USER GUIDE FOR VIRTUAL EXHIBITIONS CREATION

VX designers

CREDITS

This **VX Designers Exhibition Generator Platform User Guide** has been produced by the VX Designers project consortium, which consists of 6 partners:

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+ Info about the project and other resources are available at:
https://vxdesigners.eu/

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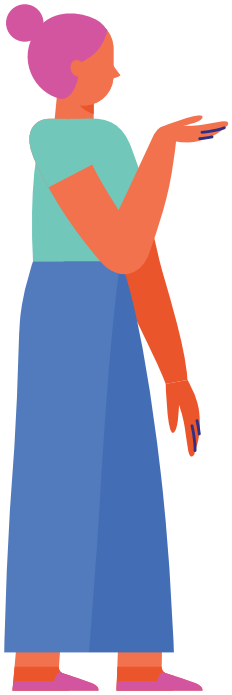
1 INTRO



To facilitate the access to the **VX Designers Exhibition Generator Platform** we have developed this **User Guide** that provides all the technical and practical information about **how to use the platform in a learning context.**

This Guide has the aim of describing the functionalities of the platform in a clear and comprehensive way, to enable all its users to create their own virtual exhibitions for learning. It includes sections for educators to prepare sessions, and "handouts for learners" that can be given to students to help them design their exhibition on the platform alone or in a group.

This Guide can be used together with the other VX Designers resources for professionals working in education (i.e. in schools or exhibition spaces): the Exhibitions & School Guide, which provides practical information about how to help students benefit from active learning through exhibitions, and the Pedagogical Guide, which provides information for teachers and school education experts, to know how to design, use and integrate exhibitions for their teaching practices.

VX Designers is an Erasmus+ project about using exhibitions for learning in secondary school education. The project is focused on placing learners at the centre of the development process and maximising their learning and interest through co-curating an exhibition.

In practice, the project develops a methodology and a set of tools and provides guidance and resources to support teachers as well as other education and museum professionals, in implementing an innovative pedagogy, using exhibitions to facilitate their learners' needs. The project also focuses on the usage of technology for digital exhibition creation, and on inclusive learning regarding exhibition curation, for learners with different needs such as those with Specific Learning Disorders and/or cultural differences. See more information about guidelines for educators at our VX designers Pedagogical Guide.

This Exhibition Generator Platform user guide will cover three aspects:

- **Technical details**, design and functionalities of the VX Designers Platform.
- **Why** to use the exhibition platform for learning, **who** can use the platform, **what** type of exhibitions can be designed, and **how** an online exhibition can be designed in simple steps on the VX Designers platform.
- Content, **resources**, examples and good practices that can be consulted when creating exhibitions, in order to choose the most suitable display for their artefacts and exhibition setting.

1 TECHNICAL TUTORIAL

In this section we will detail the different functionalities of the Exhibition Generator Platform. This tool has been designed with user-experience in mind, and features implemented are a direct answer to the identified needs.

AN UX APPROACH

We have worked on the Exhibition Generator using personas created from interviews. They represent users of the Platform and help us define their needs. From their needs, we have designed the features of the Platform, the main functionalities and its general feel.

The main elements identified are:

- Our users are teachers and learners, working together to create exhibitions.
- Teachers may have learners with specific needs. They want to find tools adapted to the different difficulties of their learners, which require personalised adaptation.
- Online exhibitions are a good way to hook students to culture, make access to art and add fun to the learning process.
- A key element should be interactivity: getting students involved should improve their interest.
- Contact with European artistic culture should be present to deepen the learners' knowledge about it.
- Having access to exhibitions created by other users.
- A free and personalised tool.
- Users have medium digital skills: they have no problem using an app or internet. But the platform should be accessible and easy to use.

MAIN FEATURES

We will now detail the solutions we have designed to address these key elements.

Users should be able to work together when creating an exhibition. We have decided to have two kinds of users: **Teacher and Classroom**.

Only Teachers can create an account with an email. Everything is **free**. Then, they can create as many Classrooms as they want. A Classroom is a shared account for learners with restricted rights, such as creation or deletion of exhibitions. A Classroom can participate in exhibitions and collections, once created and assigned to them by their Teacher. The idea is to have as little data as possible regarding our users, and especially learners. Classroom accounts are anonymized and managed by a teacher.

To have an **adapted and personalised tool for learners with specific needs**, we've made the platform accessible and responsive in the main languages of the project (English, French, Greek, Polish and Spanish).

The exhibition creation is divided in two steps:

1. **Collections –** Collect images to have an iconography on a specific topic.
2. **Exhibition –** Order elements to create a sequence and an exhibition. Images used come from collections.

The creation process for exhibitions is interactive: we can see the final result while building it. It's straightforward to add new elements to the exhibitions. Creating an exhibition can be done quickly, and it allows you to receive feedback instantly from the choices made.

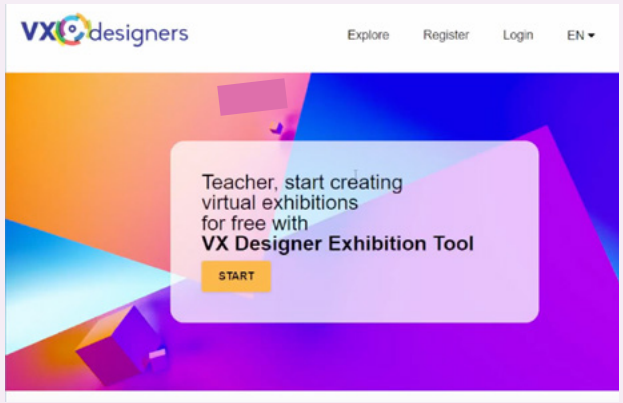
European collections can be accessed freely to build collections of images and collections **directly from the exhibition generator platform. Europeana** is a collection aggregator, and we can browse through their catalogue to create a collection of images.

Once an exhibition is ready, it can be made **public,** and it will appear on the Explore section of the Platform. The exhibition can be seen by any visitor, directly from the homepage or from a shared link. Visitors can learn about new topics, and users of the tool can get inspiration for their own exhibition.

USING THE PLATFORM

To use the Platform, you will need to create and log in with a teacher account, or to log in with a classroom code given by your teacher.

