

2025 Conference | Borderless Museums. Redefining Museum Narratives and Inclusivity

18–21 May 2025, Nova Gorica – Gorizia

ICOM Slovenia, ICOM Italia, ICOM Europe, ICOM SEE

GO! Borderless MUSEUM CONFERENCE

Borderless Museums: Redefining Museum Narratives and Inclusivity

A Cultural Bridge across Borders

As part of the European Capital of Culture 2025 celebrations in Nova Gorica and Gorizia, *Borderless Museums* will offer an innovative cultural experience that transcends borders. Under the overarching theme of *GO! 2025 – Borderless*, this initiative invites visitors to immerse themselves in the shared heritage of these two interconnected cities.

Nova Gorica and Gorizia, united as the European Capital of Culture, celebrate their shared history and future, nurturing unity, dialogue and artistic collaboration. *Borderless Museums* stands as a powerful symbol of culture's ability to overcome divisions, inspiring cooperation and renewal at a time of global transformation.

About the organisers:

ICOM Italy, ICOM Slovenia, RA Europe, RA SEE

ICOM Slovenia and ICOM Italy are two national committees of ICOM, while RA Europe and RA SEE represent regional alliances within this global organization dedicated to museums and museum professionals. ICOM promotes best practices, ethical standards and the vital role of museums in society. Through their national committees and regional alliances, ICOM fosters international cooperation, professional development and cultural heritage preservation, helping museums navigate contemporary challenges while promoting dialogue and collaboration.

GECT/ EZTS

GECT/EZTS Gorizia (*European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation – EGTC*) is a cross-border cooperation entity between Italy and Slovenia, facilitating joint projects and regional development. It plays a crucial role in strengthening economic, cultural and social ties between Nova Gorica and Gorizia, and surrounding areas. By

promoting collaboration in infrastructure, tourism and governance, GECT/EZTS enhances regional integration and cross-border mobility.

GO! 2025

GO! 2025 is the organizing body responsible for implementing the European Capital of Culture program in Nova Gorica (Slovenia) and Gorizia (Italy). It coordinates cultural initiatives, cross-border collaborations and community engagement projects under the theme *Borderless*, fostering artistic expression and regional development.

Partners

Walk of Peace

The Walk of Peace links regions, people and heritage along the former Isonzo Front. It honours WWI victims, warns against future wars, and promotes peace and shared progress, above all emphasizing the value of peace and opportunities for common development.

Goriški muzej

Goriški muzej is a regional museum showcasing the cultural, historical and natural heritage of the Goriška region. It features various collections, including archaeology, art and ethnology, housed in different historic locations.

Venue: EPIC

EPICenter (EPIC Venue) is a key cultural and event space for *GO! 2025*, serving as a hub for creativity, collaboration and cross-border exchange in Nova Gorica and Gorizia. Designed to host exhibitions, performances and community initiatives, it embodies the *Borderless* spirit by bringing together diverse audiences and artistic expressions.

LET'S TALK BORDERLESS!

This year, the prestigious title of European Capital of Culture is shared by Chemnitz, Germany, and an unprecedented cross-border collaboration between the cities of Nova Gorica, Slovenia, and Gorizia, Italy. This partnership marks the first "borderless" European Capital of Culture, symbolising a groundbreaking cultural union. Under the slogan "GO! Borderless," Nova Gorica and Gorizia will unite to create an innovative cultural experience that transcends borders, inviting everyone to explore and celebrate the rich, intertwined heritage of the two cities.

The symbolic significance of this partnership is especially striking. This region, which once exemplified peaceful coexistence, multilingualism and multiculturalism, was devastated by the First and Second World Wars. Awarding the European Capital of Culture title to these two border towns, long divided by history, reconnects them with their shared roots and past glories. It opens the door to renewed peaceful coexistence and creates a model for dialogue and exchange – a vital alternative in Europe's challenging times.

This conference seeks to explore and redefine the narratives told by museums, with a focus on inclusivity. It will examine how museums can break away from traditional models to become truly inclusive educational spaces, fostering global understanding and collaboration.

Our goal is to promote the exchange of ideas, best practices and expertise among museum professionals from diverse backgrounds. This international conference will highlight the potential of a paradigm shift, one that values personal narratives and addresses topics often omitted, erased, or difficult to discuss in contemporary societies.

