Design Methods as Tools to Support Management of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

Lubomira Trojan, PhD

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Introduction

Dynamic changes are taking place in the understanding of cultural heritage. Any output of people is considered to be heritage now and its use is determined by its users. **Heritage is now treated as a resource as well as a process that can be shaped according to the needs of the audience** (Ashworth, 2015).

Introduction

Intangible cultural heritage (ICH) includes traditions or living expressions inherited from our ancestors and passed on to our descendants, such as oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe or the knowledge and skills to produce traditional crafts (UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, 2003).

Introduction

The use of heritage in regional development requires conscious and effective heritage management. **It implies conscious, responsible and well-considered decision-making based on thorough knowledge regarding cultural heritage in order to make the best use of it for the public good** (Gutowska, 2000).

Managing intangible heritage means not only protecting it, but also exploiting its development potential.

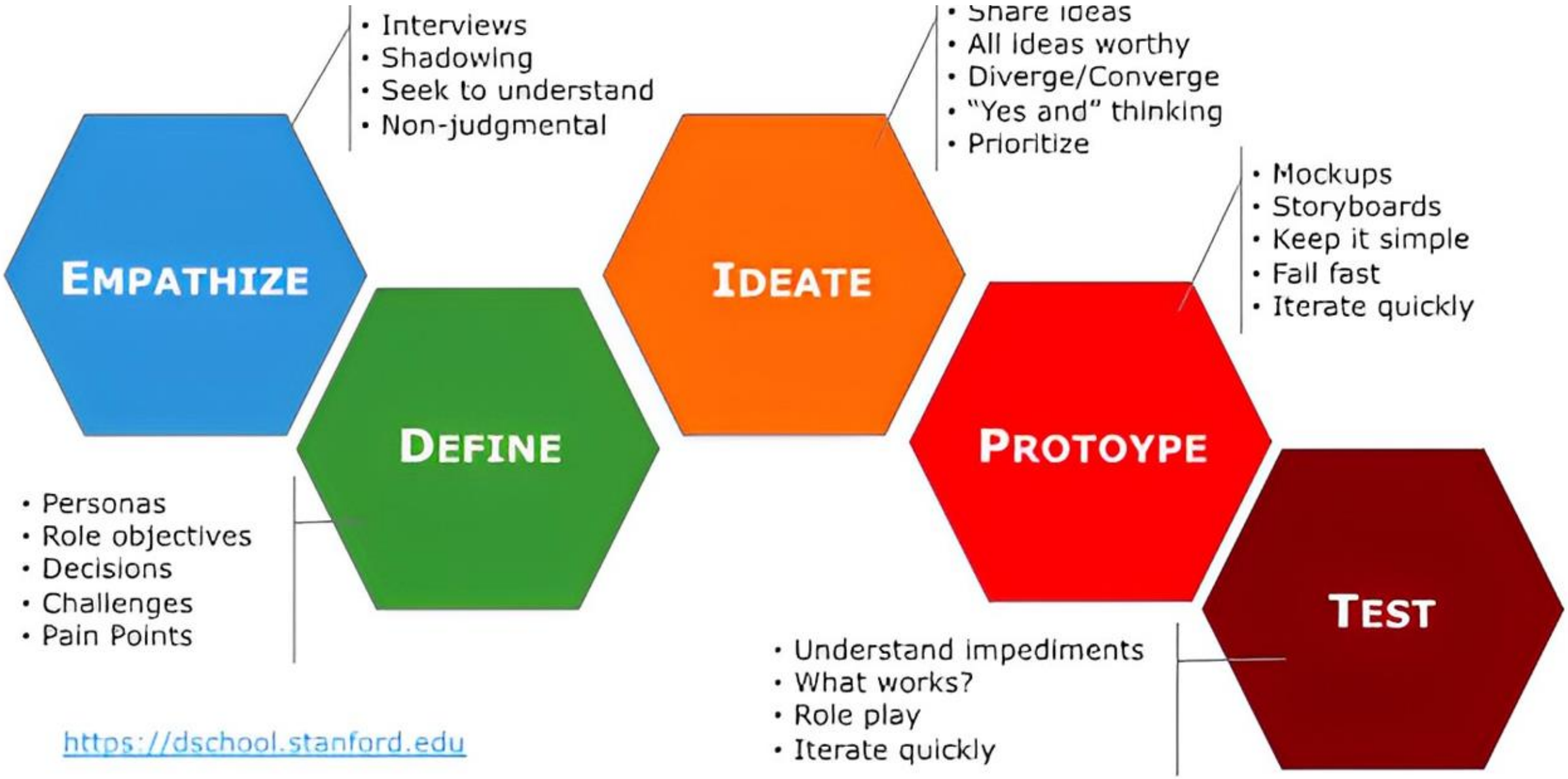
Heritage development can be understood as different forms of making heritage accessible, promoting it, and creating new products, services and processes based on it (European Cultural Heritage Strategy for the 21st Century, 2018).

