suggest that old digital methods of gathering information like newsletters are not popular among youngsters. If we focus on more innovative digital resources, we see that immersive devices appear to be the least widespread in Iceland, whereas video devices are the ones that are used most often.

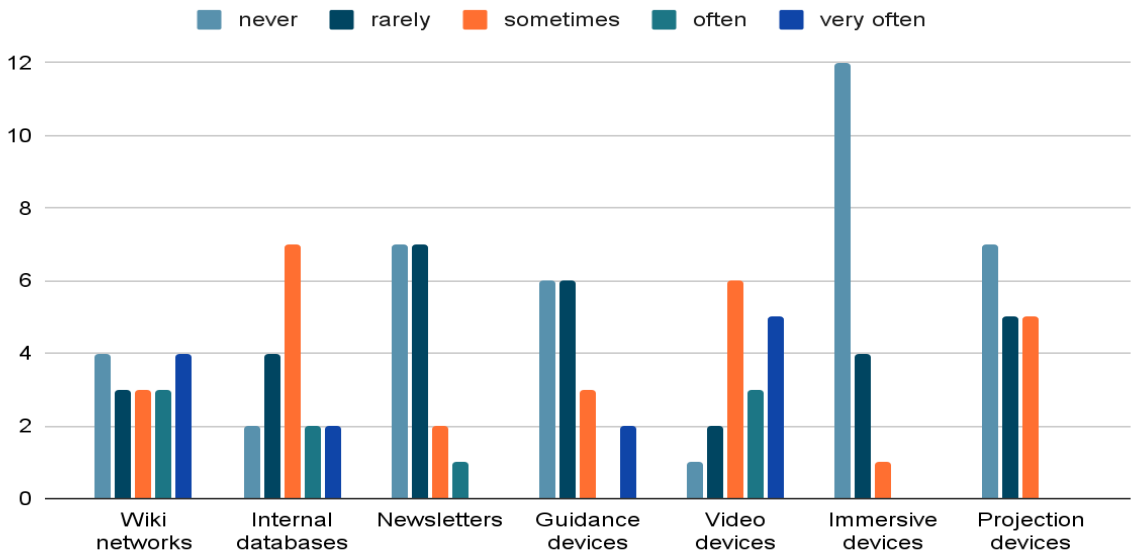

Figure 3: Access to digital resources

"4. Which of them have you found useful?"

The answers to these questions appear to have some similarities with the results in question 3. Video devices are the most useful device according to youngsters. This tells us that visual interaction with digital resources might be more efficient for the younger generation. However, also wiki networks are considered useful, although young participants resort less often to them. Finally, participants also tend to resort to internal databases in cultural institutions, although their use is not so frequent (based on the results from question 3).

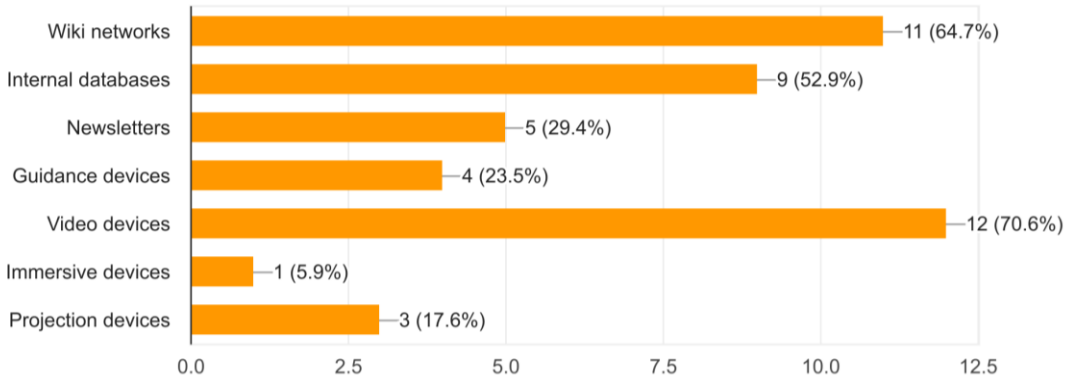

Figure 4: Usefulness of digital resources

"5. How much do you agree with the following statements in relation to digital resources you used provided by museums, libraries and archives?"

From the answers to this question, we can infer that youngsters often have easy access to digital resources from home or from their own devices. Participants' judgments are mostly neutral on statements related to availability and accessibility of data as well as feedback, which might tell us that youngsters think certain data could not be consulted.

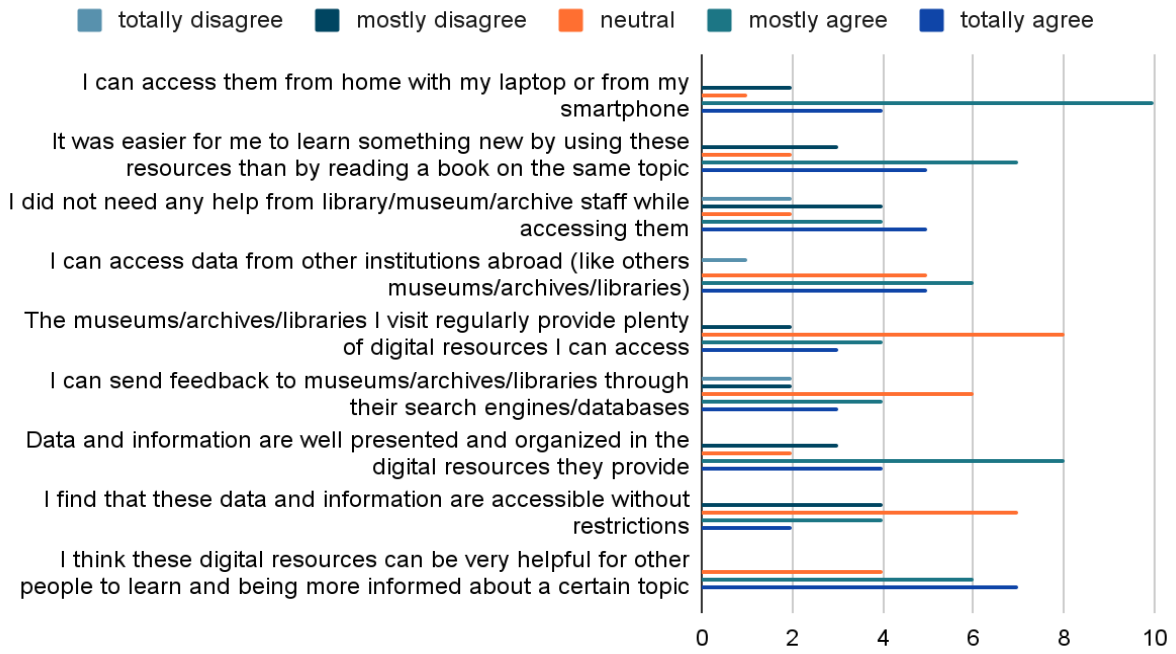

Figure 5: Judgments on usability, clarity and connectivity of digital resources

2.3. Practical and Theoretical Experience with Digital Culture

"6. What do you think should improve in the digital resources provided by these institutions?"

