

Work Package 6: Peer to peer learning amongst professionals

D7.3 – DH Training Strategy and Tools / Final Version

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1. Introduction

The present publication is the outcome of a process that began within the framework of the project **Dancing Histor(y)ies: Binding Communities and Heritage Through Dance**¹, aiming to carry out a particularly challenging undertaking. Its objective was twofold: to respond to identified training needs through a participatory process involving the project partners, and to support the wider DH project audience by offering a practical, scalable, and user-friendly peer to peer learning methodology applicable across multiple contexts and use cases.

Why This Method Matters?

The proposed methodology represents an alternative learning and engagement approach designed to:

- enable systematic knowledge exchange.
- increase levels of active participation.
- strengthen active listening practices.
- build participants' confidence in addressing complex challenges; and
- support ongoing skills development and more effective communication within an environment grounded in equality and mutual respect.

How We Developed It?

The methodology was developed through a phased approach, beginning with a comprehensive training needs analysis conducted across all organizations involved in the project. The identified needs were subsequently clustered into thematic areas, followed by a targeted review of relevant academic and applied literature to determine appropriate methodological responses. This process led to the design of a **hybrid methodology** that draws on established knowledge sources such as research studies, publications, digital resources, and artistic outputs as entry points/triggers for a more participatory and collaborative learning process. Implementation is supported by practical facilitation

¹ The project Dancing Histor(y)ies: Binding Communities and Heritage Through Dance focuses on promoting archaeological sites through the performing arts. It aims to develop an innovative, effective, and replicable model for enhancing cultural sites by actively involving local communities in artistic creation and fostering conscious engagement with heritage. The project seeks to combine the material cultural heritage of the sites with the intangible heritage of local communities whose stories and traditions fused together through the creative expression of dance.

tools, including Liberating Structures², complemented by experiential exercises and techniques drawn from systemic counseling, group facilitation, and applied theatre practices.

Who Can Use It?

The methodology is intended for individuals and organizations seeking to implement projects like DH and beyond by adopting a culture of participatory and democratic practice. It is not limited by topic or subject matter and can be adapted to the specific needs of each organization across different phases of a project. The methodology requires no specialized equipment, is flexible in terms of time, and does not demand advanced expertise in group facilitation. A **key prerequisite**, however, is trust in the resources and capacities of all participants, along with an attitude of curiosity and critical inquiry on the part of those who undertake the facilitation of peer-to-peer learning workshops.

Implementation and Testing



The methodology was internally tested at multiple stages throughout the implementation of the DH project, involving all project partners. Specifically, it was applied during transnational meetings held in 2024 in Poznań (Poland) and Cagliari, during an on-site visit to Cabras (Sardinia) shortly before the festival at the archaeological site of Tharros in summer 2024, and during a train-the-trainers workshop in Cagliari in autumn 2024, with the full participation of all project partners. The results of this internal evaluation process confirmed the

suitability of the methodology for the objectives of the DH project; through the positive feedback we received from participants across all workshops.³

² <https://www.liberatingstructures.com/>

³ The results showed that the methodology is more effective when a climate of trust is fostered, the group's principles and expectations are clearly defined, and creative, experiential forms of expression are employed (e.g., sketching, systemic sculpting, and the embodiment of narratives/constructions through physical expression).



Beyond assessing its usefulness for the DH project, the internal testing of the proposed methodology also aimed to support wider outreach and the application of the methodology to broader target audiences. Through the 2024 “training the trainer” sessions, both Institutional and Technical Partners⁴ were prepared to implement the **P2P Local Workshops in 2025**, involving external stakeholders.



The outcomes of this phase⁵ also demonstrated a high level of participant satisfaction (80%), further validating the effectiveness of the DH Peer-to-Peer Methodology.



This is followed by a comprehensive presentation of the final **D7.3 – DH Training Strategy and Tools / Final Version**, incorporating all revisions derived from feedback provided by both project partners and external participants.

⁴ Dancing Histor(y)ies builds on the experience and knowledge of 12 institutions from 10 European countries, with strong expertise in heritage management (Institutional Partners), performing arts production (Artistic Partners), and research and consulting (Technical Partners).