Heritage management models emphasise the importance of **asking questions** about the role of heritage for depositor communities and **involving people** in its conservation and development (Chabiera, Kozioł, Skaldawski, 2016).

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The ability to discover and respond to societal needs requires an integrated, interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral approach to cultural heritage. Such a holistic view is offered by the **design thinking and service design methods**, which has been extracted from the field of design and is increasingly applied in entrepreneurship and social life (Brown, 2009; Rudkin Ingle, 2015).

Design thinking process



Service design can be defined as the process of creating and improving services so that they meet the expectations and needs of the recipients (Stickdorn et al., 2018).

This requires taking a multidisciplinary, holistic approach based on the cooperation of the actors involved in the shaping of these services (Badr, 2023), as well as taking into account the experience and expectations of the recipients of these services (Ashworth and Larkham, 1994; Pistola et al., 2021).

Research question:

How can design methods support management of living heritage?

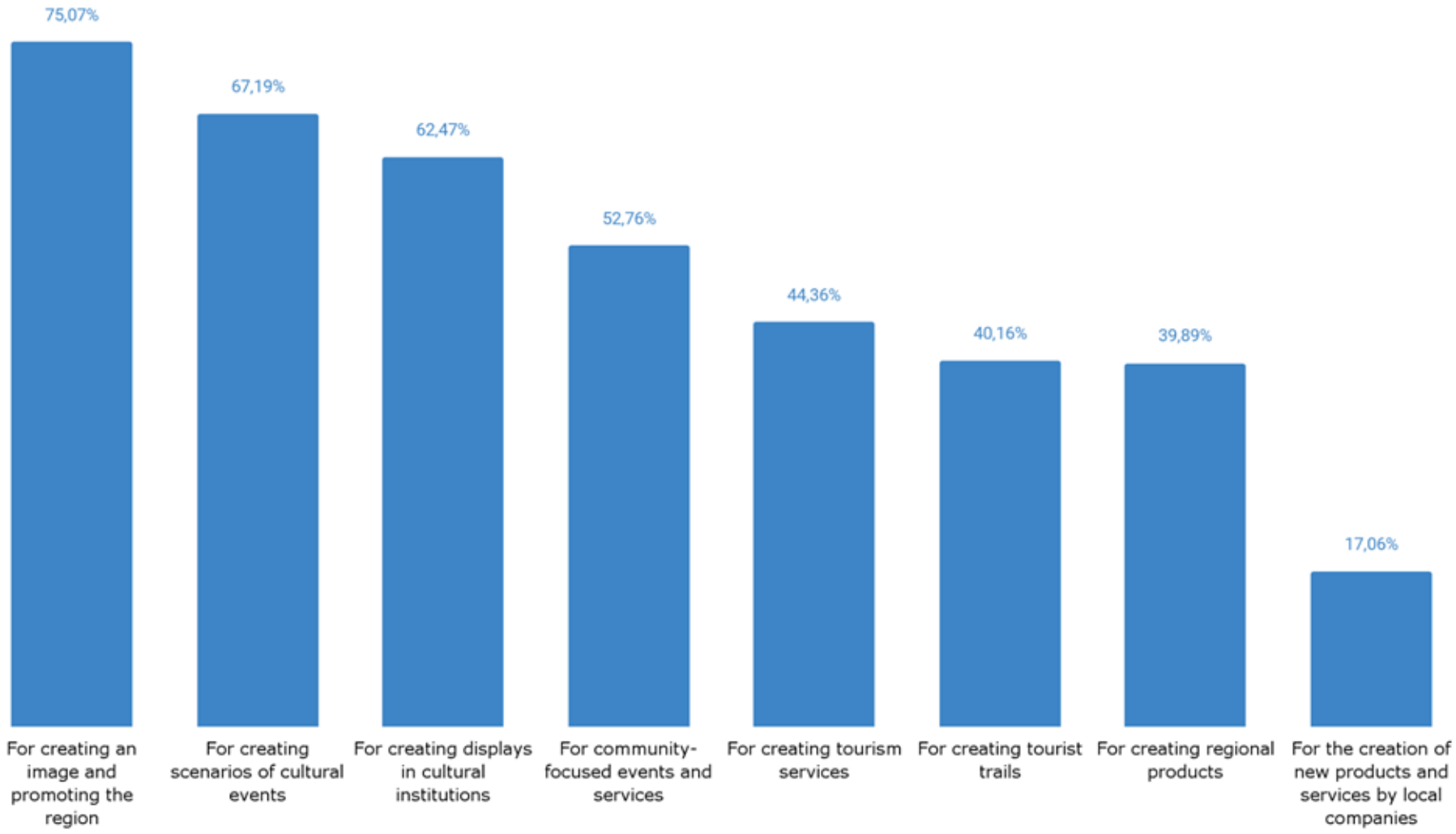
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Methodology:

The research process was based on triangulation of methods and consisted of quantitative and qualitative research, comprising the following:

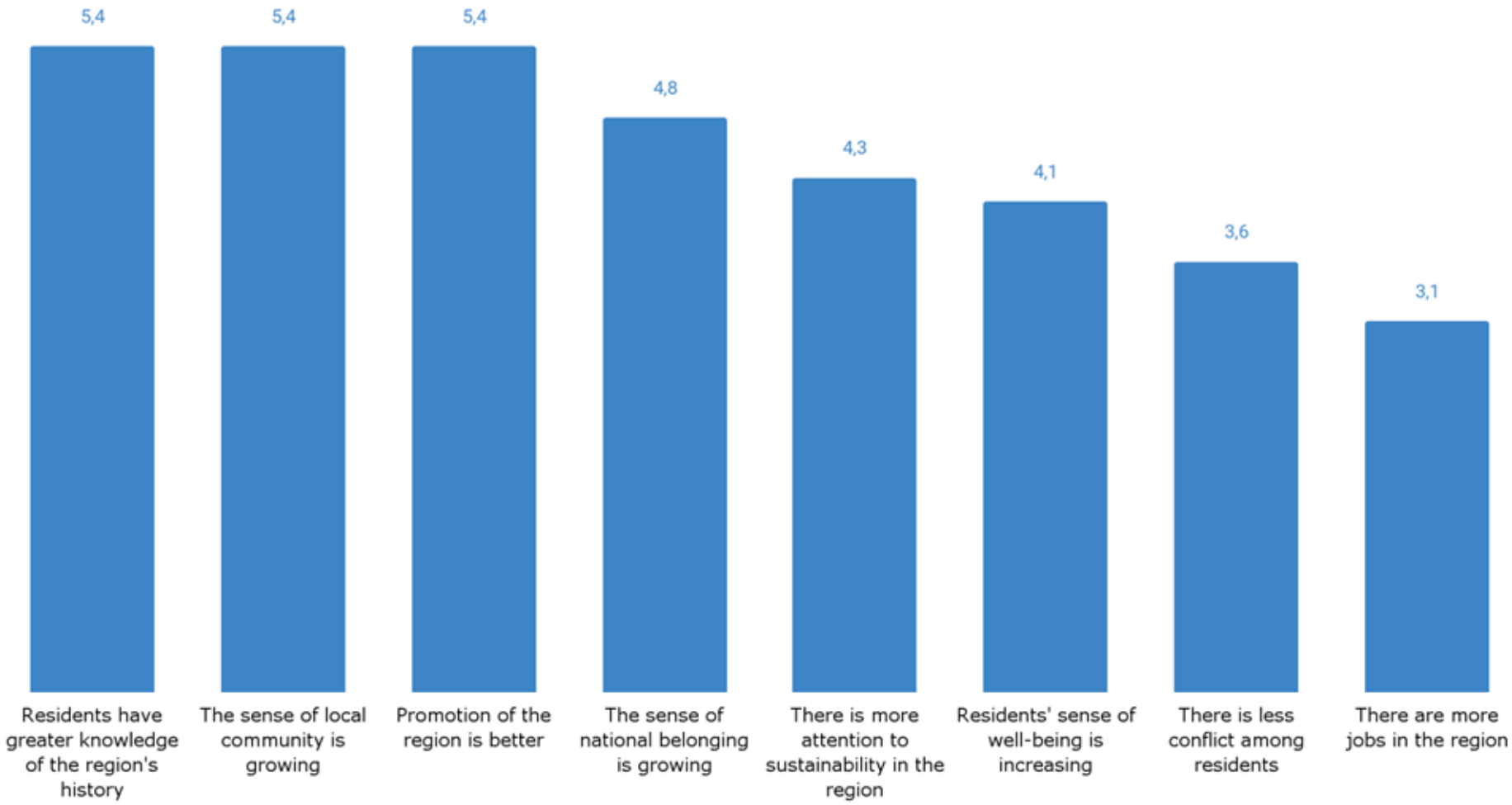
- 381 questionnaire-based surveys among entities that have in the spectrum of their activities areas related to the preservation of cultural heritage. These included representatives of cultural institutions, non-governmental organisations and local government administration;
- quasi scientific experiment – workshop in the field of crafts in the region called Śląsk Cieszyński;
- semi-structured in-depth interviews;
- non-participant direct observation.