In this question, most participants believe that data should be more open and more connected between institutions and accessible (this somehow relates to the results in question 5). On the other hand, they are probably satisfied with how feedback is given through digital tools at the moment (or perhaps they do not attribute much importance to feedback).

One participant specifically added a custom item: "they need more ads/more creative ones so we get to know about their existence", in the sense that digital tools in museums/archives/libraries should be advertised more so that people become more aware of what tools are provided.

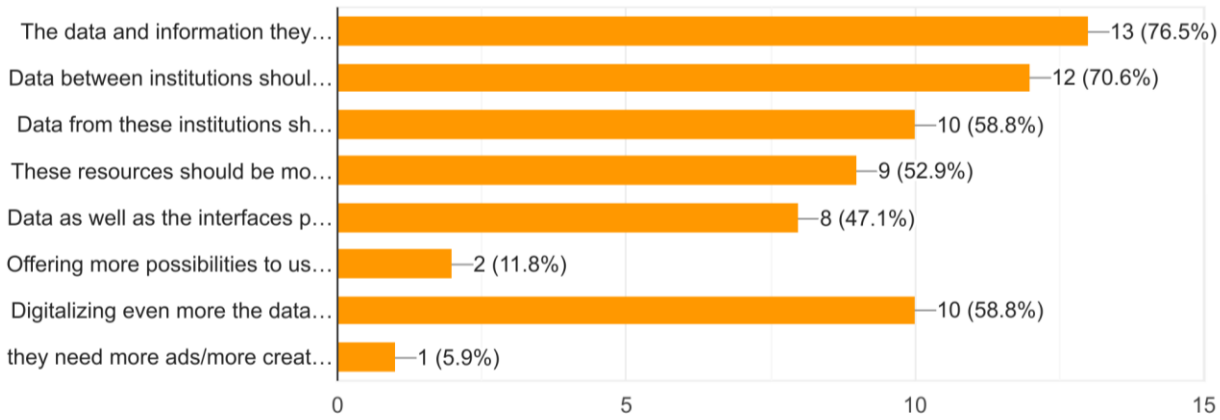

Figure 6: Improvement of digital resources according to youngsters

"7. How much do you agree with the following statements?"

In this case, participants agree to the fact that digital culture is changing the way people interact with each other. Digital resources are highly intertwined with society to the point that we can not do without them. Less participants, however, think that society is more connected through technology despite the existence of a digital culture.

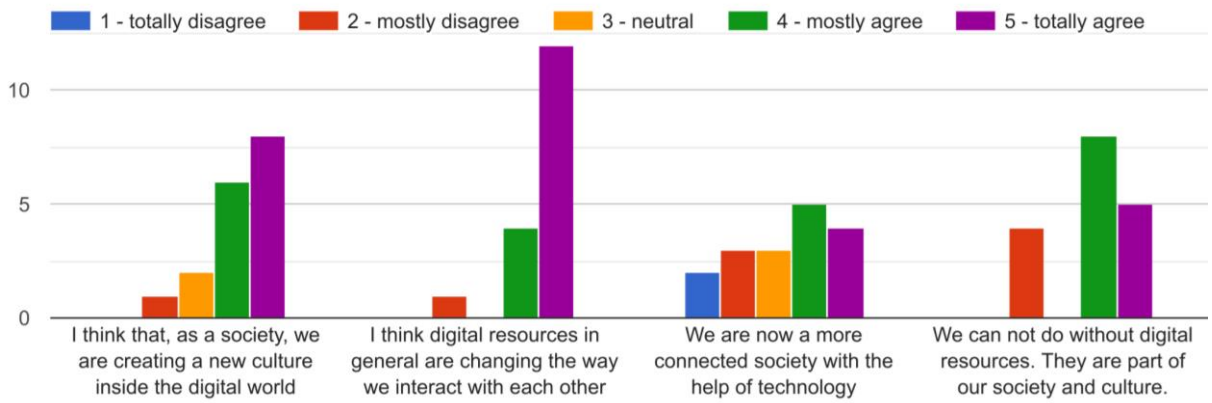

Figure 7: Judgments from youngsters on the impact of digital culture

8. Are you familiar with the concept of Linked Open Data?

The majority of participants (82,4%, 14 people) have no knowledge of LOD, and only 3 people responded "to some extent". This tells us that native digitals still have to discover for the most part what LOD are.

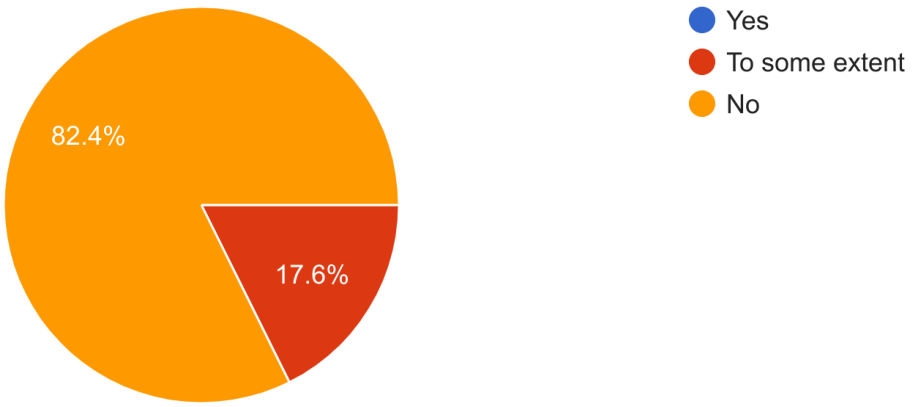

Figure 8: Knowledge of LOD

9. If you answered "Yes" to Question 8, can you briefly describe your experience with LOD?

The 3 participants who answered question 8 by saying “to some extent” did not answer this question. This might be due to the fact that a) it is difficult for them to explain their experience with LOD, b) they only know the term conceptually but have no actual experience of LOD.

3. Museum, archive and library directors

KEY FINDINGS

- Very few have participated in the questionnaire, due to the fact that cultural institutions in Iceland generally provide internal databases only but few more services might be provided in certain museums
- It is probable, also due to the lack of participation, that museums, archives and libraries in Iceland are not aware of digital culture
- The institutions involved are planning to implement audio, video and VR resources in the future

3.1. Participants

Despite the fact that the questionnaire has been sent by email to more than hundred institutions among museums, archives and libraries, and despite the fact that Cascade NGO has also contacted by phone part of these institutions to ask them to participate in the surveys, only two institutions have participated. The reason why this happened is attributed to the fact that most of these institutions use one single digital service, namely an internal database that

connects all their data, namely Gegnir/Leitir.is, which every user can access. So, even if the participants are only two, on the basis of the phone conversations NGO Cascade with various institutions, it seems that they generally provide internal databases as the only digital service for visitors, which is also accessible online and from other devices.