⁵ The results of the external evaluation confirmed the suitability of the methodology, addressing a wide range of organizational needs. Experiential exercises and techniques, such as 1-2-4-ALL, were applied with positive outcomes in all workshops. Moreover, the proposed methodology extended beyond the original scope of the DH Project and was creatively adapted and embraced by participants in all participating countries.

2. Dancing Histor(y)ies: Training Strategy and Tools

2.1 Theoretical background

The methodological principle that governs our approach when designing this educational process is based in the principles of adult education through the prism of the transformative learning theory (Mezirow)⁶ and in the principles of Peer-To-Peer Learning utilizing innovative methods such as Liberating Structures⁷.

As Mezirow (2007) mentions the widely accepted model of adult education involves the transfer of power from the instructor to the trainees. In the case of Peer-to-Peer Learning the concept of the instructor is eliminated, who is either abolished or transformed to a coordinator/facilitator who supports the process but does not convey any knowledge directly.

The practice of Peer-to-Peer learning has been influenced by Constructivism⁸, the philosophy of Critical Pedagogy⁹ and the theory of Connectivism¹⁰.

What is peer learning?

Peer-to-peer learning (P2P learning) is a process of exchanging experiences and knowledge between people who share a common (special) interest or are active in a common field. The learners in this training approach serve as both learners and trainers, sharing their expertise, experiences, and ideas with one another to improve their understanding of a specific subject or skill.

It combines formal and informal learning strategies. That is, it can be implemented in an organized way within a framework or unintentionally - through informal everyday learning. Instead of relying exclusively on teachers or textbooks, participants actively participate in group discussions, problem

⁶ Transformative learning is the expansion of consciousness through the transformation of basic worldview and specific capacities of the self; transformative learning is facilitated through consciously directed processes such as appreciatively accessing and receiving the symbolic contents of the unconscious and critically analyzing underlying premises (Mezirow, 2007).

⁷ It is a learning process that takes place in small groups (4-6 people) of peer participants with the main goal of training participants to ask the right questions instead of finding the answers to already formulated questions of third parties (Revans, 1982)

⁸ Constructivism is a theory in education which posits that individuals or learners do not acquire knowledge and understanding by passively perceiving it within a direct process of knowledge transmission, rather they construct new understandings and knowledge through experience and social discourse, integrating new information with what they already know (prior knowledge). (Marquardt & Waddill, 2004).

⁹ Critical Pedagogy is based on the tradition of Paolo Freire and aims at emancipation and social justice through the analysis and criticism of power structures.

¹⁰ Connectivism tries to elaborate how digital technologies, and specifically Internet, contribute to new ways of learning.

solving, and information exchange. Peer-to-peer learning can take place in a variety of settings, including study groups, workshops and community-based projects.

Why peer to peer learning?

The literature review suggests that participants are more receptive to the messages they receive from their peers. They can see fresh approaches for addressing challenges and come up with creative, collaborative solutions when they learn with their peers. The advantages of peer education are mainly the following:

- ✓ Peer learning fosters **teamwork**, cooperation, patience, and better social skills.
- ✓ Provide Active Engagement: Learners take responsibility of their learning process by teaching and explaining concepts to their peers.
- ✓ Learning from peers of different backgrounds, views, and ethnicities fosters an environment of **mutual respect**, gratitude, and progress.
- ✓ Teaching and explaining concepts to others helps participants **improve their communication skills** and capacity to convey complicated ideas in simpler terms.’

2.2 The Development Phase of the DH Training Methodology

DH P2P Training Strategy is based on an innovative pedagogical concept where participants develop skills through social interaction, exchanging various ideas and developing a collective intelligence. The purpose of the training program is to promote the autonomy and empowerment of the participants so that they feel capable of facing new challenges with confidence, acquire skills that are useful in their field of activity and build foundations for continuous learning (learn how to learn).

In this context, the training program is not designed to provide ready-made solutions and traditionally structured knowledge, but it will attempt to utilize participants previous experience and knowledge, their previous successful problem-solving strategies and stories by weaving the mosaic of different perspectives/approaches to a commonly defined topic. A structured process will be established to achieve the above-mentioned objectives.