Purposes for which the ICH is used in the regions:



Source:
own study

Impact on the development of a region of the activities undertaken by the institutions for the protection and development of the ICH:

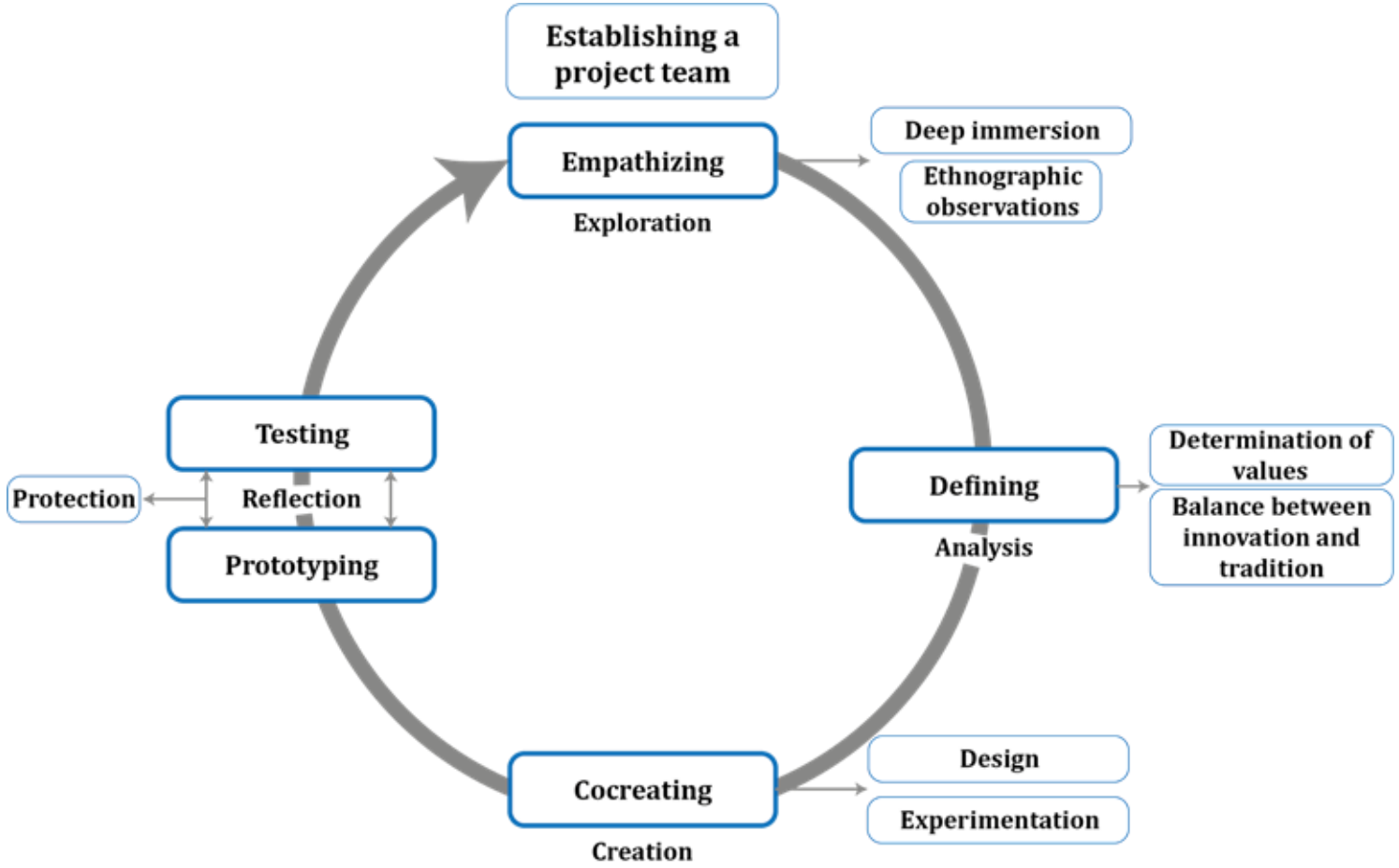


Source:
own study

Part of the research process included the development of a proprietary design thinking process model for the ICH area

The assumptions:

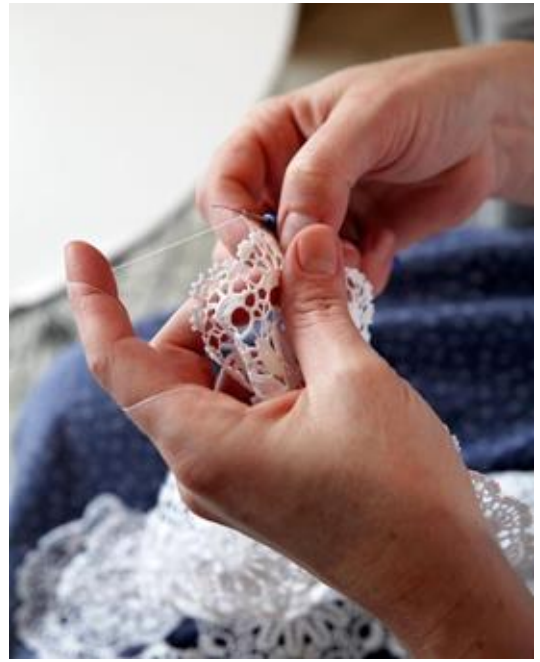
- a holistic approach to heritage,
- the focus of the process on people and their understanding of heritage,
- the circular nature of the process, illustrating the fluidity of the stages,
- key stages of the process: empathizing (emphasis on the use of ethnographic methods) and defining (the need for a good design challenge was emphasised);
- selecting an appropriate facilitator and establishing a project team with a defined composition;
- combining two stages: prototyping and testing.