3.2. Awareness on Digital Culture

"1. Which of the following digital resources do you provide in your museum/library/archive?"

The two institutions provide an internal database, whereas one of the two also provides video devices for users.

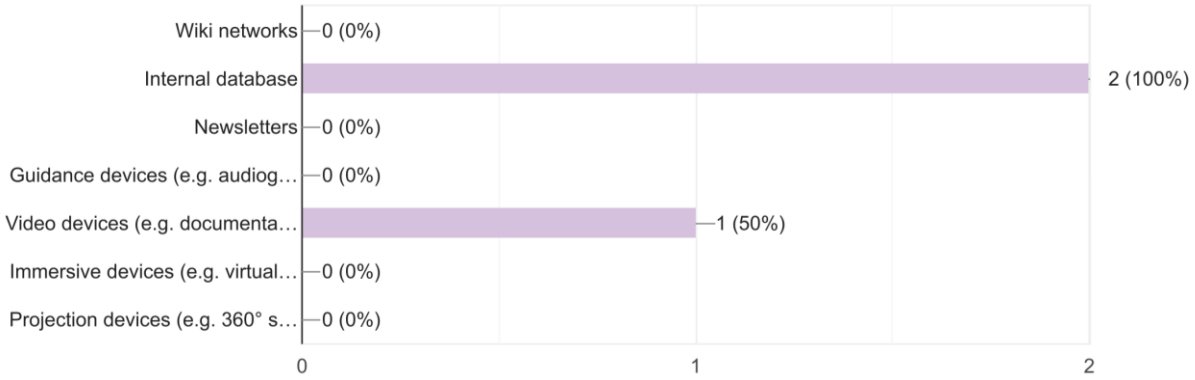

Figure 9: Resources provided in museums/libraries/archives

3.3. Practical and Theoretical Experience with Digital Culture

"2. When did you first introduce Digital Culture in your museum/library/cultural institution?"

The institutions that answered adopted these digital tools about 10 years ago.

Figure 10: First adoption of digital tools

"3. What challenges did you face when you introduced them?"

Technical issues appear to be common to the participants, but also experienced personal, IT infrastructure and skills gaps have been a challenge for them.

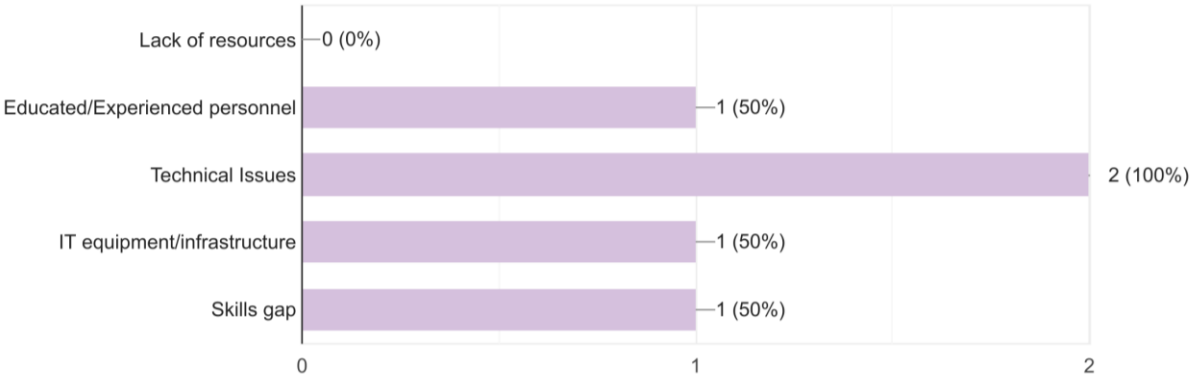

Figure 11: Challenges in cultural institutions

"4. How often do you think your visitors use these resources?"

As shown in Figure 9, the institutions that participated provide internal databases and video devices only:

- Internal databases: one institution reports that visitors sometimes resort to internal databases, while the other one reports they often do it
- Video devices: the institution providing video devices says visitors sometimes use them

"5. Which age groups tend to use these resources the most?"

The institutions involved report that adults or both age groups consult internal databases, while both age groups use video devices.

"6. How much do you agree with the following statements?"

The institutions involved report:

- That their staff is fully prepared to support visitors while accessing digital resources, but users can interact with them on their own (which indicates that such resources are user-friendly)
- That data can be accessed from devices like laptops or smartphones and also from abroad. This might be related to the fact that most institutions in Iceland use the same internal database (Gegnir/Leitir.is) which is also accessible from abroad
- That some data is not digitalized yet and accessible to the public

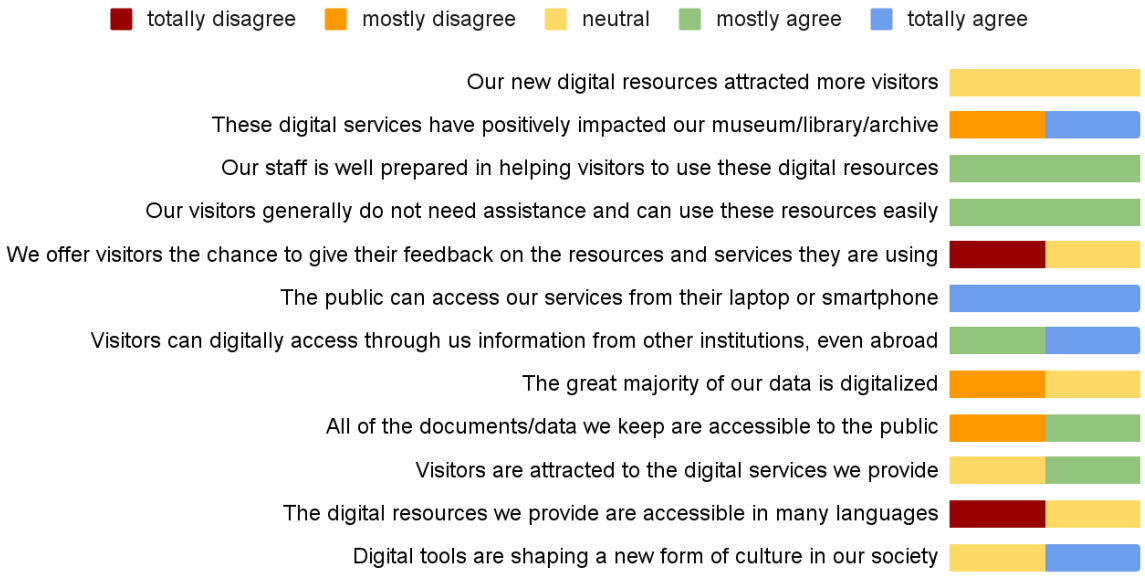

Figure 12: Characteristics of these institutions

"7. Which of these data and services are openly shared by you with other institutions?"

