



MUSEUM JAMS IN RECORDING RECENT HISTORY PHENOMENA

**Finnish Postal Museum
Finnish Museum of Games
Media Museum Rupriikki**

Work model for organising Museum Jams

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Finnish Heritage Agency, Innovative Projects

[#museojamit](#)

POSTAL MUSEUM

VAPRIIKKI
THE FINNISH MUSEUM OF GAMES
MEDIA MUSEUM RUPRIIKKI

WHAT IS THE MUSEUM JAM WORK MODEL?

Museum Jam is a work model developed for the use of museums to reach and record the phenomena of recent history. The model is particularly suitable for capturing the memory information of development and creative professionals and involving them in related museum work. The Museum Jam work model can be tailored to the needs of busy key individuals working in these fields and to saving their memory information with the minimum of delay.

The work model has been adapted from the gaming industry's Game Jam events, where gaming professionals come together and form ad hoc teams to develop a game, for example, over a weekend. The end result of such Game Jams is more or less finished games.

Museums, on the other hand, bring together key individuals involved in a recent past phenomenon to remember, share their knowledge, donate the material they have collected to a museum collection and/or plan a museum exhibition. Like Game Jams, the aim is for the atmosphere of Museum Jams to be relaxed and informal. The results may also be surprising. Jamming therefore requires total engagement and transparency on the part of those involved.

Memory information has traditionally been collected in museums through interviews. Compared with individual interviews, the advantage of Museum Jams is their agility and capacity to reach a wide group of memory contributors with relatively few resources. Museums organising Museum Jams do not need to know as much about the topics in advance compared with a situation in which they would collect information using separate interviews. The museum's role is to guide the discussion, not to interview those present. This makes the Museum Jam method suitable for quick responses: a Museum Jams can be set up quickly and used to survey in an agile way recent

phenomena or gather context information for item donations.

The work model is also suitable for involving informants in, for example, the museum's exhibition work. In addition to the recorded memory information, the end result of Museum Jams may be, for example, an exhibition concept, exhibition plan or exhibition elements plan related to this memory information.

The Museum Jam concept also offers something to informants familiar with the recent history topic: an opportunity to see old acquaintances and chat with them on a common subject. Nostalgia and fun are also positive aspects. Informants who share their memory information perceive that the museum values them and a subject that interests them, making them feel that their own history is important.

Although the aim is to organise Museum Jam events in as relaxed a way as possible, the main goal of the events, however, is always to collect and record information. The events are generally recorded in their entirety, including unstructured discussions.

The idea of the Museum Jam work model is also to make the material and information recorded at the events as widely available as possible.

This guide outlines the Museum Jam work model from a practical perspective. In its chapters, the work model is presented stage by stage, from the selection of a topic suitable for jamming to the accessibility of the recorded material. Everyone can relatively easily try the method by following, step-by-step, the instructions given in the guide or applying them however they wish.

The work model was created as part of the Museum Jams project, in which the Finnish Postal Museum, Media Museum Rupriikki and the Finnish



Photo 1: Museum Jam event, held on 22 November 2019. The topic was Posti Group's electronic services.

Museum of Games participated. All of the museums are located in the Museum Centre Vapriikki, Tampere. The project received funding in the form of a Finnish Heritage Agency Innovative Projects grant.

Digital dark age a threat to museums' basic mission

Underlying the Museum Jam work method are changes in the museum sector's operating environment and particularly the technological environment. The digitalisation of information is giving rise to, or has already given rise to, a phenomenon called the digital dark age.

The paradox of the digital dark age is that information is produced in unprecedented amounts, but its long-term preservation for use in history

and other research has been jeopardised. For example, with regard to development work carried out in companies, mainly contracts and technical documentation area stored in the archives, but sources telling about development processes – emails, project plans – are easily left permanently unrecorded. This highlights the significance of memory information.

According to the Finnish Museums Association, preventing the digital dark age is the most important task of museums' contemporary documentation and all recording activities.¹

For this reason, a key issue to be considered in a Museum Jam project is the format and preservation of materials.

¹ Musealan toimintaympäristö, Suomen museoliitto 2023 – strategia, <https://www.museoliitto.fi/index.php?k=13463>