Source: own study











Cieszyn, Silesia region, Poland



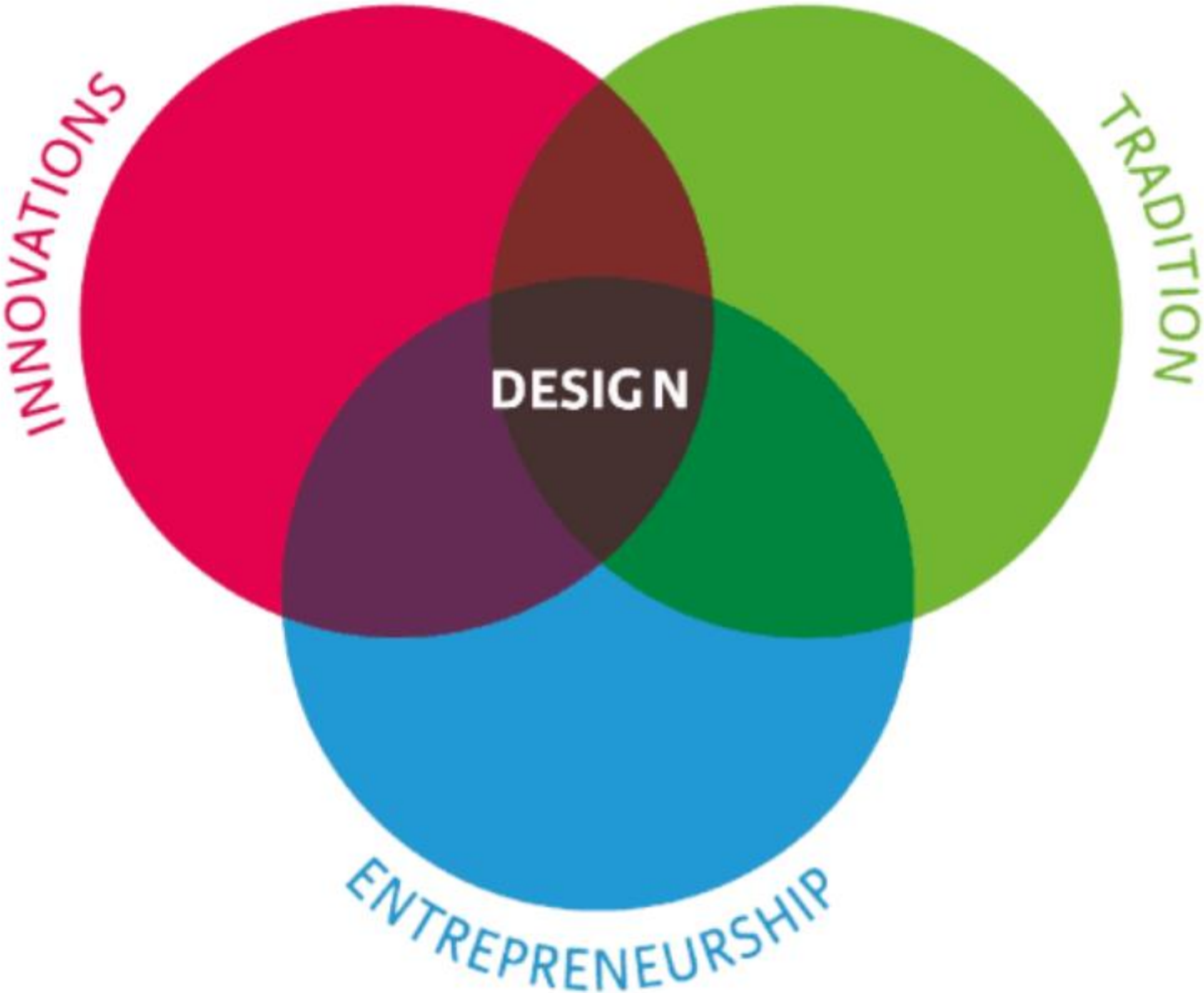


Results of the design thinking workshop

The problem	Design Challenge	Proposed solution
Lack of cooperation and trust between craftsmen and city hall, people responsible for promoting the city and supporting entrepreneurs	How do we make craftsman want to support each other and take advantage of formal support?	"Craftsman's club" - an association grouping representatives of all stakeholders in the region, a place to exchange experiences
Low public awareness of the nature of craft work, importance of this work in the community	How can we change awareness of the role and value of crafts?	"Secret tradition" - a new tourist service, combining promotion of local artisans, study visits to craftsmen, workshops, living contact with heritage.
Lack of intergenerational transmission of craft skills	How can we persuade the younger generations to continue the crafts and motivate artisans to be active in the field?	"Craft Experience Garden" - a place offering lively meetings, workshops and opportunities to experience crafts.
Insufficient time spent together by families	How do you integrate families while promoting traditional crafts?	"Rosette" - a field game, aimed at families, the scenario of which is based on the heritage of woodcarving and symbolism of the rosette motif important for the pastoral culture of Cieszyn Silesia.

Solutions for the regional development:

- promoting and transmitting the values of the ICH,
- creating new experiences and tourism offerings for domestic tourists,
- creating relationships with the public,
- creating new experiences and tourist offer for international tourists,
- creating new experiences and leisure offers for local residents,
- intergenerational transfer of skills and ICH,
- income-generating production and sale of ICH accompanying products,
- creating local ties,
- creating family ties,
- promotion of the region ,
- shaping the public space,
- intra- and inter-institutional cooperation,
- promotion of physical activity,
- promotion of a sustainable lifestyle.


INNOVATIONS
TRADITION
DESIGN
ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Conclusions:

Results of research confirm that the use of design methods in the management of intangible cultural heritage brings added value, because:

- it influences the emergence of tangible and intangible solutions,
- it equips heritage managers with tools to improve their work,
- it brings solutions closer to the needs of the users,
- it strengthens the belief in the importance of the occurrence of intangible cultural heritage for a region,
- it strengthens the desire among depositors and heritage managers to protect heritage,
- it strengthens the social ties of depositors.

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