

App aims to make cultural heritage interesting and interactive

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The app, called COOLTURA, has been designed for mobile devices through the EU-funded TAG CLOUD project (due for completion at the end of January 2016). The app allows users to access and use cultural content from the cloud-based COOLTURA platform.

The project taps into the potential of smartphones and [mobile devices](#). The concept is that mobile features such as geo-location and real time interaction can be used to provide personalised up-to-date and interactive cultural heritage content, in real time.

'The main objective of the TAG CLOUD project has been to enable more active cultural engagement,' explains project coordinator Dr Maria Fernanda Cabrera-Umpierrez from the Technical University of Madrid

in Spain. 'This will help to open up learning about cultural heritage.'

The COOLTURA app is currently available for smartphones and tablets and can be integrated with wearable devices (such as the Apple Watch). In the future, says Cabrera-Umpierrez, COOLTURA could be integrated with other devices to engage customers with [cultural heritage](#) in different environments, such as at home (e.g. with a Smart TV), on site or during a visit.

Cloud computing is about sharing computing resources rather than having local servers or personal devices handle each individual application. In this sense, 'cloud' is a metaphor for 'the Internet,' where services—such as servers, storage and applications—are delivered to an organisation's computers and devices through the internet.

This means that high performance computing power to perform tens of trillions of computations per second can be tapped into for consumer-oriented applications.

'TAG CLOUD uses the cloud to provide an adaptive cultural experience according to user interests, likes and habits,' explains Cabrera-Umpierrez. 'Visitors benefit from receiving a personalised cultural experience, and enjoy a more interactive cultural visit. The innovation will also help cultural institutions attract more visitors, and by getting a better insight into visitor preferences, help them to improve and adapt their exhibitions.'

Indeed, a central aim of the project has been to increase the active participation of general public in cultural events and experiences, by inviting them to contribute with new content and opinions and to share information, before, during and after a visit. Cultural heritage institutions often use a range of digital technologies in order to attract, engage and retain visitors, but often success is limited. TAG CLOUD

opens up the possibility of interactive engagement.

A second app – Stedr – was also developed by the TAG CLOUD team. This app is designed for discovering, creating and sharing digital stories related to places, and to fuse traditional digital storytelling with social media. While COOLTURA is now available for download, Stedr is not yet fully ready for market.

The COOLTURA concept was successfully deployed at three pilot sites: the monument complex of the Alhambra and Generalife in Spain; the Barber Institute of Fine Arts in the UK; and the County of Sør Trøndelag in Norway. In order to leave a sustainable legacy, the TAG CLOUD team expects that the concept will be rolled out at other sites, in order to reach a wider audience of end users and cultural institutions.

More information: For further information please visit TAG CLOUD project website: www.tagcloudproject.eu/

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