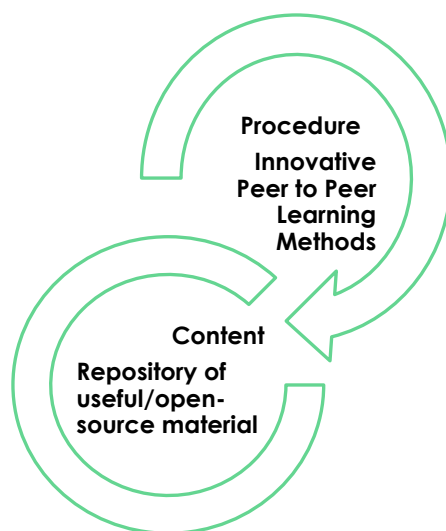
The thematic areas for peer training are defined each time by the needs of the organizations that wish to integrate them into their organizational culture. To make this possible, it is recommended to conduct a needs assessment and include the shared needs in the training plan. Furthermore, it is suggested that, around these needs, each organization identify the individuals who will facilitate the

process, giving them time to work through emerging needs by collecting relevant material (e.g. good practices, articles, photographs, videos, etc.) and by organizing a space, for example a digital one. This process of researching and studying the organization’s needs is useful not to turn the facilitator into an expert (“the sage on the stage”), but rather to help them develop an attitude of curiosity, initially serving also as triggers for the facilitator, enabling them to formulate the questions around which the process will unfold.



Tip: The trainer/facilitator does not need to be an expert as long as he/she knows the topic, the instructions and experiments with the proposed techniques.

More specifically, the training strategy for Dance Histor(y)ies proposes the use of a hybrid method, which is developed on two distinct levels: (a) the content level and (b) the training process level. **At the content level**, it is proposed to carry out a needs assessment for each organization and to collect material for inspiration and reflection (e.g. videos from artistic events, photographs, websites, good practices, interviews, etc.), primarily by the facilitators of the process. **At the process level**, the strategy proposes the use of innovative methods such as the 1-2-4-ALL approach from Liberating Structures combined with other activities, for example ice-breaking processes and other experiential exercises.



3 How this approach became DH P2P training program?



The DH P2P training program was based on two tools 1-2-4-ALL¹¹ and Appreciative Interviews¹² from the Liberating Structures toolbox. The tools are described in detail below. The P2P Dancing Histor(y)ies training program was tailored to the needs of both professionals and amateurs involved in the thematic areas of the DH project, such as managers of cultural and heritage sites, artists, representatives of local communities, professionals from relevant NGOs, and researchers.

Practical Implementation Steps for P2P Workshops

- Choose the topic(s) you are interested in.
- Select your trainer/facilitator.
- Give the trainer/facilitator access to relevant material and time to study (the repository can be very useful) and share with them the P2P methodology instructions so they can become familiar with the method.
- Organize your workshop(s).
- Consider the participants who will form the team and invite the individuals or organizations you want to engage.
- Find a suitable space with basic equipment (e.g., a quiet room with chairs, a whiteboard, a projector, A4 paper, pens, and markers is a good start).
- Ask participants to evaluate the workshop (you can adapt the questionnaire provided to your local needs).
- You may provide additional material to participants (e.g., best practices from the DH project).

Preparatory Steps: Give yourself time to study the material and the method. Experiment (play) with the process and bring it closer to your personal style and experience. At this stage you could also try

¹¹ <https://www.liberatingstructures.com/1-1-2-4-all/>

¹² <https://www.liberatingstructures.com/5-appreciative-interviews-ai/>

to pilot the method. You may also find helpful, the explanatory material on the Liberating Structures website¹³, where you can see in detail how 1-2-4-ALL and Appreciative Interviews tools work.

The following description includes the steps a trainer/facilitator can follow to organize a workshop lasting approximately 3 hours using both techniques. The workshop can deal with one or two topics. It goes without saying that organizations may choose just one tool and conduct an independent workshop around any chosen topic.

Group composition: people who have a special interest in the topic of the workshop.

Duration: 2.5-3 hours approx. (depending on the number of participants)

Group participation contract: Before joining the workshop, participants are informed of the rules governing the process, which are simple and clear.

Ground Rules:

- Creation of a safe place
- Confidentiality
- Respect for every point of view
- Prohibition of comments, observations, questions that may be offensive and avoidance of questions that make it difficult/embarrassing for the members of the group.

Space: The meeting room must be appropriate for the session without interruptions (a comfortable & quite environment)!