As one could expect, considering the previous questions, only services related to digitalized works (books, magazines etc.) are provided by the participants, due to the fact that data is accessible through Gegnir/Leitir.is. Moreover, one of the two institutions also reports that they are active in social media as well.

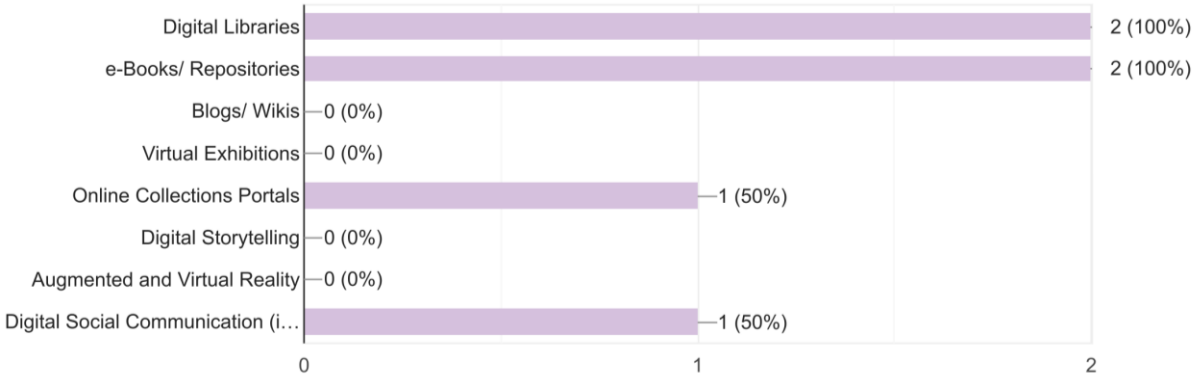

Figure 13: Services shared with other institutions

"8. What are the digital resources or services you are planning to provide in your institution?"

In this case, the new services that will be provided in the future by the institutions involved are audio and video streaming and also augmented and virtual reality. Most importantly, they are planning to create a website/portal accessible from visitors.

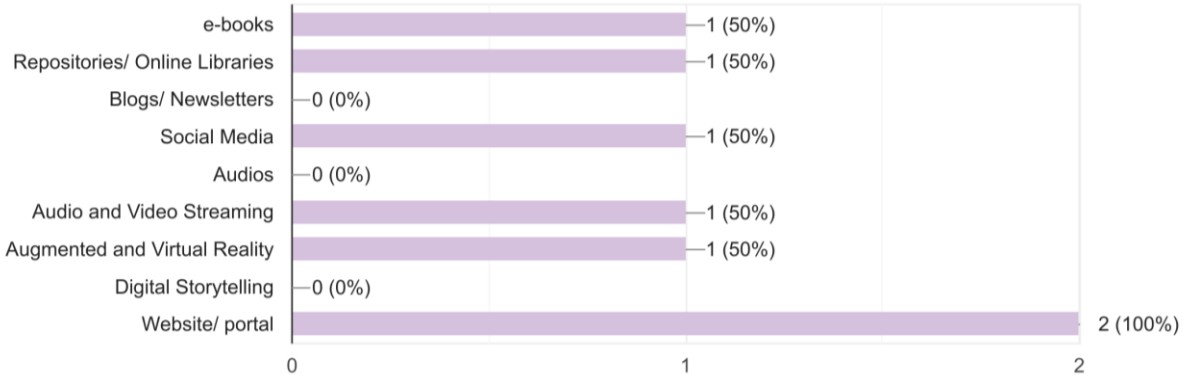

Figure 14: Services planned in the future

4. Cultural institution staff

KEY FINDINGS

- Staff members might not be trained enough in order to work with digital data, and also LOD
- Shared data like LOD have an impact on collaboration among institutions as well as

data reuse, data archiving and analysis
- Staff members suggest that social media and videos are the best way for audiences to engage with data

4.1. Participants

Similarly to the case of museum, archive and library directors, despite the fact that NGO Cascade has tried to be in touch with more than a hundred of cultural institutions, only 3 participants have answered the questionnaire. This might be explained by multiple factors: a) staff members did not always have access to the mail inbox of their institution due to the restrictions imposed during the ongoing COVID19 pandemic; b) various cultural institutions in Iceland (especially school libraries) do not have any staff members other than the director; c) staff members might not have the necessary information to answer the questionnaire.

4.2. Practical and Theoretical Experience with Digital Culture and LOD

"1. How much do you agree with the following statements?"

An interesting point in the data presented in the figure here below is that participants recognize that they should be trained to work with data shared across institutions (and similarly with LOD) and that they also recognize the importance and the role of these shared data, but at the same time they degrade their judgment on whether they have been actually trained in working with such data.

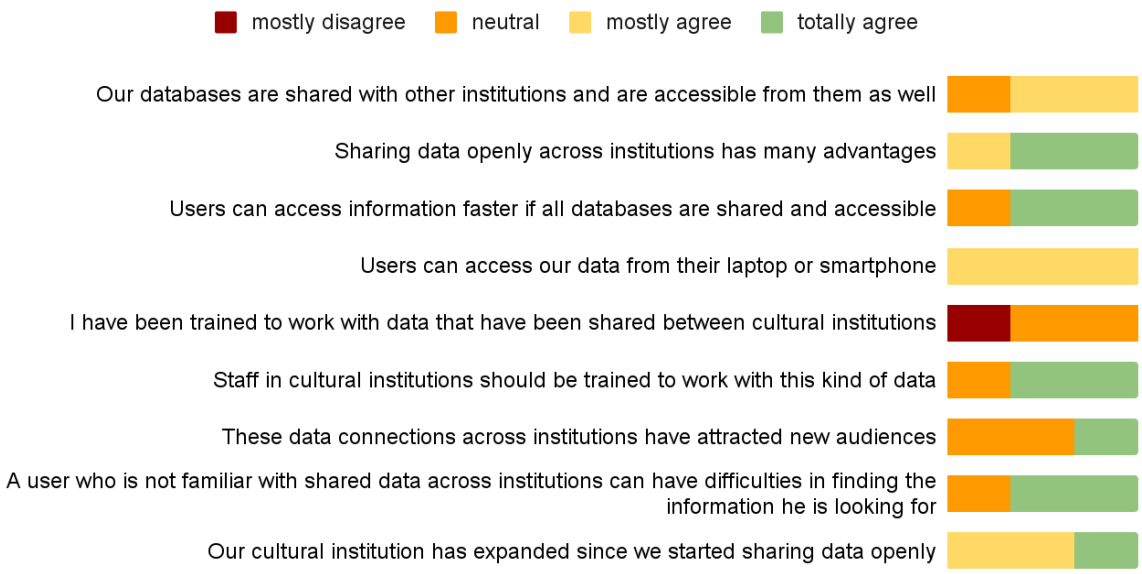

Figure 15: Judgments on data shared across institutions

"2. What do you think is the most significant impact of these shared and open data for your institution's staff?"