The following steps are also available in **this video:** https://youtu.be/zCs_mR8UA-M .



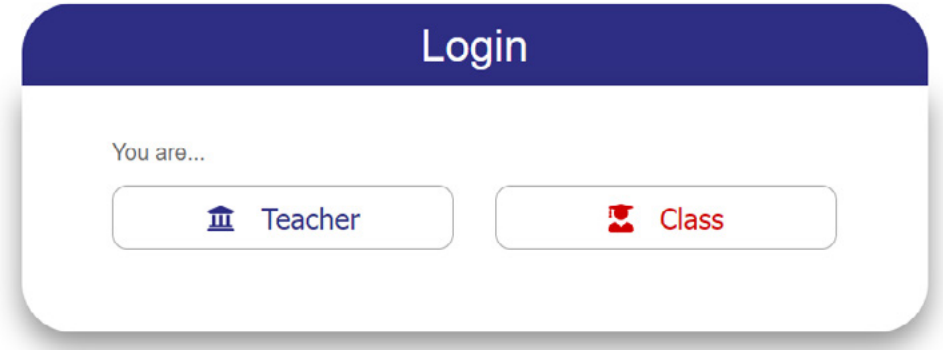
CREATING AN ACCOUNT AND LOGIN

In the header menu, you can **Register** and create an account (1) or **Login** (2) with your credentials.

Only teacher accounts can be created this way. A classroom account is created by a verified teacher (see next section).

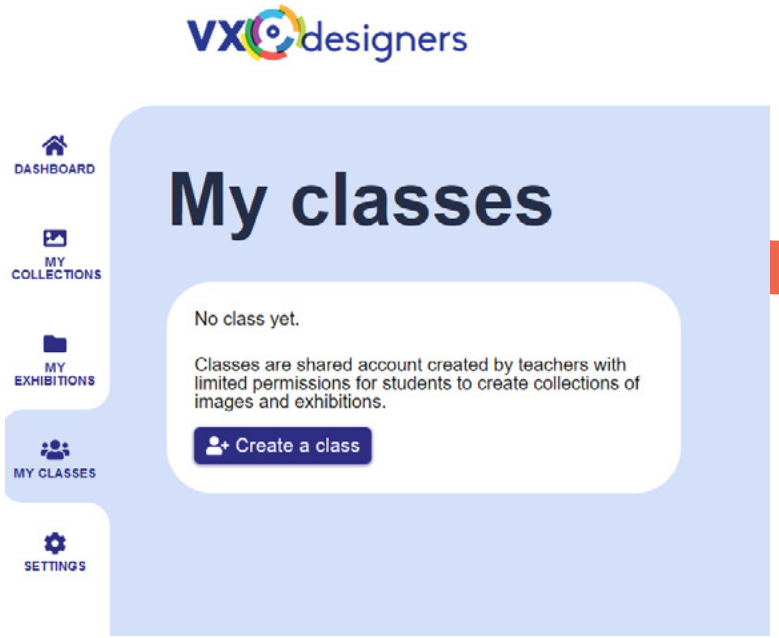
To register a teacher account, you will fill the form with your email address, a strong password, your name, and the name of your school. After reading and agreeing to the terms and conditions, you can create an account. You will receive an email in order to confirm your email address. Once it's done, you can log in.

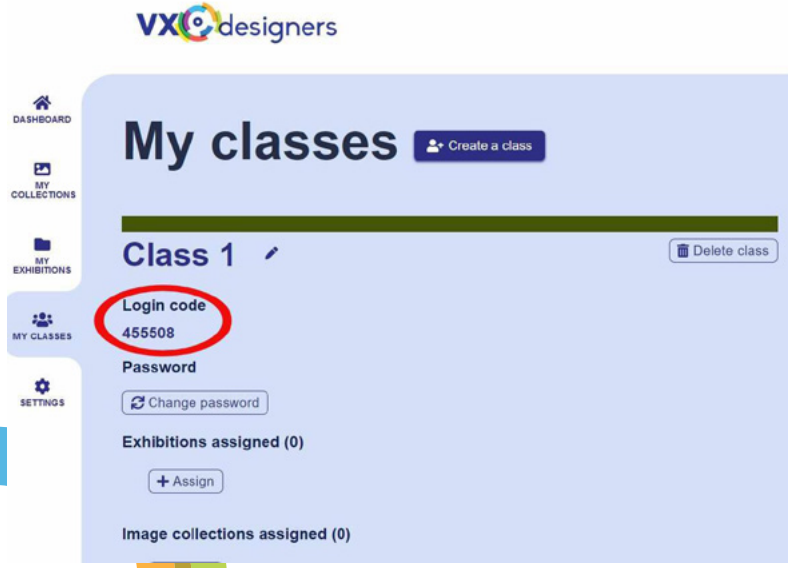
The login page will ask you to pick either Teacher or Class. You can log in as a teacher with your email and password. By selecting "Class", your students can log in with the code and password you will create for them (see next section).



CREATING CLASSROOMS

To create a class account, login as a teacher and select **My Classes** on the side menu. You will be asked for your class name (for you to identify the class quickly) and a password.





Once your class is created, a login code is automatically generated for it. Give this automatic login code and the entered password to your students, so they can log in to the Platform.

A Class account cannot create or delete collections and exhibitions, only participate in them. They cannot see the collections and exhibitions until you assign them through **My Classes** page, or directly from the settings of a collection or exhibition.

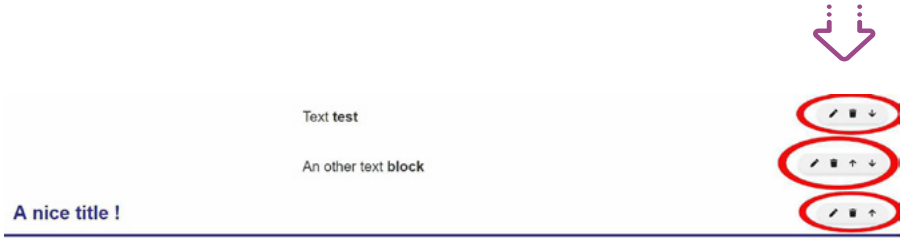
MANAGING A COLLECTION OF IMAGES

- To create a collection of images: click on **Create a collection** directly from the dashboard homepage, or from the page **My collections.**
- To modify a collection: click **Edit** from the collection page or from **My Collections**, listing all your collections.
- To add images to a collection: open the collection page and click **Add new image.** You will be prompted to add images from your devices (images stored on your hard drive for example), or from the Europeana database that can be browsed with keywords.
- To delete an image from a collection: click on the image from the collection page and select **Delete**.
- To delete a collection: go to **My Collections**, and click **Delete** for the target collection. (create, add/remove images, using Europeana, delete collection).