We will explore how national narratives should be reconsidered, who gives voice to the unheard and vulnerable, and reflect how personal encounters can be key to understanding our rapidly evolving world. This is particularly important as we witness the resurgence of antisemitism, racial prejudices, stereotypes and hate speech.

TOPICS:

- Exchanging Best Practices: Museums as Borderless Platforms of Knowledge
- Ethics in Museums: Curatorial Roles and Dilemmas
- Museums Serving Their Communities: Building Connections
- Hidden Frontiers: Plural Communities Reflecting on History and Shaping the Future
- Transnational and Cross-Border Museum Collaboration: Strengths, Weaknesses, Challenges and Opportunities

SUNDAY, 18. 5. 2025

Venue: EPIC building, Transalpina square

16.30 registration, EPIC building

17.00 GREETINGS

Representatives of the organisers

Representatives of the government

17.30 Opening Emma Nardi, President of ICOM

#IMD 2025: *The Future of Museums in Rapidly Changing Communities*

18. 00 Keynote Sharon Macdonald

Connective Heritage – Museums beyond Borders

19.00 Presentation of GO! 2025 Borderless project

Kaja Širok

EPIC Venue: Embracing the Past, Shaping a Borderless Future

19.30 Reception

MONDAY, 19. 5. 2025

Venue: EPIC building, Transalpina square

8.30 - 9.00 REGISTRATION, coffee

9.00 – 10.00 Keynote: **Steph Scholten**, invited by **ICOM Slovenia**
Discomfort, Decolonisation, Repatriation. Museums, History and Identity in Times of Nationalism.

10.00 – 11.00 Keynote: **Tamara Nikolić Đerić**, invited by **ICOM SEE**
Three Possible Aspects of Borderlessness in Museums

11.00- 11.15 coffee break

11.15- 12.45

EXCHANGING BEST PRACTICES: MUSEUMS AS BORDERLESS PLATFORMS OF KNOWLEDGE moderator ICOM SLOVENIA

Stanislava Paunović, University of Glasgow:

Engaging Imagination, Emotions and Bodies: Inclusive Practices in Modern Art Museums

Michela Perrotta and **Elena Minarelli**, Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation: *Io vado al museo / I Go to the Museum / Я ИДУ В МУЗЕЙ / Je vais au musée / ฉันไปที่พิพิธภัณฑ์ / МЕХ МУЗЕЙГЕ БАРАМЫН / 私は美術館に行きます /*

Joni Karjalainen & Titta Kallio-Seppä, Museum of Torne Valley (Tornionlaakson Museo/ Tornedalens museum) *Our Shared Museum of Tornio and Haparanda*

Lidija Nikočević, Ethnographic Museum of Istria

Tightrope Walk: Cross-border Cooperation on Difficult Heritage Issues

12.45 – 14.00 lunch

14.00 – 15.30

ETHICS IN MUSEUMS: CURATORIAL ROLES AND DILEMMAS - moderator ICOM

SLOVENIA

Suy Lan Hopmann, Stiftung Stadtmuseum Berlin: *How to Deal with BIPOC Staff in Participatory Exhibition Projects?! The Model Exhibition “Dekoloniale – What Remains?!” as a Case Study*

Manuel Scortichini, Research Fellow in Industrial Design, University of Camerino: *Curatorial Ethics in the Digital Age: Navigating Data-driven Dilemmas in Museums*

Tanja Roženberger, Slovene Ethnographic Museum: *The Museum and the Isolated Individual*

Aleksandra Berberih Slana, Zagreb City Museum, *Zagreb City Museum at the Crossroads between Tradition and Inclusivity*

15.30 – 17.00

MUSEUMS SERVING THEIR COMMUNITIES: BUILDING CONNECTIONS – ICOM SEE moderator

David Kožuh, Goriški muzej: *Art Beyond the Visible*

Elena Corradini/ Sara Uboldi/ Francesco Gherardini/ Elisabetta Genovese, University of Modena and Reggio Emilia: *TOUCHWELL A Project to Employ Archaeological Museum Collections for People’s Care, Welfare and Wellbeing*