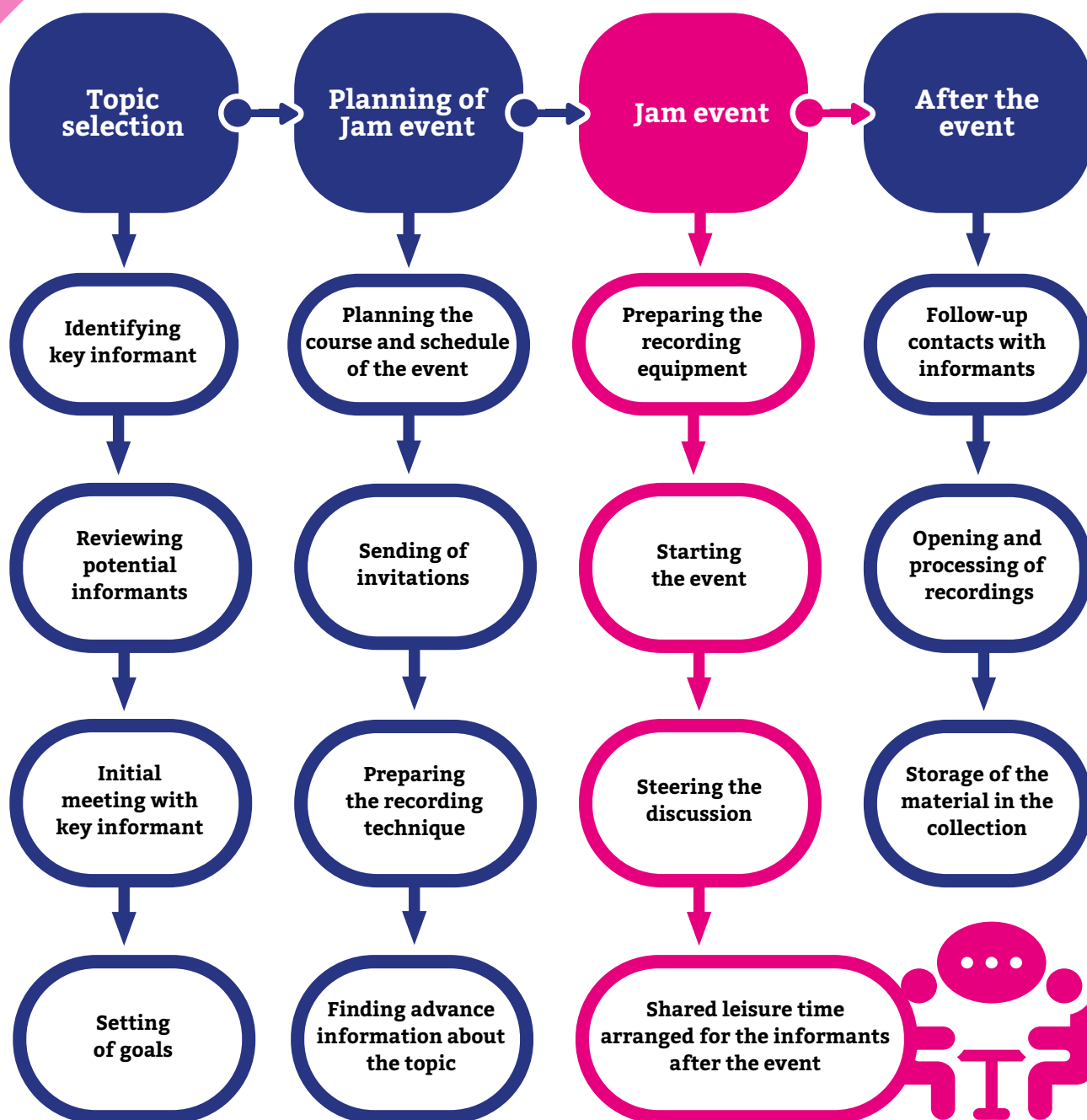


Figure 1: Museum Jam method.

1. SUITABLE TOPIC AND KEY INFORMANT

Organising a Museum Jam begins with the selection of the topic. A suitable subject may have already been identified within the museum, but the impetus for it may also come from outside the museum. Particularly in museums that record phenomena in the fields of development and creative work, contacts will come from people who are interested in placing their work in the museum's collections or exhibitions. The Museum Jam method is designed and is particularly well suited to react quickly to such contacts that the museum receives.

At the heart of the Museum Jam method is the so-called key informant. This refers to a person who not only has memory information about the chosen topic, but also belongs to networks of people familiar with the phenomenon. Often, key informants will have played a key role in organisations and networks that developed around the phenomenon. The key informant may also be the person on whose original initiative the museum decides to begin recording the topic as part of the museum's collection.

A good key informant will also be interested in the history of the phenomenon and may have already written a record of relevant information and maintained contacts with members of a network related to the phenomenon. A good key informant, moreover, is essential for the Museum Jam method, because such a person not only has memory information on the phenomenon but also a good understanding of who else would be important to include in a Museum Jam event.

Once the topic and the related key informant have been identified, an initial meeting is held with the person in question. The idea of the meeting is to make the division of responsibilities for the Museum Jam as clear as possible. At least the following issues should be considered in the meeting:

- Who are the other informants to be invited to the Museum Jam event?

- How much will the key informant handle communications with the other informants to be invited to the event, and how much of this will be handled by the museum?
- Does the key informant want a special role in the Museum Jam?
- What would be a suitable date for the museum Jam? What about alternative dates?
- Where will the Museum Jam be held?
- Will the Museum Jam be closed, with only invited informants attending, or will an open invitation to the event be issued?

At the initial meeting, it is also important to obtain as much information as possible about other people the key informant knows who will be invited to the event:

- How many potential informants are available to attend?
- What has been their role in activities related to the phenomenon to be recorded?
- Where do they live?
- Do they have any special requirements (e.g. accessibility)?

In the meeting, the goal should be to discuss as clearly as possible practices related to the organisation of the Museum Jam, so that the key informant and the museum have the same understanding of the event. This will also reduce the possibility of conflicting communications when the other informants are contacted about the event. At this point, the key informant does not need to have fully internalised the idea of the Museum Jam method. It is sufficient for them to understand that this will be a relaxed event aimed at saving memory information, and that it will be recorded.

Every key informant is different, just as every Museum Jam event will be distinctive in its own way. The Museum Jam method also requires the total engagement in the event of both the museum staff and the key informant. It is not possible to prepare for everything.

MUSEUM JAMS IMPLEMENTED IN THE PROJECT

Surveying a blind spot in Finnish gaming history

“The purpose of the Museum Jam was to collect information about play-by-mail games and to obtain context information for postal gaming objects in the collection of the Finnish Museum of Games. Extensive material related to postal gaming and the running of play-by-mail games was also collected at the event, and the attendees participated in designing an exhibition element on postal gaming for the Finnish Museum of Games. The Museum Jam was held in a meeting and sauna facility close to the Museum Centre Vapriikki, where the Finnish Museum of Games is located. The event included a visit to the museum. The event was open, and a couple of enthusiasts registered for it in addition to our informants.”