Beware: Any image deleted (or collection containing it) will be deleted from the exhibitions using it. Make sure your images are not used in one of your collections!

MANAGING AN EXHIBITION

- To create an exhibition, click on **Create an exhibition** directly from the dashboard homepage, or from the page **My exhibitions.**
- To modify an exhibition, click **Settings** from the exhibition page.
- To add new elements to an exhibition, open the exhibition page and click the button **+** at the bottom of the page**.** You will be able to choose from different kinds of elements: Title, text block, video or images from your **Collections**.
- To edit, move up or down, or delete an element from your exhibition, click on the corresponding buttons on the right side of it.



- To delete an exhibition, go to **My Exhibitions**, and click **Delete** for the target exhibition.

3 CREATE EXHIBITIONS ONLINE FOR LEARNING

In the next section we are going to explain **why** using the exhibition platform can facilitate learning, **who** can use the Platform, **what** type of exhibitions can be designed, and **how** an online exhibition can be designed in simple steps on the VX Designers Platform.

We are going to guide you through all these questions, however, there is not only one answer, as the process is about finding motivation, starting to define objectives, being creative and letting students be creative too.

Always keep in mind that an exhibition needs previous steps: define the objectives, research and organize, VX Designers Platform is a tool for designing an exhibition, but it should be more than just filling in blank spots.

To find inspiration, don't forget to visit examples of exhibitions and think out of the box. In this Guide you will also find resources with examples that can help you shape your collections and exhibitions.

Let's look at the different ways of using exhibition design for learning:

3.1 WHY USE ONLINE EXHIBITION DESIGN FOR LEARNING?

There are many reasons why and ways in which designing an exhibition is useful in an educational context. Therefore, educators need to define from the beginning why and how they wish to do so.

Exhibitions are an excellent educational tool since they are interactive and creative, can increase learners' engagement and help them deliver curriculum targets along with many other benefits, such as:

- Creating an environment where several pedagogical methodologies can be applied, with an emphasis on active learning, engagement, diversity, and inclusivity, among others.
- Managing technology and innovative teaching tools, developing Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge through the developing and co-curation of online exhibitions.
- Providing activities that also involve external members of the classroom such as families, friends or peers.

You can find more detailed information about how to help students benefit from active learning through exhibitions in the VX Designers Exhibition and School Guide, and for further information about how to organise, manage and develop an exhibition, we recommend the VX Designers Pedagogical Guide.

3.2 WHO CAN USE THE PLATFORM?

As an Exhibition Generator, this Platform can be used by all those involved in the process of co-curating an exhibition:

Educators/teachers to create an environment where to develop collections and exhibitions to be used for one or several classes. The teacher can manage collections and resources depending on the subject or specific research area, and manage the visibility and other administration tools.

Formal and non-formal learners and users who wish to design an exhibition alone or in groups, using the possibilities through the collaborative tools that the VX Designers exhibition generator platform provides.

Learners to co-create an exhibition. Having a learner version of the platform, they can contribute with the process together with educators in order to present a topic, explore a subject or develop a research idea and show the results.

General public or visitors of a private exhibition: once the exhibition is public and can be shared to the public or groups of people related to the class (families, partners, peers).

3.3 WHAT TYPES OF EXHIBITIONS THERE? (HANDOUT FOR LEARNERS)

Here starts the path to create an exhibition, but actually there's not only one way to do it, there are infinite possibilities, you just need to find the one that suits you best.

To know more about the types of exhibitions we can find, take a look at the VX Designers Resource Database where we gathered all you need to set the stage for your exhibition.

The VX Designers Resource Database can be found here: https://vxdesigners.eu/database/

And is divided by the next sections in different tabs:

1. **List of resources to be used for content support:** With thousands of works, artists, categories, and more resources that can be added to the exhibition.
2. **How to design an exhibition:** Basic tips about exhibition design from blogs, videos and experts in the field.
3. **Trends and innovation in digital exhibition design:** To look further in virtual exhibitions.
4. **Professional online exhibitions to get inspired:** Examples for what you will be able to do whether using VX Designers platform or any other tool.
5. **Other platforms and apps to create online exhibitions,** get inspired or go one step further.
6. **Examples of exhibitions** designed for learning.

Beside the above, we also can categorize and organize the exhibitions differently if we use a **Chronological narrative**, for example for History, Art history, Natural history, and so on. As we can see in this example: Virtual version of the exhibition "Every Eye is Upon Me: First Ladies of the United States" by Smithsonian Museum https://firstladies.si.edu/

Another option is to create a **Thematic Narrative**.
Look how different exhibitions are arranged by Google Arts and Culture:
https://artsandculture.google.com/project

And even by colour: https://artsandculture.google.com/color?col=GREEN.

Let's deepen into types of exhibitions:

Curated Online Museum exhibition

A method that is used by many renowned museums, ranging from History to Art, have started creating vibrant online exhibitions of their museums using a variety of interactive tools to engage virtual users. These museum exhibitions offer a curated online walkthrough of the building, allowing virtual users to immerse themselves moving through an interactive copy of the museum. Via this platform, many museums offer a virtual curated tour of the exhibits involving narration whilst being virtually guided through the exhibitions and pieces of work. It is an attempt to recreate the experience one would get from walking through the actual museum, with the narrator acting as a tour guide to accompany you through the museum. To coincide with this experience, many curated online museum exhibitions offer a variety of outputs in order to provide the viewer with a more in depth virtual experience.