Tanja Kocković Zaborski, Ethnographic Museum: *The RemekTijelo“ Project as Part of the Ethnographic Museum Dealing with Mental Illness Stigma in Our Society*

Francesca Monachino/ Stefania De Vincentis/ Elisa Mazzella/ Cecilia Vicentini, Università degli Studi eCampus,/ Università Ca' Foscari di Venezia: *Accessibility in Museums for Individuals with ASD: A Systematic Review of Cognitive and Digital Approaches Using Advanced Technology for Enhanced Cultural Engagement.*

Corinne Brenko/ Nejc Kovačič, Museum and Galleries of Ljubljana (MGML): *Breaking Barriers and Making Connections: 40 Years of Ljubljana’s LGBT Community*

Mario Buletić/ Jan Franjul, Ethnographic Museum of Istria/ Process – Association for the Promotion of Queer Culture and LGBTIQ+ Rights (Pula): *Encounters Beyond Boundaries: Fostering Inclusion and Acceptance in the Coming Out Museum*

17.20 --- 19.00

Guided tours: coordinator GORIŠKI MUZEJ

TUESDAY, 20. 5. 2025

Venue:	Auditorio della Cultura Friulana
<p>9.00 – 10.00 Keynote Charles Esche, invited by ICOM Italy Hidden Frontiers. Museums and Plural Communities Reflecting Together on Histories and to Foresee Futures</p> <p>10.00 – 11.00 Keynote Roberto Balzani, invited by ICOM EUROPE Transnational and Cross-border Museum Collaboration: Strengths, Weaknesses, Challenges and Opportunities.</p> <p>11.00- 11.15 coffee</p> <p>11.15- 12.45 HIDDEN FRONTIERS: PLURAL COMMUNITIES REFLECTING ON HISTORY AND SHAPING THE FUTURE - ICOM ITALY moderator Kristina T. Simončič, Galerije B. Jakac- Muzej moderne in sodobne umetnosti: <i>Cisterscapes - Cistercian Landscapes Uniting Europe. Unity in Diversity.</i> Constanze Itzel, House of European History: <i>Go Europe! Transcending Borders in Narratives, Space and Museum Practice at the House of European History</i> Roberta Altin/ Katja Hrobat Virloget, University of Trieste/ University of Primorska: <i>"In the Garden of the (In)visibles." A Travelling Exhibition on the Material Traces of Borders and Migrations</i> Reem Elshorbagy, Grand Egyptian Museum (GEM): <i>The Role of Loans and Travelling Exhibitions in Transnational and Cross-Border Museum Collaboration: Strengths, Weaknesses, Challenges and Opportunities</i></p> <p>12.45 – 14.00 lunch</p> <p>14.00 – 15.30 TRANSNATIONAL AND CROSS-BORDER MUSEUM COLLABORATION: STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES - ICOM EUROPE moderator Alenka Černelič Krošelj/ Jurica Sabol, Posavje Museum Brežice/ Museums of the Croatian Zagorje: <i>Borderless: The Croatian Zagorje and Posavje Regions – From Past Stories to a Project with a Vision for a Strong Network</i> Michele Toss/ Anselmo Vilardi, Fondazione Museo storico del Trentino: <i>The Euregio Digital History Museum: How to Build a New Approach for a Common Transnational Narrative.</i> Darja Komar/ Tadej Pungartnik/ Gerald Hartman / (et.), Podzemlje Pece, Carinthian Regional Muzeum, EGTC Geopark Karawanke- Karavanke (et.): <i>Opportunities of the Cross-border Karawanken/Karavanke UNESCO Global Geopark for the Development of Regional Museums</i> Uršula Lipovec Čebtron/ Marijana Hameršak, University of Ljubljana/ Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research Croatia: <i>Museums – Places of Counter-commemorative Practices of Border Deaths?</i></p> <p>15.30 – 17.00</p>	
<p>Cristina Da Milano. Workshop</p>	
<p>17.20 19.00 - Guided tours Coordinator: GECT GO</p>	

Wednesday, 21. 5. 2025
Walk of Peace An action-packed journey through the historic trails of Upper Posočje! We'll uncover the Soča Front (Isonzofront) battlefields, explore the Kolovrat open-air museum, relive WWI in the Kobarid Museum, and dive into the rich Longobard heritage of Cividale.