– Niklas Nylund, *Finnish Museum of Games*

Increasing the understanding of Posti's recent history and enriching collection information

“The Museum Jam topic was Posti Group's electronic services. The event enriched the Finnish Postal Museum's existing information on the electrification of postal services by inviting informants whose work history extended from the 1960s to the present day. We widely discussed electronic postal services from the 1980s to the 2000s. We outlined the important development steps in this story. The contributors also ended up analysing the present state of postal services. We gained an understanding of Posti's recent history and augmented our collection. We strengthened our contacts with former and present postal workers. We also obtained information about suitable follow-up interviewees. The Museum Jam was held in the Main Post Office in Helsinki, a building familiar to and full of memories for the informants.”

– Mirka Ylä-Mattila, *Finnish Postal Museum*

Gathering information and identifying key individuals for an exhibition project

“A Museum Jam was organised for people who had worked on the Nokia N-Gage phone. Developers of both the phone and its games participated. At the event, historical information was collected, follow-up interviewees identified and a narrative constructed for the building of an exhibition about the N-Gage. The Museum Jam was held at the Museum of Technology in Helsinki, as most of the informants were located in Helsinki. After the private event, our key informants gave a public presentation on Nokia's phone development.”

– Heikki Jungman, *Media Museum Rupriikki*

Understanding technological and industrial processes

“The Museum Jam was attended by people who had been involved in the development of Nokia's camera phones. The group, assembled by the key informant, included camera team employees and researchers. At the event, a narrative on the development of a total of 29 camera phones was planned. In addition to the development of camera phones, there was a general discussion on the design and utility of mobile phones and the role of social media in our everyday lives. The objective of the event was to plan an exhibition script in which museum visitors would be informed about the camera team's goal of developing a mobile phone with the highest possible quality camera. Cooperation with the group is important for the museum from the perspective of new technology and industrial research, and augmenting the information resources of the collection.”

– Outi Penninkangas, *Media Museum Rupriikki*

2. PLANNING AND COMMUNICATION WITH INFORMANTS

After the initial meeting with the key informant, other potential informants are identified with the key informant's help are contacted. Preliminary contacts may be made by the key informant, who knows the other informants best and is often the person who, as a familiar figure, is better able than the museum to encourage them to participate. At this stage, preliminary information is obtained about the people who are potentially interested and whether it is worth organising the event.

More detailed planning of the Museum Jam will be done in the museum, but the key informant may be involved in this according to their interest. At this point at the latest, it is important to consider the museum's goals for the event. What is the museum's vision of the event? What are the desired outcomes for the event? In general, there is at least a wish to record memory information, but it is also possible using the jamming concept to, for example, involve informants in exhibition planning.

A preliminary framework is planned for the course of the day. The jamming idea involves engagement and surprises, so the schedule and programme should not be planned too rigidly. It is important, however, to have a vision of the course of the day, so that the day proceeds smoothly. Aspects to plan include, at least, the Museum Jam location, the schedule, catering and staff roles as well as technology and its testing.

At the planning stage of the event, it is worth keeping the key informant up to date with regard to decisions related to the Museum Jam. The key informant is often best able to judge what would work or would not work with this particular group. The planning of the Museum Jam is also a discussion between the key informant and the museum about the details of the event. It is good to remember, however, that every key informant

is different. Some want more responsibility for the arrangements and have more input than others into the format of the event.

The suitable number of participants in a Museum Jam is 6–10 people. With too small a number, a good atmosphere and discussion is hard to achieve. Too large a number, on the other hand, can cause confusion in the discussion, making it difficult to distinguish simultaneous comments in the recording. In too large a group, moreover, everyone may not get an opportunity to speak. It would be positive if the participants represented different perspectives on the phenomenon to be recorded. If it is not possible for everyone to attend, additional interviews can be conducted afterwards with important informants. During Museum Jams, new potential informants are also often identified.

Museum representatives will probably be needed to guide the discussion at the event itself. It would therefore be advisable for them to look in advance for information on the topic and to think about questions by which they can guide the discussion. Often the key informant can help identify public sources on the topic. The key informant may also be interviewed or, for example, asked to write a short paper on the topic before the event. In addition, it is also worth reviewing the material on the subject that may already be in the museum's collection.

Collection material may be included in the event to stimulate discussion. For example, in a Museum Jam that records product development, finished products and prototypes may help informants tell about the choices made in the product development process. When introducing material, care should be taken, however, not to steer the discussion too much in a certain direction at the expense of other themes.

WHAT KIND OF SPACE IS GOOD FOR JAMMING?

- accessible
- as free from disturbance and background noise as possible
- suitable for recording
 - spacious, but not so much that the informants can wander out of the audibility range of the recording equipment.
 - on the other hand, it is good to provide the informants with a place for privacy that is not recorded.
- suitable for group work
- offers a catering option

The natural location for the event is, of course, the museum, in which case the event programme can also be combined with a museum visit. A space related in some way to the topic being recorded is inspiring.

An attractive invitation

Once the group of potential interested informants has been identified, the museum sends them an invitation to the event. The invitation should include information about the event location and schedule as well as all aspects that facilitate the participation of the informants, such as lunch to be served, travel expenses, sauna opportunity etc. The invitation may also urge the informants to look for material related to the phenomenon and to bring it to the event; even if the informants do not want to donate the material to the museum, the material may still be included in the jamming event to stimulate memories.

In the invitation, it is worth emphasising, on the one hand, the relaxed nature of the event and, on the other hand, the expertise of the museum. The invitation should also state that the event will be recorded and stored in the museum's collection.