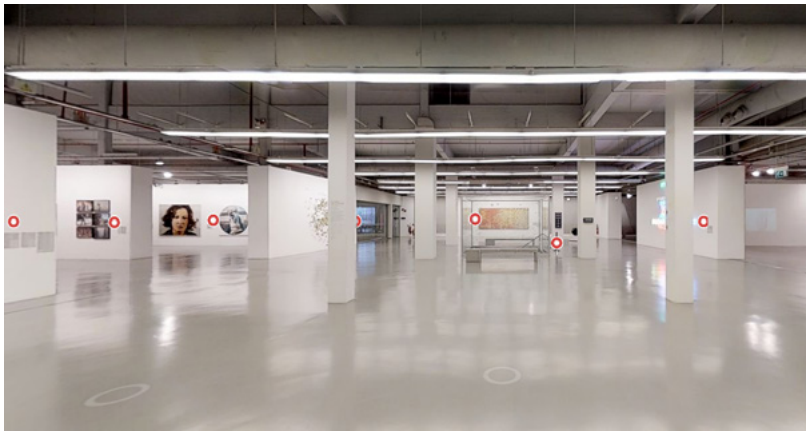
- Narrated museums tour recreations.
- Videos and informative multimedia.
- In-depth virtual displays of work, projects and artefacts.
- Focus on particular exhibits or artists.

Example:
History of Khipus and Empires Undeciphered
Anthropologist Sabine Hyland examines Khipus throughout history
https://artsandculture.google.com/story/RAXhNJOYeqMCyQ

Narrated Museum tour recreations

Narrated museum tours in virtual exhibitions are simulations of what you would experience being guided around the actual museum. They are often accompanied by a narration from the curator of the museum and allow visitors to view and visit the displays within the museum in an entirely virtual experience. Visitors can navigate from room to room and exhibition, occasionally accompanied by other forms of media, in order to ensure that the experience is more immersive.

Example:
Artists in their time
Istanbul Museum of Modern Art
https://www.istanbulmodern.org/virtualtour/



Videos and informative multimedia

Virtual galleries provide a platform to display numerous videos and informative multimedia. Videos are an integral part of virtual exhibitions, as they give an entertaining and captivating form of media to pass on information. They can be used as an explanation for art pieces, historical artefacts, or help create the story of the exhibition. They can also be part of the exhibition itself, displaying performances, animations, and documentary footage. An important feature of videos is also the audio aspect that they can provide, helping recreate the sound of a historical moment, the music to a piece of art or performance.

Example:
"We Speak Hip Hop" the voices of twenty-eight committed artists.
https://www.wespeakhiphop.fr/

In depth virtual displays of artwork, projects, or artefacts

In in-depth virtual displays, opportunities for high resolution and interactive features of artefacts and works of art allow the viewers with never-before seen opportunities to have a closer look at the works of historical greats or surviving artefacts from our past. Examples of this have been done in the Rijksmuseum, creating an interactive version of many of Rembrandt's pieces that allows you to see the cracks in the paintings, the ageing of the ink and different brush strokes used. London's Natural History Museum has many of the artefacts and fossils found available for close examination on their virtual tour that allows users to get a unique view of the relics of our past.

Example:
***The Magic Curve* exhibition presents pieces from two Barcelona Museum of Design collections which focus on the curve.**
https://artsandculture.google.com/exhibit/la-curva-m%C3%A1gica/kgLiW4dNrg55LA

Focus on particular artists and exhibits

Virtual tours of museums will often look to do weekly or monthly events where they highlight the influence or impact of a particular piece of art or an artist. In a virtual exhibition they can easily attach interviews, historical documentation, slideshows, and other interactive associated multimedia to help form a full picture around an artist and his/her work. These

sorts of projects also allow museums to consistently update their audiences and provide new demonstrations with very little cost in comparison to physical campaigns in museums.

Example:
TATE Modern online exhibition for Andy Warhol
https://www.tate.org.uk/whats-on/tate-modern/exhibition/andy-warhol/exhibition-guide

The Artist Website

The artist website is the most immediate form of virtual exhibitions, similar to a solo exhibition. The Artist's website allows individual artists to display their images and artwork in a self-curated online virtual space. Here, artists, again similar to a solo exhibition, can guide visitors through a story or emotional road in order to communicate what the artist wants. This can be through different forms of multimedia. Artists often use their websites as an online space for experimentation as well as a platform to market and share their work.

Example:

Artist website of Njideka Akunyili Crosby

https://www.njidekaakunyilicrosby.com/

Viewing Room

The virtual viewing room, in its function, is very similar to a viewing room in an art gallery. It is an online space that is used to market and sell a limited selection of an artist's work, either to the general public or to selected individuals. They are often temporary web pages that are created quickly with the sole purpose of displaying the selected pieces of art. Viewing rooms allow artists an element of online privacy if so required, and have been used extensively to display particular available pieces. Their role is to be relevant and contemporary to both what the audience is looking for, as well as the current message an artist wants to convey.

Example:

Marketplace for digital works that can be sold with cryptocurrencies

https://rarible.com/

Historical online exhibitions

Historical online exhibitions look to provide a virtual experience to inform their audience of significant historical moments, documentation, and artefacts. The online medium provides historical institutions with numerous options. Historical events, anniversaries or personalities can be the main focus, and a collection of materials can be attributed to that event or person, easily viewed and examined by the audience.

Example:

Virtual gallery to mark 50 years of Earth Day, an annual event held in support of environmental protection.

https://hubs.mozilla.com/JjUpYrj/aa-earth-gallery

Literary Online Exhibitions

Literary Online Exhibitions are largely similar to an online historical exhibition. The virtual platforms can greatly help poets, writers as well as archivists looking to display virtual versions of documentation and the words of poets. Many national libraries and archives with online virtual exhibitions offer the possibility to have extremely close examination of ancient documentation, letters and scripts that would not be possible in physical exhibitions.

Example:
The Getty Book of the Dead
Ancient Egyptian Funerary Texts in the J. Paul Getty Museum
https://artsandculture.google.com/story/ogUheUm1d2fPAg

3.4 HOW TO DESIGN AN EXHIBITION ONLINE?

In this part of the Guide, we will learn how to create an exhibition online.

The VX Designers Exhibition Generator Platform allows you to create, edit and publish your very own exhibition online. In the first phase you have to give it a name, description and featured image:

The name should give an explanation of the topic that is as short as possible. It should also be recognizable, so that your audience will quickly remember the name and relate it to the topic and the creator.