The staff members who answered see that shared and open data have for the most part an impact on connectivity among institutions, data analysis, data archiving and reusing.

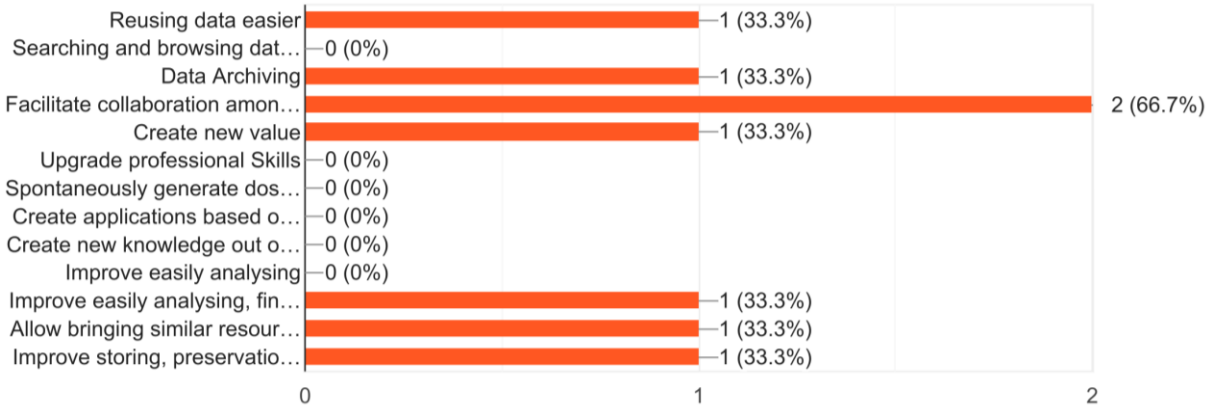

Figure 16: Impact of shared and open data

"3. In what ways do these shared data help audiences to engage with content?"

All the participants view the connection between shared data and social media as a way for audiences to engage with content. Similarly to what we have seen with youngsters, videos appear to be an efficient way to let audiences interact with data.

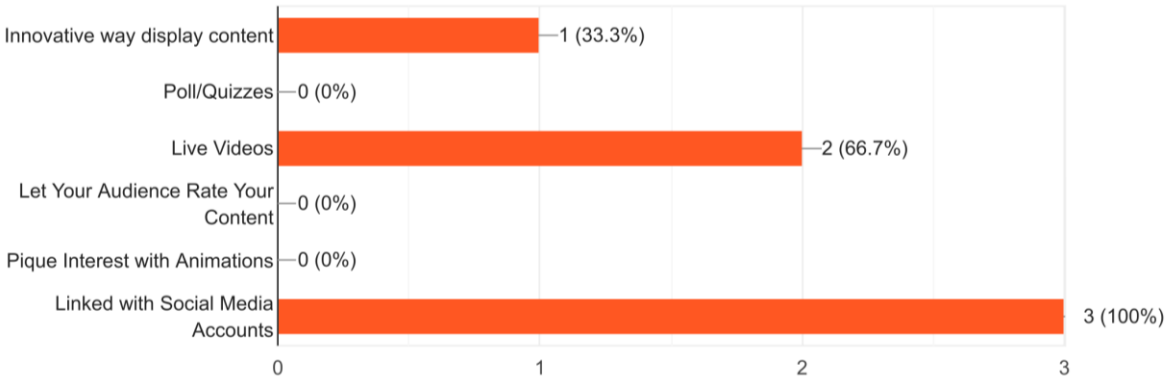

Figure 17: Best means of interaction with data

5. LOD Experts

KEY FINDINGS

- The purpose of LOD is more related to development, creation and preservation of content audiences can interact with
- Internet, Digital curation tools, Digital safety tools, Social media, Digital management tools and Online and Mobile digital media tools are the most efficient tools in cultural institutions and they are also provided at least to much extent across Icelandic institutions
- Staff members should be more trained in LOD
- LOD should be taught more in vocational and online courses

5.1. Participants

Only one LOD expert has participated in the questionnaire.

5.2. Results

"1. What should Linked Open Data be used for in the cultural field?"

The LOD expert suggests that LOD needs to be used for multiple purposes, as shown here below. These purposes are more related to development, creation and preservation of content audiences can interact with.

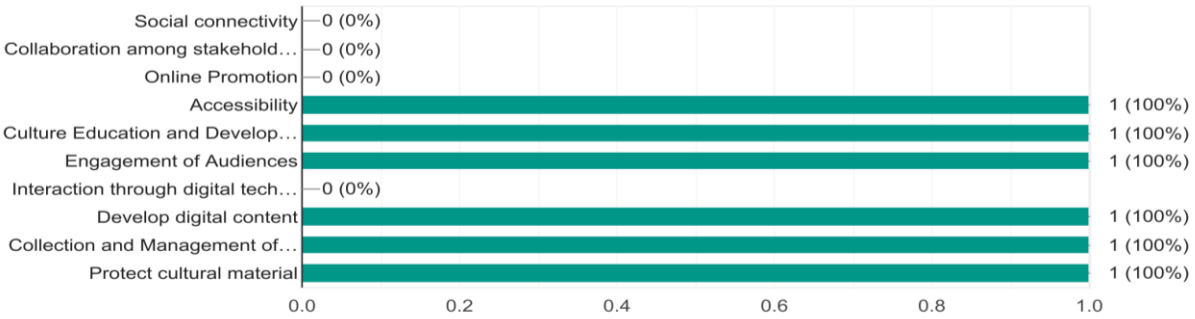

Figure 18: Purpose of LOD

"2. To what extent do you think the following tools are useful in cultural Institutions?"

In this case, the LOD expert suggests that the most useful tools in cultural institutions are the Internet, Digital curation tools, Digital safety tools, Social media, Digital management tools and Online and Mobile digital media tools.