4 1-2-4-ALL or Appreciative Interviews?

4.1 Choosing the 1-2-4-ALL



We choose 1-2-4-ALL as an introductory tool to open the discussion around a topic, but if we want to go deeper, we can use Appreciative Interviews. It is recommended to start the process with 1-2-4-ALL to introduce a topic (about 1 hour) and then go deeper using Appreciative Interviews (AI) (about 2 hours). Of course, each tool can be used independently if it serves the purposes of the training.

The procedure

In this first phase the trainer/facilitator welcomes group members and presents the way of work, provides info about the training theme and introduces himself /herself to the group (5 minutes)

1. Ice Breaking: game to get to know the participants (the facilitator can choose any game he/she wants). In this phase the necessary time is provided for the participants to get to know each other and interact (10 minutes).
2. After that it is important to have a round of discussion focused on the expectations of the participants by answering questions about their motivations/expectations (e.g. why are you here today? what are your expectations from the training?) (5 minutes)
3. The facilitator/trainer introduces the topic by providing relevant info, (e.g. by presenting a good practice, a video, an image, etc.) asking the participants to participate actively. By formulating a question or an invitation to the participants (e.g. what challenges might there be around this topic?) (5-10 minutes)

If 1-2-4-All¹⁴ is chosen, then the trainer should follow the following steps and give the following instructions:

(1) One moment alone (1) to reflect: for instance, in response to a question or in reaction to a presentation, writing down responses or ideas. (2-3 minutes)

(2) A few minutes in pairs (2) to share, compare, improve or expand on the individual ideas. (5-8 minutes)

(4) A few more minutes for pairs assembled in foursomes (4) to share and further develop the pairs' ideas (8-10 minutes)

(All) During the last step, any foursome can share one important idea or question that the whole group should hear (there is no need for each group to report out).

Conclusions, decisions, or actions are made based on what emerges. (8-10 minutes)



Wrap up: The trainer recaps and synthesizes all the views heard by connecting them to the original opening question/initial trigger. **(5-8 minutes)**

Total Duration: 60-70 minutes



In groups where there is a difficulty with the language, an instruction could be given to the group to work with a sketch, (e.g. draw your idea (work in pairs, fours) and present your sketch to the plenary!

Break (15 minutes) or End

4.2 Choosing the Appreciative Interviews

If the trainer wants to go deeper into the same topic or another, he/she can use Appreciative Interviews

¹⁴ The whole cycle can be as short as 10-15 minutes and shouldn't be longer than 15-20 minutes. If the issue warrants more time, it is much more productive to do a second cycle rather than let the steps last too long.



In the first phase, the trainer provides one more trigger if the process is on the same topic or a new trigger if it is a different topic (best practice, image, video etc, 5-10 minutes)

The trainer provides the following instructions

“Please tell a story about a time when you worked on a challenge with others and you are proud of what you

accomplished. What is the story and what made the success possible? Pair up preferably with someone you don’t know well.”

- ✓ In pairs, participants take turns conducting an interview and telling a success story, paying attention to what made the success possible. **(7–10 min. each participant; 15–20 min. total)**
- ✓ In groups of 4, each person retells the story of his or her pair partner. Ask participants to listen for patterns in conditions/assets supporting success and to make note of them. **(15 min-20 min for groups of 4)**
- ✓ Collect insights and patterns for the whole group to see on a flip chart. Summarize if needed **(10-15 min)**
- ✓ Final Discussion: Ask, and *“What opportunities do you see to do more?”* Discuss the questions **(10 min)**

Total Duration: 70-90 minutes



If the trainers are familiar, they can ask the groups to present their stories dramatized or with other techniques, (e.g. sculpture¹⁵)

5 Evaluation

For evaluating the whole process, it is useful for the trainer/facilitator to ask participants at the beginning of the workshop to specify their expectations (what they hope to gain from the session) and then reassess at the end whether these expectations have been met. The compilation of participants’ evaluations is considered very valuable feedback for both the process and the facilitator.

Additionally, tools that could be incorporated include short questionnaires to measure participants’ satisfaction, as well as recording the facilitators’ experiences, for further enrichment of the process.

¹⁵ <https://dramaresource.com/sculptor-and-statue/>