The description contains brief information about the content of the exhibition, its purpose and a short note encouraging people to visit it. This part shouldn't be too long because it cannot make our audience bored and tired. 5-6 sentences are a maximum length.

The featured image – choose one image from your collection. It should represent the topic, draw attention and be recognizable.

After selecting these three parts, you may go into the main part – the content of the exhibition. The exhibition editor gives you three options of content:

Title - this part can be used to divide your exhibition into sections. Exhibitions in the museums often do have different sections of the topic. As the curator of your own exhibition, it is a good practice to do so too. Note that there should not be too many of them though, as there will be more chaos then and the audience will not know what the main topic of your exhibition was.

Image - this part of the exhibition consists of two smaller parts:

- **An image itself –** be it some graphic, famous picture, it all depends on the topic and the kind of the exhibition. You may select an image from one of the collections that you created earlier. Remember that the image should match the topic and the section that it is in.
- **Caption –** the best use of the caption is putting in there the title, author and year of creation of the image.

Text - many exhibitions, aside from the images, also contain texts that give the context of each section and topic of the exhibition. It can also include some inspirations for the audience, some topics to think about, and some directions on the interpretation of the exhibition's images. You may also include your own thoughts and insights. Use it as a guide for the audience, let it encourage people to enjoy the exhibition.
In the following subsections of the guide, you will learn about the basic steps of designing an exhibition online, some practical tips to create your exhibition content and support, important elements to consider for any exhibition and finally, you will get more detailed instructions on how to use the exhibition generator. This part can be printed and handed out to learners.

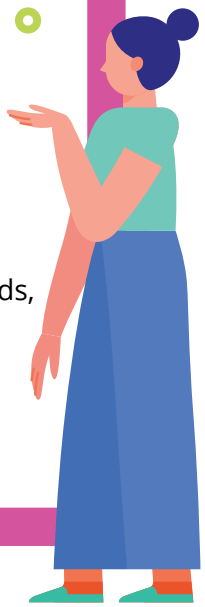
3.4.1 How to design an exhibition?

Basic steps

1 What is it about? - helpful tips for finding the topic

Find the topic you would like to make an exhibition about:

- Gather your thoughts: what are your interests? What do you like to do? Which topic would develop your knowledge?
- If you can't find any topic, ask people around: your parents, teacher. You can also ask your friends, which topic they would like to hear about
- When you find the topic, ask your peers and teacher, what would they like to find out in the exhibition, ask for their feedback.



2 How will it look like? – create a concept first

Before starting to create exhibition on the platform, make a plan:

- You can make concept drawings of your exhibition
- Make a structure plan of your exhibition
- Make a list of contents you would like to put in there

3.4.1 How to design an exhibition?

Basic steps

3 How will you explain your story?

How to put your ideas into logical words?
How to inform people clearly and efficiently?

- Make a list of ideas on how to explain the story of exhibition?
- Things that are difficult to explain – ask for advice from teacher, parents etc.
- Gather your family or friends – and talk in front of them, this way you will be able to see, what should you change in the explanation before the big day of start of exhibition

4 Who is it for?

The most important part of the exhibition – your audience:

- Think first, who is going to your "target", who are you making your exhibition for?
- Is the whole audience using your native language? If not, consider English version of your exhibition too
- Is it for the younger audience or older one? Make sure to adjust your content, your expla nations and words you are using, in order to draw attention from your target group

3.4.1 How to design an exhibition?

Basic steps

5 Why are you designing it?

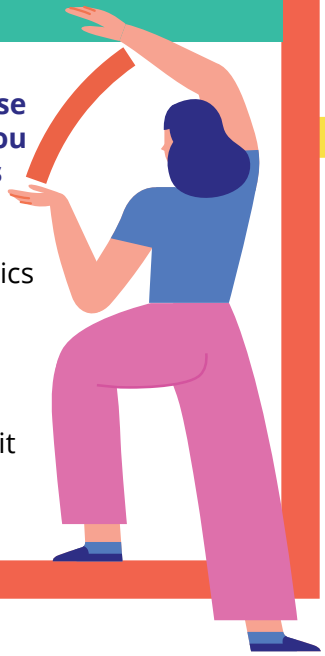
Why this topic? Asking "why" always makes you think critically about the exhibition and lets you make it even more perfect:

- Is it because of your interests/hobbies?
- Maybe it is because you would like to learn something new?
- Or maybe, you are an expert in this topic and would like to pass the knowledge to the others?

6 What resources do you have?

Your exhibition should be of course possible to create – that means you have to consider all the resources that are or are not available:

- Are there all the images and graphics that you need?
- Do you want to include the texts?
- If not, try to find a substitution for it



3.4.2 Practical tips to create your exhibition content and support

Writing an introduction to your exhibition. Exhibitions tell stories. These can be realized through different objects, sounds, text, models, specimens, pictures, etc. In order for your audience to understand your whole exhibition, you need to write an introductory text to explain what it is about. This text panel should not exceed 200-300 words. Make it short and sweet! Your introduction should explain what your exhibition is about and why it is of interest. Remember to make your viewers eager and curious to explore what you have created! Another tip is to explain the theme/meaning of each section under each of your section panels (if you have any). This should also be less than 200 words each (Australian Museum, 2021). Introductions can start off with a catchy, rhetorical question that is to be answered in the following text. Brevity, here, is key.

"Effective labels and effective exhibitions are unique combinations of variables that together can enhance or deter communication" (Serrell, 1996: 234).

Writing a caption for your display. Labels are useful for sharing information to visitors about what is on display. Especially when it comes to online exhibits, since the visitor is not able to physically touch the object at hand, it is important to accurately describe the exhibit – through labels. Additionally, labels should include the name of the object/specimen, the date of creation/collection (if relevant), a brief description, and its story. Overall, this text is there to interest the audience – therefore, you need to keep it brief, use short sentences (2-3 sentences) and be consistent with the other labels. You may take this for granted, but it's always important that the labels are about what you are looking at and not about something else. A common phenomenon is that visitors often skip the labels. This is why they should be kept short and interesting for better chances of capturing the audience's attention (Gould Library, 2020).