The invitation can be prepared in email format. It can include a link to the registration form for the event. At the same time, the registration form can be used to request the consent of participants to record the event, which will save time at the event itself when filming consent issues have already been taken care of. An electronic registration form is easy to create using, for example, the Google Forms application. An electronic form also collects in one place the contact information, filming consents and other details of those who register that they have been asked to provide on the registration form.

An example invitation can be found on the following page.

Hi!

On Friday, 22 November, the Finnish Postal Museum will hold arrange a "Museum Jam" on the topic Posti Group's e-services. The objective is to record the history of Posti's electronic services and compile an exhibition concept on the subject. We are inviting to the Museum Jam individuals who have been involved in implementing this important and interesting phase for Posti Group from the 1980s to the 2000s.

You are welcome to attend a Museum Jam on Posti Group's e-services on Friday, 22 November in the Main Post Office building.

At the event, Posti Group's e-services from the 1980s to the present day will be discussed. Posti's development activity was linked to the first wave of communications and digitalisation in the 1980s-90s. Posti continued its development activity in the 2000s. What was the starting point of this development activity, what was planned in it, and what did it ultimately produce for use?

In addition, we will jointly prepare an exhibition concept for possible future exhibitions and articles of the Postal Museum. What were the core issues during this period? What would the narrative arc of this be like?

The event is part of the Museum Jam project of the Finnish Postal Museum, Media Museum Rupriikki and the Finnish Museum of Games, which aims to record digital age memory information for the museums' collections.

You can register for the event using this form <https://forms.gle/RZFXxNufXhzwZdSj6>

Please note that we will record memory information at the event, so we kindly request that you indicate on the form your consent for filming. In addition, we enquire in advance whether you would consider making to the museum a donation related to the topic.

Programme

Meeting room Kuriiri in the Main Post Office building, Mannerheiminaukio 1 B, Helsinki.

9 am	Event begins. Coffee and snacks.
9 am–12 noon	Discussion of Posti Group's electronic services.
12 noon–1 pm	Lunch.
1 pm–3 pm	Discussion continues, consideration of exhibition concept.
3 pm	Coffee and snacks.
4 pm	Event ends.

We will reimburse travel expenses arising from your participation. Compensation will paid for public transport costs. Please, therefore, remember to save your travel ticket receipts if you come to the event using public transport. The museums will also offer you lunch and snacks during the day.

Contact us by mail or phone if you have anything to ask about the event.

Best wishes,

Open Museum Jam

Museum Jams can also be open to all. An open event generates wider participation and a broader perspective on the phenomenon to be recorded. On the other hand, an open event will make the event more difficult to manage. Too many partic-

ipants will present difficulties for the recording of memory information, which is why the number of participants should be limited even in the case of an open event. Communications and registration can be handled, for example, through a Facebook event, shared on appropriate pages and groups.

TECHNOLOGY AND RECORDINGS

Audio and video

Museum Jams can be recorded as audio and/or video. Following the discussion of a large group afterwards is easier with a video recording than with audio alone.

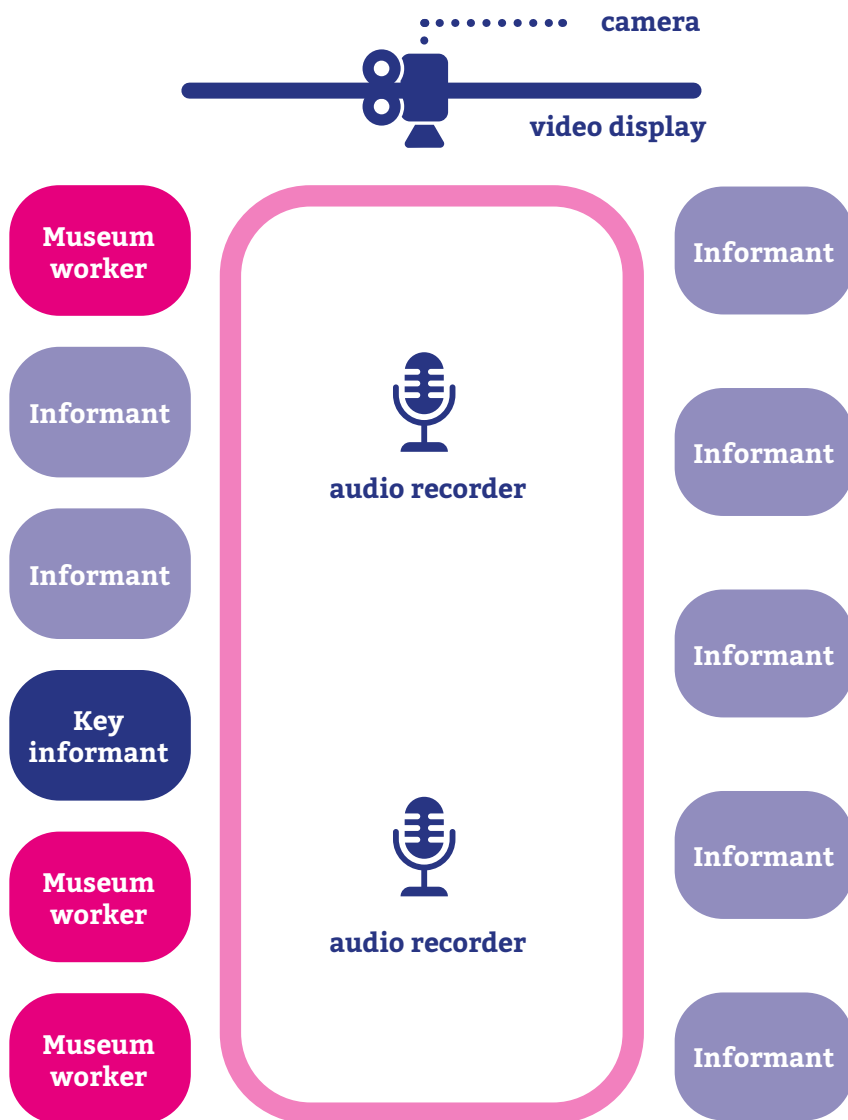
It is recommended that two separate audio recorders be used to record a discussion of 6–10 people. If only one audio recorder is used, some people will end up sitting several metres away from the recorder. This will impair the recording quality and possibly the quality of transcription done utilising artificial intelligence. Table noise recorded in the audio file can be reduced by using a tripod during recording and, in addition to this, by placing a “mat” of some soft material (such as expanded plastic) under the tripod.