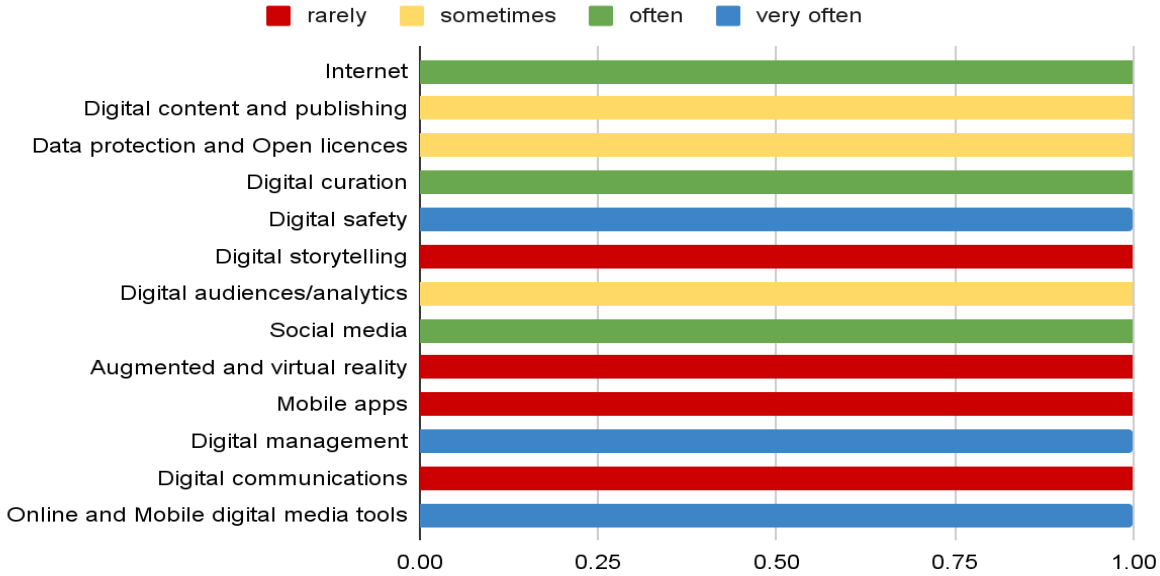

Figure 19: Useful tools in cultural institutions

"3. To what extent do you think these tools are provided in cultural Institutions?"

According to the LOD expert, the tools he considered useful in the previous question are either provided to much extent or provided everywhere. In other words, Iceland appears to have already implemented many of these tools. But, considering the results from museums, archives and libraries, we might wonder about the degree of awareness of the impact these tools can have in the cultural field.

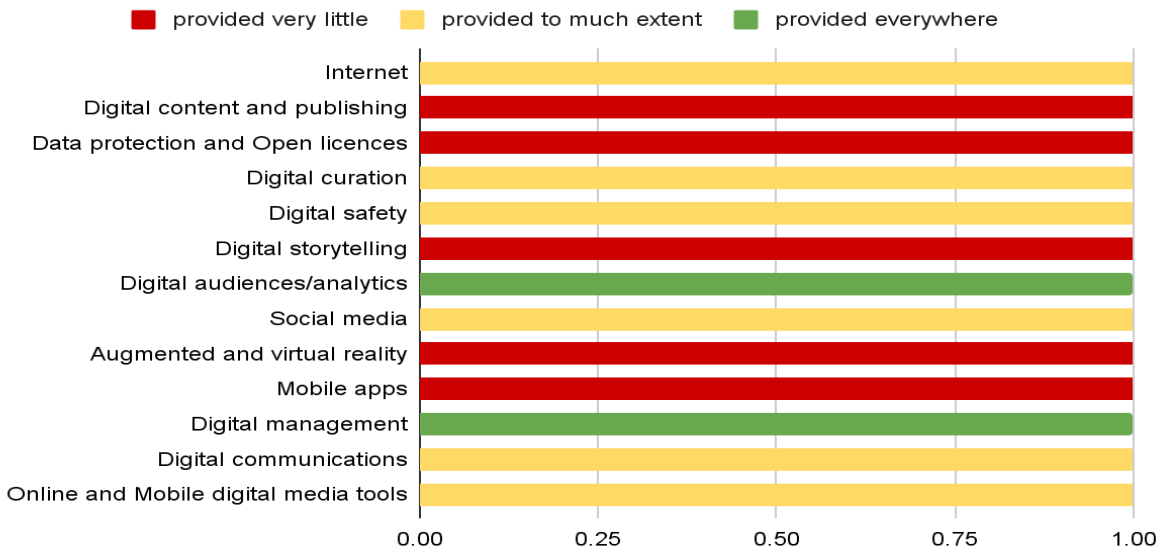

Figure 20: Tools provision

"4. What do you think are the next steps to take with Linked Open Data in the cultural field?"

The LOD expert suggests that the next steps are informing and training cultural institutions more on the usefulness of LOD. This most probably resonates with the results gathered from cultural institutions staff.

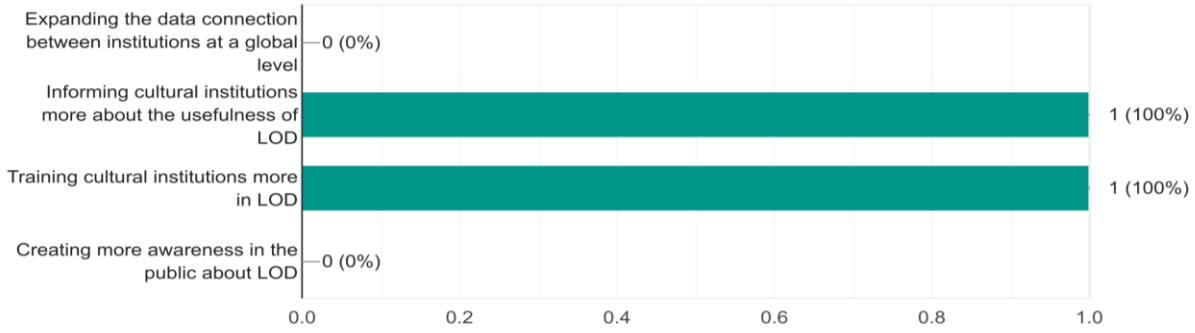

Figure 21: Next steps to take in relation to LOD

"5. So far, how can someone learn about Linked Open Data?"

The LOD expert reports that, at the moment, it is possible to learn about LOD in vocational and educational training, and also in schools and universities as well as online courses.