Designing inclusive exhibitions. When curating an exhibition, inclusion should be a key consideration. Inclusivity consists of several axes such as ability, generational differences, language, gender and the physical environment (Hollman, 2018). We have identified some key questions that should be asked by the curator during the exhibition design:

- What pieces and artists should be included? Should some pieces not be included? If so, what is our rationale for making this decision?
- Does the exhibition develop digital interactives that are also inclusive of all abilities?
- How is empathy developed in the exhibition? Are the exhibits / artists' experiences properly honoured?
- Does the exhibition contain a single story or multiple narratives?

Exhibits, at their core, can and should advance new ways of being through critical dialogue, collaborative practices and community building – where possible (Incluseum, 2014). Inclusion can be as simple as including exhibits who were made by people from marginalized populations and/or diverse groups of people. This is an often-overlooked aspect of exhibition design and is a significant consideration that can also attract wider audiences.

Capturing your audience. Exhibitions should aim to place visitors at the heart of the experience. This is also in relation to the concept of inclusiveness. Murphy (2016) points out that nowadays, museums especially, are beginning to appreciate the fact that 'not all visitors are the same [...] attempting to define a variety of experiences from a visit to their organisation and cater to the needs and tastes of a diverse audience". Additionally, in 2015 Microsoft revealed that humans' attention spans have fallen to an average of 8 seconds, describing the changing nature of people's sensitivity to information (Artsy Editors, 2016). This makes it even more challenging to design exhibitions that can capture wider and more diverse audiences. Immerse experiences are always very effective in this regard as well as the use of gamification. This is because audiences become participants, which is always interesting and engaging for them. Also, embracing smartphone culture is a good way of embracing modern technology while, at the same time, integrating people's lifestyle in an exhibit. Additionally, integrating 'trending' topics, like climate change, can help guarantee wider participation.

"Virtual exhibitions are online events that are organized on a web-based comprehensive virtual exhibition platform" (Gaskins, 2021).

Designing the layout of your online space. Virtual exhibitions can be both very limiting but also very liberating in terms of space. The layout you choose for your exhibition will be depending on the meaning you wish to convey and the order in which you want your audience to view your exhibits. You can choose a linear layout, where the audience can follow the exhibits one by one and where one leads to the other to 'tell a story'. You can also choose to show independent messages, like an open path design where the audience has access to all types of messages and can choose which one to open/access first and where there is no 'logical' order to follow. The format of the exhibition is also key: Will it be a 3D or 2D space? Cepeda (2021) identifies some virtual exhibition formats, such as, social media art galleries, webpages, premade virtual spaces, Augmented Reality (AR), and virtual tours/ virtual spaces (i.e., street view galleries, 3D spaces [Minecraft, Second Life, Unreal Engine]) and VR spaces. The format will depend on your individual needs for the exhibition and you should weigh in on the pros and cons of each method to decide what will be best for your own purposes.

3.4.3 Important elements to consider for any exhibition

ACCESSIBILITY
How to be inclusive in your design, consider how to be inclusive in the design process and for your audience

The purpose of any exhibition is to communicate, to transfer knowledge, emotions, stories, beauty... that is the reason why it is essential to make sure that your message is clear and that most of the audience can understand and have access to it. In this section, we will give you some good tips to help you design an exhibition that is understandable and accessible for all!

People are diverse, this means that each person has different interests, skills, learning styles, and of course, different backgrounds and needs. The first thing to consider here is a structured work with clear guidelines and organised ideas, so your audience can follow without having doubts about what they are seeing and learning. To do so, you should keep in mind the goals of your exhibition to ensure that everybody understands them as well. A note listing the key points that you want to transmit can be helpful to organise your work.

In order to be clear, you can suggest a path for travelling through your exhibition, since learning becomes much easier when we can follow a structured presentation. You can use headings, storylines, themes, or elements that repeatedly appear to establish landmarks. Do not forget about providing instructions about your labels and path to enable the audience to better understand the topic you are presenting.

Also, it is crucial to make your visual material accessible. To do so, make sure that you follow these guidelines:

- Your text is in a legible font, it is large enough, and it is presented in high contrast with its background. Also, you should avoid italics or decorative fonts. That is why you will find out that the writing options on the platform are limited to ensure legibility.
- Images are supported by a description. In addition, it is important to keep your sentences short and concise.
- Don't add too many images or text to prevent your public from getting confused and give clear instructions.

Furthermore, to design an inclusive exhibition, you must think of representing diversity through your items. Think about studying varied sources and getting inspiration from different cultures, lifestyles, social origins, and types of people. Diversity is rich and will upgrade your exhibition by showing equity and parity values.

COPYRIGHT & COPYLEFT

Explain what it is, why it is important, (maybe include here also: referencing authorship, bibliography etc.)

When working on your online exhibition, you have to bear in mind other important elements, such as where you get your content and items from, if they are freely available to use, and how you should use them. These ideas relate to the terms “copyright” and “copyleft”, have you ever heard of them?

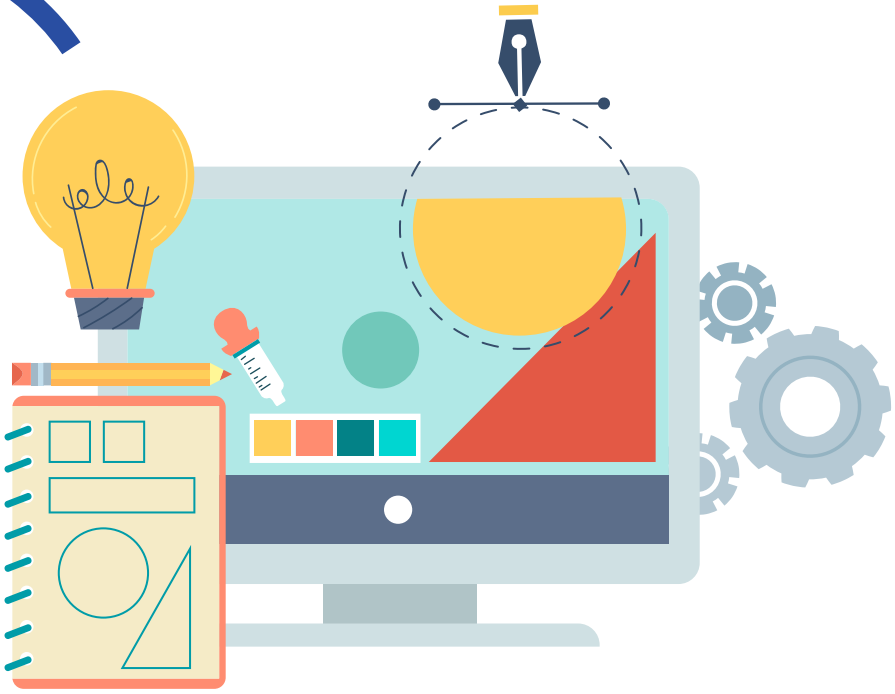
Maybe you would like to create your own items, but often, we will use materials created by other people. Many free, open and available resources come together with this guide; however, you can always look for different ones that you prefer to include in your exhibition. In this case, you need to be aware of the concept of copyright: a law that gives the owner or author of a work (photography, song, film, book, painting...) the right to say if their work can be copied or used by other people and how. Sometimes, if you want to use a specific image or material with copyright, you won’t be able to, or you will need to pay for it. That is why we recommend using open sources and items thanks to Creative commons. This is a practice that gives users the right to modify and distribute a work (or intellectual property) with different conditions, as for example not getting any financial benefit out of it, which means that the copyleft must always be preserved.