Generally, quite good quality sound is obtained with video recorders, but we recommend separate audio recorders with their audio linked to the video. In any case, the audio track of the video recorder will be needed at the editing stage to align the audio track produced by the external audio recorders.

If objects or documents are discussed at the event, and there is a need for video close-ups of them, another hand-held camera that can focus on the object or document being discussed will be required. A mobile phone camera, for example, is suitable for this purpose. If desired, an image stabiliser can also be attached to it.



Photo 2: Photo of a Museum Jam via video recorder. There are two separate audio recorders on the table.



Recording equipment used by us and their positioning

- Zoom H2 audio recorder (2)
- tripod
- GoPro7 camera
 - easy and fast installation at a height from which even a large space completely covered
 - it is possible to monitor the recorded image from a mobile phone
 - aspect ratio selection can be used to help define the desired image area
- mobile phone camera
- image stabiliser (gimbal)

Size of recordings

Due to the long duration of Museum Jam events, good quality video, and even audio, files are rather large. This is worth taking into account when editing the material. Larger files slow down the editing process to some extent. It is also important to consider how high quality raw material and how large files one wishes to save permanently. After editing, the quality of the video and audio material can be compressed to a more sensible recording size, but if the raw material is also saved, the use of storage facility space is certainly a relevant issue.

We found 1080p to be an adequate resolution for the video. At this resolution, file sizes are around 4 GB/10 min. In an audio recorder, two-channel audio was sufficient and this produced file sizes of around 1 GB/hour of recording. Some audio recorders have the option of four-channel recording, in which case there is more scope to determine the level of different sounds at the editing stage. In practice, however, this slows down the editing considerably, and even with two-channel recording, the speech of informants speaking at different volumes was recorded clearly enough.



3. MUSEUM JAM EVENT DAY

Recording

On the day of the event, the technical recording should be on before the informants arrive: often informants begin their recollections as soon as they see the others, and cannot wait for the official start of the event. If the microphone is not turned on, valuable material might be lost. For the recording to be on at this stage, the informants must have given their advance consent to filming and/or recording. Consent can be requested using the registration form, as described in the previous chapter.

Role assignment

Although a Museum Jam event is usually quite relaxed and informal, it is natural that someone is assigned the role of chairperson. The chairperson may be a representative of the museum or the key informant. Their role is to gently steer the discussion in a direction that supports the goals set in advance by the museum for the event.

The schedule of a Museum Jam event always includes the opening of the event. This is done by a museum representative agreed in advance, for example the chairperson selected for the event, who presents the day's objective and schedule, and goes through aspects related to filming and recording. This is followed by a round of introductions.

It is a good idea for all museum representatives to think in advance about questions that may guide the discussion, if necessary. A Museum Jam event is not an interview session, however, but an open discussion. The discussion ought to be relatively tightly structured and focused on details, but group discussion, on the other hand, is also well suited for surveying large entities or searching for a narrative for a "dark" phenomenon. There may also be intrinsic value in considering the direction the discussion may follow and which issues are therefore highly likely to be raised

In addition to memory information

The event may focus solely on collecting memory information. The jamming concept is well suited, however, to producing some concrete end result in collaboration with the informants. The informants may participate in planning a museum exhibition describing the phenomenon either concretely, for example by designing exhibition material or elements, or by "fishing" for their views on what would be important to display in the exhibition. The Museum Jam method is also suitable for collecting context information on objects in the collection or to be donated.

If the aim is to create some concrete output with the informants during the day, it is often natural to divide the event into two parts: the event begins with free recollections on the topic and continues, for example, after lunch with planning a concrete issue together with the informants.

Duration of the event

The duration of a Museum Jam event may be anything from an hour-long light session to an event lasting a whole weekend. The method can be scaled to suit the objectives and available resources. Often, it is most fruitful for the museum to have the informants on site for about 4–6 hours. This is a long time, however, and many will not be able to stay for so long. It is common for some informants to have to leave after lunch. This should be taken into account when guiding the discussion and planning the event.

It is therefore worthwhile to be flexible with the schedule, to enquire about the informants' individual schedules in advance and again at the beginning of the event, and to schedule the most important part of the event in terms of results for a time when most of the informants are present. The informants may also be encouraged to stay longer by arranging for them an extra programme after the discussion event itself, such as the op-

portunity to enjoy an evening meal and sauna. It is often the case that the informants have not met each other for a long time. For them, the time they spend together is as important a reason to come

and stay at the event than bringing the phenomenon associated with them to the knowledge of the museum.

4. AFTER THE MUSEUM JAM

After the Museum Jam, the museum will have memory material recorded at the event, possibly some other concrete, jointly produced output, and a network of informants familiar with the subject area. The network, including those informants who did not attend the event for scheduling reasons, should be sent a brief summary, with thanks, of the fruits of the event.