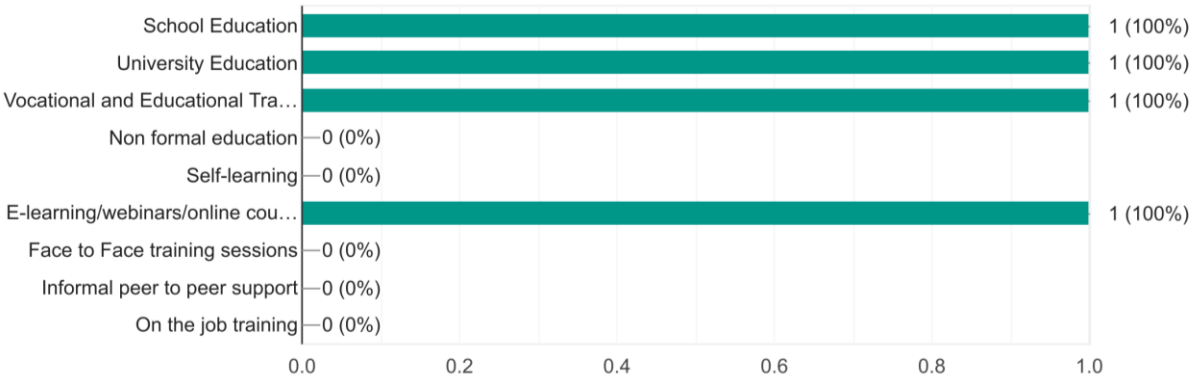

Figure 22: Current contexts where learning about LOD is possible

"6. Where do you think we should put more effort in promoting Linked Open Data?"

The LOD expert suggests that there should be more promotion of LOD while in job training. Moreover, more online courses should include information on LOD.

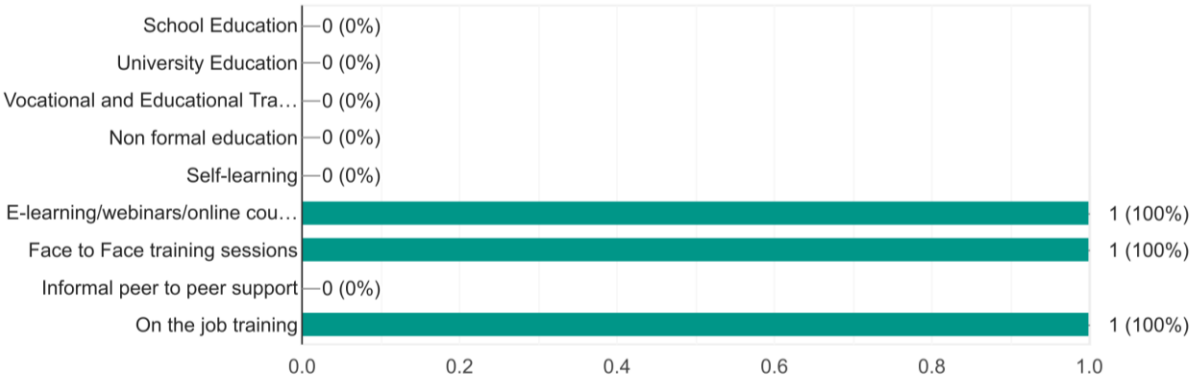

Figure 23: Ways of promotion of LOD to improve

6. Digital cultural providers and IT professionals

KEY FINDINGS

- Digital resources are at least to some extent implemented in all institutions/cultural

fields. However, there should be definitely a more thorough implementation in archives and libraries
- Digital resources can help all users, also adults, to learn faster and develop new skills
- Digital skills gap might be a main obstacle for the promotion of digital resources
- It is important to offer digital training and encourage collaboration in order to promote the development and implementation of digital resources

6.1. Participants

Only two participants have answered the questionnaire.

6.2. Awareness on Digital Culture

"1. To what extent do you think digital resources and tools have been implemented in the following institutions/cultural fields?"

The participants report that digital resources and tools have been implemented at least to some extent in all the fields listed in the survey.

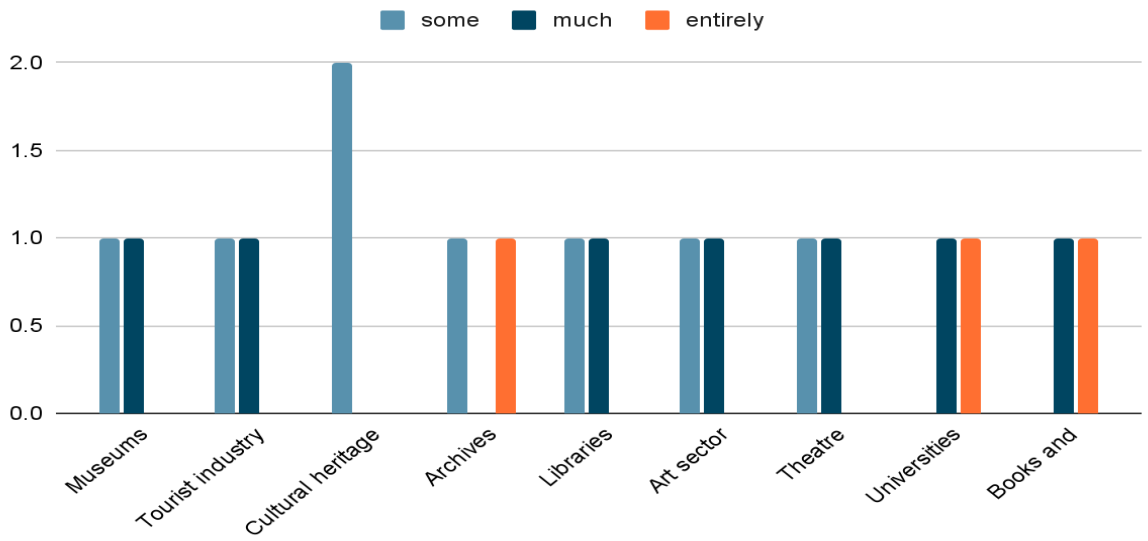

Figure 24: Implementation of digital resources

"2. In which institutions/cultural fields do you think one should absolutely intervene and extend the use of digital tools and resources?"

Both participants agree that archives and libraries should have a more extended use of digital resources (and, to some extent, also museums and universities).

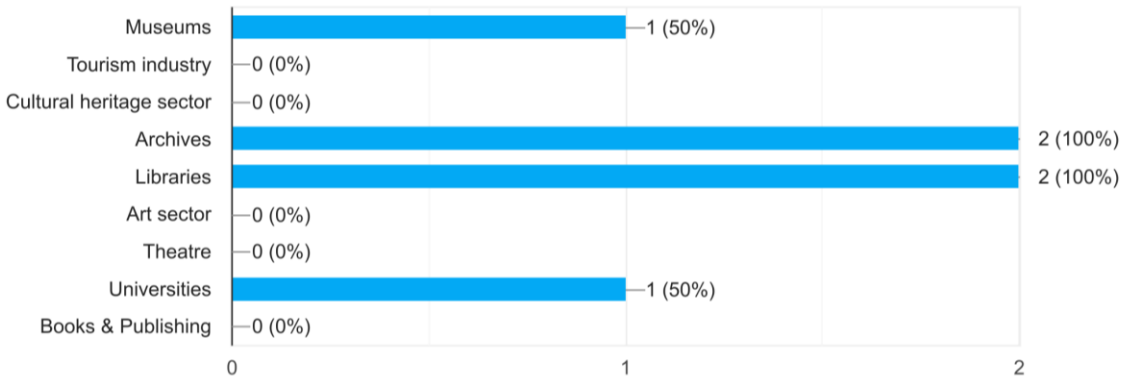

Figure 25: Intervention on institutions/cultural fields

"3. How much do you agree with the following statements?"