When using materials from other authors, it is always important to mention the authorship for different reasons:

1. In terms of honesty and integrity, it is fair to give the author the recognition of his or her work.
2. It allows your public to find out who created the piece of art/idea you are showing or debating, which will help them fully understand your exhibition or even do further research.
3. References are aimed to differentiate which content and ideas come from you and those that are someone else’s. This evidences your understanding of the topic and can support your arguments and ideas.

SUSTAINABILITY
good practice in using online space/resources (optimise images, delete unnecessary content etc.)

When we talk about online exhibitions, we talk at the same time about images, videos, texts... all of which need to be stored. The digital sector and the Internet are usually linked to greener practices since, in general, they help us reduce our energy consumption and the use of paper. However, what should we do to avoid a significant environmental and climate change impact when working on our online exhibition through the VX Designers platform?



The most important thing you can do is to be reasonable with the number of materials you store, it also makes your exhibition more accessible.

- The more photos or data you keep in your online storage (in this case, the VX Designers' platform), the more energy the server consumes; that is the reason why the platform has a weight limit of 2MB per image.
- Be efficient during your design process, select the relevant elements you want to use in your exhibition and don't keep those you are not exhibiting.
- Another tip to save energy is to adjust the quality of your images and videos (sometimes HD is not essential), not displaying videos automatically, turning off and unplugging your electronic devices when you are not using them.
- Reducing the time you spend on your computer and phone: disconnecting from time to time is not only good for you but also for the planet!

MANDATORY SECTION
AND HOW TO PRESENT INSTRUCTIONS

To summarise the main elements that you need to consider for your exhibition, remember the following :

To include an introduction where you explain to your audience the context of your exhibition and some elements they will find while navigating it. This will help the users understand the exhibition purpose.

It is essential to add some precise sentences, images or infographics as guidelines or instructions to explain to your public how to “read” and visit your exhibition. The different parts, how each part is signposted, the meaning of the different symbols or labels used... all the information that can be useful to interpret and understand your online exhibition.

A conclusion at the end of your exhibition content is also fundamental, since you will be able to highlight the main points that you want your public to recall.

Finally, do not forget to include your bibliography or references and authoring of all the items and ideas exposed in your online exhibition.

3.4.4 The different elements available on the VX Designers exhibition generator platform

This part includes information about each section of the exhibition creation platform and its practical uses, in order to design an **innovative** online exhibition.

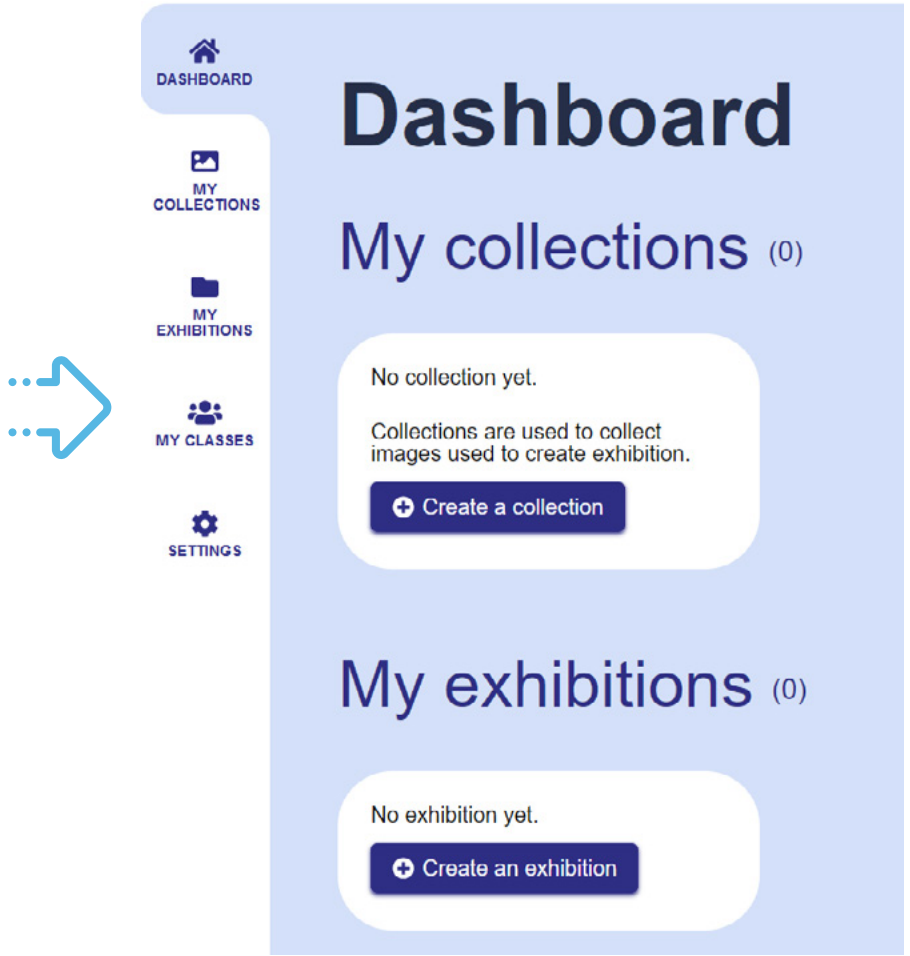
Exhibition creation roadmap

The exhibition generator is composed of two main tools: **Collections** of images, and **Exhibition** creation. Collections are required to add images to Exhibitions in order to manage and order artworks.