It is often rewarding to continue cooperating on the topic of the event, building on the foundation created by the first Museum Jam. The discussions held at the event may reveal people who have important information on the topic but who were

unable to attend the event. Indeed, follow-up work to the Museum Jam often includes separate interviews with such people, supplementing the memorial material obtained at the Museum Jam.

If the event has been videoed, the video must be edited, compressed and stored in an accessible location or as part of the museum's collection. For the sake of accessibility, it is a good idea to transcript the video/recording of the Museum Jam. Any object or image donations received from the event are saved in the museum's collection.

5. FROM RECORDINGS TO USEFUL MATERIAL

After the Museum Jam, attention must be paid to the materials of the recorded phenomenon. After the event, they are usually as follows:

- Earlier collection material (objects, archive material, images...)
- The Museum Jam recording (video + audio + transcription)
- Donations received during the Museum Jam
- Significance analysis + significance statement

It is worth considering the storage of material arising from the Museum Jam before the event takes place.

1. What type of material does the museum have the resources to store? (Storing of AV material)

2. What kind of information do you want to record? (context information or memory information)
3. To whom will the collected material be made available? (collection staff, museum researchers, other researchers, general public)

The museum's collection and collection policy may be utilised in the planning and ideation of Museum Jams. For example, an object ensemble may be selected from the collection with the aim of enriching related context information via a Museum Jam. The process may also operate in the other direction, i.e. Museum Jams may be used to identify phenomena and entities about which there is as yet insufficient information in the museum's collection. In the case of digital age phenomena, the event may also inspire partici-

pants to delve into their own archives, in which case donations may also be made during the Museum Jam.

When preparing a Museum Jam, old archive materials may be digitised/scanned where appropriate into the collection management system. If a document that explains the phenomenon or collection well has already been found amongst a large volume of paper material, it is recommended that this be saved in the collection management system, for example as an attachment to the phenomenon or event, or later as an attachment to the recording or transcription. If there is a lot of relevant paper archive material, it makes more sense to enter a comprehensive archive list into the collection management system.

The Museum Jam will give rise to a video that may be hours long and many gigabytes in size. Collection management systems provide varying support to the storage of large files, and storage space in systems is currently still limited and expensive. Compressing video reduces the need for space, but the sense in saving a poor-quality video over the long term is worth considering.

What relevant data content does the video format offer? And at what compression level will the data content be stored? The audio track, which is more modest in size, can be easily isolated from the video for storage in the collection

Transcription

Transcription is a useful tool for recording a discussion, and it also enables the Museum Jam's information content to be searchable. Unfortunately, collection management systems do not yet support searching of document content, but through transcription the entire recording can be easily tagged. If the recording is long (several hours), it is worth tagging the transcription in half-hour and one hour sections. In this way, a researcher searching for information will be able to retrieve the relevant parts and will not have to go through the entire recording/transcription.

Even if the video itself is not entered into the collection management system, the transcription and the keywords obtained through it should be saved there. If it is decided to enter an audio-visual recording into the system, then the transcription is stored in connection with it.

MACHINE TRANSCRIPTION SERVICE

In the Museum Jam project, the Happyscribe.com machine transcription service was tested in the transcription of Museum Jam recordings. Unfortunately, in the service, the comprehension and machine transcription of Finnish-language speech was still not at the standard that relevant keywords could be extracted from the resulting text file. The task was also challenging for the machine transcription service, because there were several speakers who would now and then speak at the same time.

We tested that a clear, single-speaker recording worked sufficiently well also in Finnish. In an English-language interview or Museum Jam, machine transcription may work better.

Transcription based on artificial intelligence (AI) is developing rapidly, however. In addition, AI-based transcription already offers advantages if transcription is done in the museum: AI identi-

fies the speakers and adds timestamps to the transcription file based on them, which enhances the efficiency of the work compared with traditional transcription.

As it becomes more established, automatic transcription may revolutionise the usability of museums' AV material. With a reasonable effort, interviews, presentations, and other information content in audio format can be made machine-searchable. This will also pose challenges for collection systems. It is not advisable to overload the basic searches of systems with full texts, but it will, on the other hand, be necessary to bring the contents of transcriptions within the scope of searches.

If a transcription of the recording of a Museum Jam is considered necessary, then it is worth allocating specific resources to this.

Significance analysis method

After the Museum Jam, researchers had a better understanding of the studied phenomenon or the part of the collection that is the subject of the Museum Jam. In order to capture this information and for it to become part of the museum's information resources, the Museum Jam project utilised the significance analysis method². Significance analysis is a method, intended for the needs and use of Finnish museums, for determining the significance and museum value of museum objects and collections. The analysis requires a research-oriented approach, and its result is the interpretation made by the performer(s) of the analysis. Significance analysis is a continuous process; it offers the opportunity for later reassessments and new interpretations. The outcome of this process is summarised in a significance statement.

The significance analysis and statement form a link between cataloguing and documentation (video), and bring the researcher's expert knowledge into the museum collection. The prepared documents also serve as an incentive to become acquainted with the collection and the Museum Jam recordings. The significance analysis of the collection and the updated significance statement supplement the concise cataloguing information.

The analysis, which is not public, may highlight relevant informants and objects, the course of the Museum Jam event, and the relationship of the collected information to the museum's existing collection, and may consider, if necessary, subjects for further research.

The significance statement is a condensed version of the significance analysis and is intended to be public. Finna does not yet support the publication of significance statements, but it will surely be possible in due course. The subject has been raised in Finna training courses and in the TAKO working group³.