Both participants agree that digital resources are useful for everyone, both young people and adults, in order to learn and also develop new skills. Moreover, it is easy to interact with digital tools.

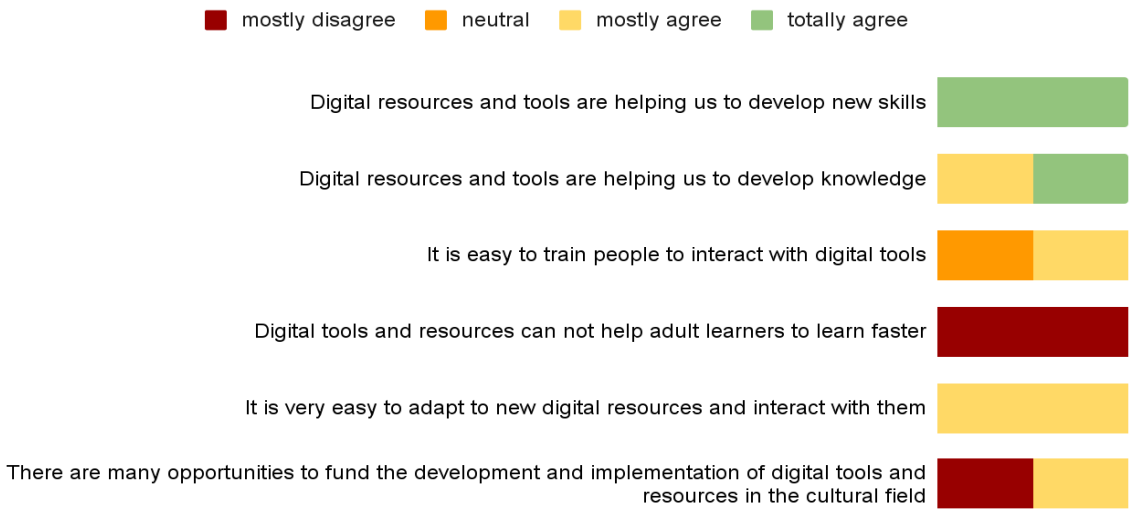

Figure 26: Judgments from digital cultural providers and IT professionals

6.3. Practical and Theoretical Experience with Digital Culture

"4. What do you think are the main obstacles to promoting digital tools and resources in the cultural field?"

Both participants point out that digital skills gaps might be an obstacle for the promotion of digital resources. Further issues might occur with lack of IT infrastructure or funding, as well as inclusion aspects.

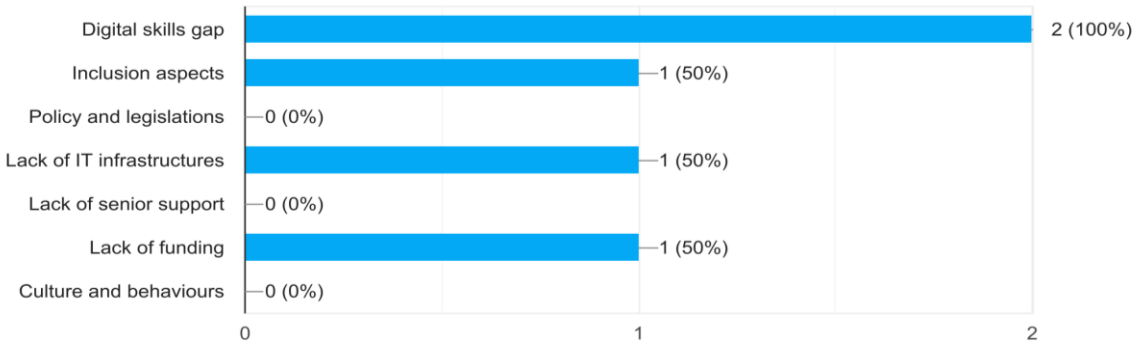

Figure 27: Obstacles to promoting digital tools

"5. Which new habits and methodologies should be promoted in order to accelerate the development and implementation of digital resources and tools?"

Similarly to the LOD expert, also the participants here focus on digital training to allow a better development and implementation of digital resources, but also collaboration appears to have a role. To a lesser degree, embracing transparency as well as possible risks should also be promoted.

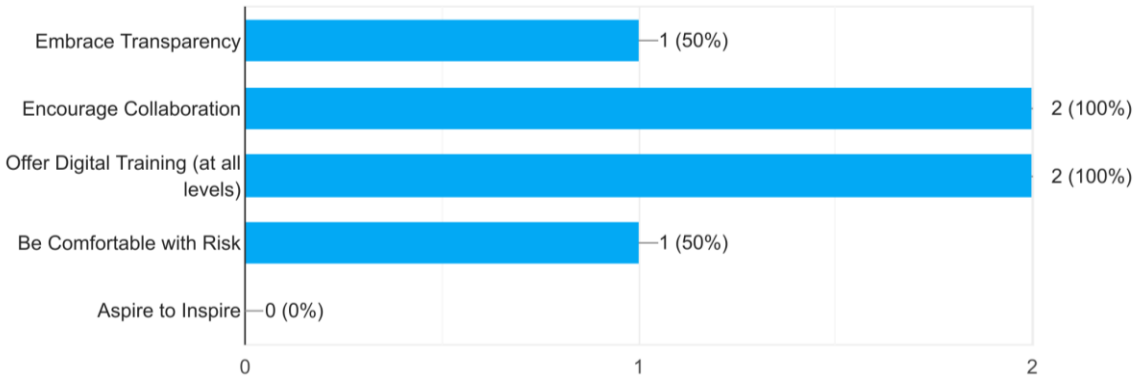

Figure 28: Methodologies to promote

7. Concluding remarks

The outcome of the Digital Cultural Designer research in Iceland has shown that the topic of digital culture is extremely important and needs to be thoroughly investigated and promoted, considering the fact that despite the presence of digital tools and resources in institutions, there is still need to make staff members of museums, archives and libraries aware of the importance and potentials of digital culture and LOD. The same applies to directors of these institutions.

It is also important that youngsters adopt the basic knowledge of digital culture literacy and the ability in finding sources through libraries, museums or other centres/institutions, also by interacting more with LOD. Digital culture is moving forwards and providing access to even more data, information, and documents, therefore newer generations should interact with this great quantity of information in a more efficient way as soon as possible.

Iceland could be the ideal place to expand the reaserch, with the availability of electricity and clean energy, the potential with the opportunity and with good universities. There should be, however, more awareness of digital culture of LOD, both among institutions and newer generations, which should be granted through courses (whether online or in person) and training.