If there is no exhibition or collection, the platform invites the teacher to create a new one.

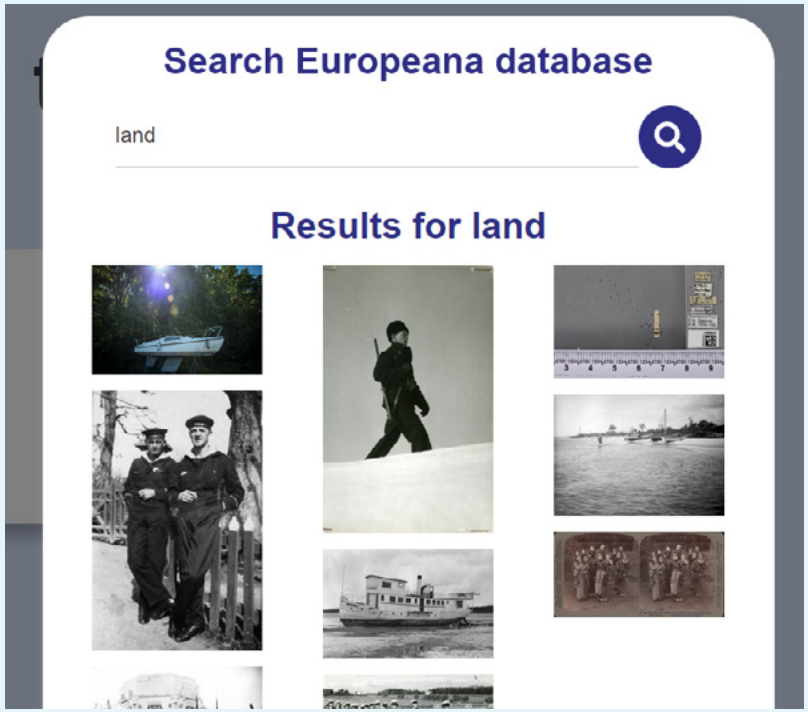
By first collecting images in collections, the tool has some advantages for collaboration.

- It's easier to divide tasks. Some users can be dedicated to create a set of coherent images, while others are assigned to sequencing in an exhibition.
- Collecting images has its own pedagogical contribution, and separating it to exhibition creation helps to conceptualise further exhibitions.



Collections

Collections are in themselves a powerful tool to learn about art and culture, and to develop curation skills. Users can upload images from their device (computer, phone, tablet...) or pick an image from the Europeanadatabase.



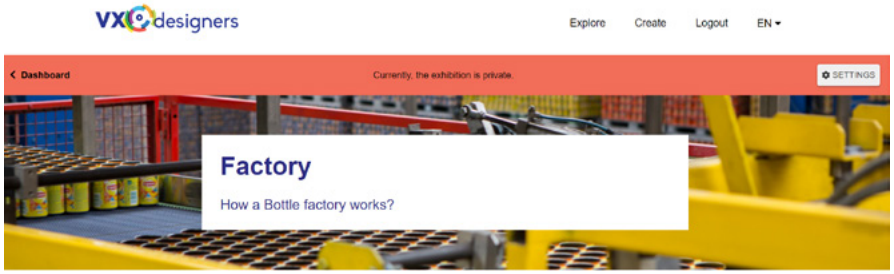
An image has a caption and a source. It will be automatically completed if it's imported from the Europeana database, the user will fill these fields otherwise.

Exhibitions

Private exhibitions can be modified and several elements can be added to it: mainly texts under different forms, and images.

Images

A banner at the top of the exhibition welcomes the visitor and is a first hint to the theme of the exhibition. It can be changed in the exhibition settings.



The caption and source of an image will be imported when selecting it from a collection. It is important to have these fields, as it adds contexts and credits the right holders for legal purposes.

Images can be JPEG, PNG or GIF images, as long as they are lighter than 2Mb. GIF images are a good way to add animation to your exhibition without adding a large video. PNGs are useful for transparent images.

Texts and Titles

In addition to the caption and source of images, we can add texts as titles and text blocks.

Titles will create a rhythm and divide the sequence in parts.

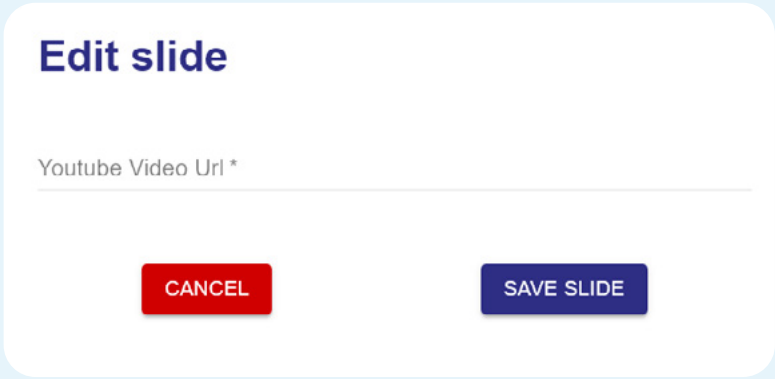
Text blocks can give more information about an artwork, or open discussion and add context.

There is a common editorial approach to all exhibitions, and for accessibility and readability concerns, formatting is not available. We want to ensure all the exhibitions of the platform have the same feel and are standardized. Regarding the user's expectations (see 2. Technical Tutorial), the interactive exhibition creation tool focus more on accessible content and less on formatting.

Videos

You can add videos to your exhibition. Videos must be hosted on Youtube and publicly accessible. Just paste the Youtube URL of the video (starting with **https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=**...)

Videos can be documentaries, interviews, educational videos or a soundtrack. This is a great way to add more dynamic information. You could add videos with sound only, if you want to add sounds to your exhibitions.



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+ Info about the project and other #VXdesigners resources:

https://vxdesigners.eu/