² Häyhä, Jantunen and Paaskoski, 2015.

³ See also Västi 2019.

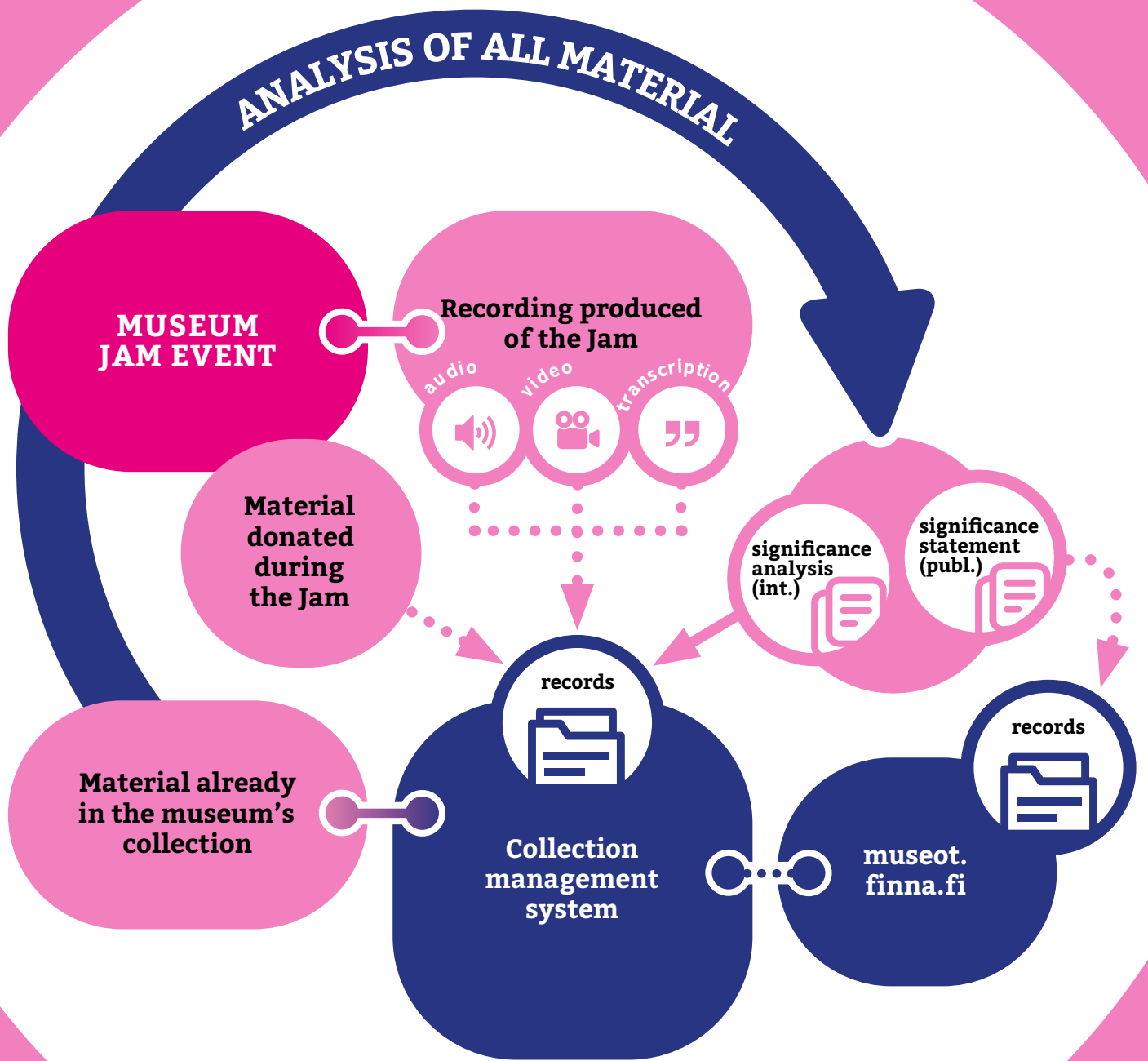


Figure 2: Material management. Figure after Västi (2019, 12).

6. LIMITATIONS OF THE MUSEUM JAM WORK METHOD – RISKS AND PREPARING FOR THEM

Limited perspective

At the heart of the Museum Jam method is the idea of utilising a key informant who has an existing network of people familiar with a topic that interests the museum. This network can be utilised with speed and agility. On the other hand, the museum should be aware that it might also limit the perspective on the phenomenon.

Even an extensive network will not cover all the people associated with the phenomenon. Networks related to past phenomena are often based on friendships, so individuals or organisations, for example, that were once perceived as competitors may remain outside them. Similarly, people who once worked too far from the key informant's position in an organisation, such as those who held lower or higher positions in the hierarchy, are often excluded. A Museum Jam event may easily give the museum the impression that the phenomenon was widely covered and recorded at the recollection session. A single event, however, can never provide more than one perspective on a phenomenon.

Nevertheless, one can try to broaden this perspective by aiming to invite people representing as many different positions as possible to the event. For example, the Museum Jam on play-by-mail games, organised by the Finnish Museum of Games, was attended by people representing the following perspectives:

- people who had worked with play-by-mail games in two different companies
- people who had designed play-by-mail games
- a person who had illustrated play-by-mail game manuals and sales catalogues
- people who had played play-by-mail games in the 1990s and still play them today

Alternative perspectives on a phenomenon may be sought by organising new Museum Jam events to which different informants are invited.

