The impacts of Valletta 2018 - Initial findings

Theme 5 - The Valletta Brand

Audiences’ experiences of the Valletta 2018 brand

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This study aims to offer an insight into how audiences engage with the different forms of communication forming part of the Valletta 2018 communications programme. Building upon the findings of the Valletta Participation Survey, this research will investigate the active and passive audience engagement with the Valletta 2018 brand.

Methodology: A mixed methods approach involving real time experience tracking (Baxendale et al., 2015; Macdonald et al., 2012) subsequent to exploratory focus group discussions about audiences perceptions on encounters and experiences with the Valletta 2018 brand. The real time experience tracking data collection will include a sample size of 400 participants.

Results to date: The custom-made interactive application which will be used for real time experience tracking, is currently in the process of testing and envisaged to be ready for data collection in quarter 2 2016.

Way forward: Exploratory focus group discussions to establish how audiences engage with different Valletta 2018 brand touchpoints will be held in the first quarter of 2016. The RET app will be launched in the first quarter of 2016 and data collection through this app will take place between May and June 2016.

Concluding remarks

The Evaluation and Monitoring process started in 2015 and will conclude in 2019. This is a long-term process which will help the Valletta 2018 Foundation, and the cultural sector as a whole, better understand the impacts of the prestigious title of European Capital of Culture. This research process is a valuable tool in terms of the implementation of the ECoC and in ensuring that the Foundation is in line with the needs and motivations of local communities and cultural practitioners. The Foundation will be further reviewing the results of the first year of the research in order to address the challenges within the cultural sector and continue developing a strong and inclusive cultural programme for 2018.