Roles within a network

In a discussion session in which several people are present, it is natural for some to take a more leading role in the discussion, while for others it is natural to give them this space. Some people always make their voices heard more than others. Moreover, the people attending the event may replicate the old mutual hierarchies and power dynamics that had arisen between them in, for example, their former workplace.

Museum staff or the key informant can try to mitigate these problems by guiding discussion at the event, and by trying to give all participants speaking time. The hierarchies within the informant network, on the other hand, as they emerge in the interactions within the network, might in themselves provide valuable information about the phenomenon. The most important aspect, in terms of the end result, is to decide clearly in advance whether in recording of the memory material the goal is to record as free a discussion as possible, or whether the discussion should be consciously steered with questions. It is also possible to supplement aspects that received less attention at the Museum Jam event with interviews conducted afterwards.

Relationship of trust with the museum

Utilising the key informant at the heart of the Museum Jam work method makes it an agile and relatively low-resource method of collecting memory information. This means, however, that the museum has significantly fewer opportunities in the method to build trust between the museum and the informants. With the traditional method

of collecting memory or context information through individual interviews, informants' trust in the museum can develop in relationships that may last for years. In the Museum Jam method, the museum has in a certain way outsourced this relationship of trust to the key informant. The key informant acts as the bellwether of trust between the museum and other informants, as other informants arriving at the event often may not have interacted with the museum before. Most of the people who come to a Museum Jam will not have met the representatives of the museum before, which also brings unpredictability to the event, perhaps also some tension at the start.

Museum Jams requires from the organisers total engagement and possibly the ability to improvise. Before using the method, it is worth considering whether it is suitable for the desired topic to be

recorded and particularly for those who are familiar with it. Does the network associated with the phenomenon to be recorded therefore require a longer-term, cautious building of trust?

Although museum jamming can never enjoy such a level of trust at the start, the method seeks to increase trust between the informants and the museum by offering some "carrot" to those who attend a Museum Jam event. This may be the opportunity to meet old acquaintances from decades past or to take part in reminiscences on a nostalgic subject. Confidence may also be built through lunches, sauna opportunities or even guided tours offered by the museum. It is important that all participants experience that the event is of benefit to all parties, not just the museum.

Risks and preparing for them

Risk	Consequences	Preparing for the problem
Failure of recordings due to a technical problem or background noise, for example.	In part of the recording the conversation cannot be followed, or the entire recording is unusable.	Advance testing of the equipment, preferably in the space where the event will be held or in a similar space.
The key informant has a different view of the event than the museum.	The key informant misinforms the other informants about the course of the event.	Reviewing the idea and goals of the event with the key informant in a meeting held at an appropriately early stage.
Possible business secrets and copyright issues surrounding the phenomenon.	The result of the Museum Jam cannot be published or even saved into the collection.	Clarifying copyright issues in advance, if possible.
Lack of trust between the informants and the museum.	The informants are reserved at the event, or are unwilling to attend at all.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advance consideration: is the subject area suitable for the Museum Jam method. • Building a relationship of trust with the other informants via the key informant. • Ensuring that the informants also get something from the event, not just the museum.

Risk	Consequences	Preparing for the problem
The key informant does not perform the duties prior to the event that the museum had thought he/she would perform.	The event cannot be held in the form that the museum had expected. An insufficient number of informants will come to the event.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Careful division of responsibilities between the key informant and the museum. • Regularly checking the progress of issues with the key informant, for example through phone calls.
Not enough participants can be attracted to the event.	The memory material collected is limited to the views of only a few participants or the event had to be cancelled completely.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A careful review of potential other informants with the key informant. • Holding the event at a less busy time, for example in the summer. • Public marketing of the event. • Setting the final date for registration well in advance of the event, allowing time for additional marketing opportunities, if necessary.
Group dynamics lead to a distorted outcome.	The collected memory material is limited to the views of only a few participants or the group repeats the consensus on the phenomenon it formed earlier.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guiding the discussion with questions and themes considered in advance. • Separate individual interviews.

Figure 3: Risks of the Museum Jam work method and examples of preparing for them.

MUSEUM JAM – A NEW APPROACH TO RECORDING AND COOPERATING

The Museum Jam work model was created as part of a joint project between the Finnish Postal Museum, Media Museum Rupriikki and the Finnish Museum of Games. We applied the relaxed Game Jam events for the use of museums. We formulated a common working model for museums to align museums' differing models.

With the aid of Museum Jams, we reached phenomena of recent history in a new way. We wanted to share a work model common to all museums, so that reaching the phenomena of the digital dark age, in particular, would be one step closer and the threshold to accessing them would be lower in the museum sector. This difficult-to-reach age must also be left for future generations to study.

The Museum Jam method gives museums the opportunity to network with and bring together experienced professionals and experts. We encourage museums to act boldly in a new way. Dare to step back from the role of expert. Give the floor to those involved in the phenomenon and involve them in a topic that is important and close to them. Participants feel valued when they become part of museum activities that often seem remote.

Museum Jams brought new contacts and stakeholders to the participating museums and rekindled old relationships. Cooperation between museums and sharing of knowledge also intensified. Museum Jams are highly suitable as a platform for the collaboration of several museums.

Each of the Museum Jams we organised was different. We gained diverse experience of the suitability of Museum Jams for different situations and topics to be recorded. Not all of the Museum Jams succeeded entirely as planned, which in any case is not possible or even necessary with such a relaxed, partly unpredictable concept. It was important, however, that the participants were satisfied with the events.

Museum Jams will remain among the repertoire of the participating museums' activities. We hope that other museums will also adopt the agile recording approach of the Museum Jams. We look forward to hearing more about museums' experimentations with the Museum Jam model. Please share your experiences #museojamit.

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