

MODULE 10

ONLINE PLATFORMS FOR COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

DIGITAL RURAL EUROPEAN ART
AND MEMORY



Project partners



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How to use this E-book

You can use this e-book before, during or after the learning session. The first part introduces the main ideas behind community participation and shows how to recognise whether people are simply receiving information or whether they are given a real opportunity to contribute. You will then explore where participation can take place, what different forms of online participation can be used for, how to check whether a participation process is clear and trustworthy, and how to contribute in a useful way.

Each section includes a short practical activity. These activities will help you apply the ideas to everyday community situations and gradually prepare you for the final task. At the end of the e-book, you will complete a final activity in which you will create a small digital record of cultural heritage.



Glosas Emilianenses – medieval manuscripts from Spain.

MODULE INFORMATION

 Module number 10	 Level Beginner
 Topic Participation in Community Memory	 Format Hybrid learning
 Duration 3 hours	 Main output Community Entry Memory

About this module

Community participation means having a real opportunity to contribute to something that affects the place where you live. This can happen in many everyday situations: commenting on a plan for a public space, suggesting an idea for a local event, correcting information in a community archive, contributing a photograph or memory, joining a local initiative or helping decide which stories, places or traditions should be documented.

Digital tools have created more ways to participate without always needing to attend a meeting in person. However, simply putting something online does not automatically make it participatory. People need to understand who is asking for their contribution, what they are being asked to do, what they can actually influence and what will happen with their response. In this module, you will therefore look at participation from both sides. First, you will learn how to recognise opportunities to take part, choose a suitable route, check what you are agreeing to and make a useful contribution. You will then turn that knowledge around and consider what makes a participation opportunity clear, accessible and trustworthy for other people.



Learning Objectives

- Recognise different forms of community participation and explain the difference between receiving information and having a real opportunity to influence something
- Identify where and how people can participate in local, heritage and community issues and recognise the organisation or group responsible for the process
- Explain why local photographs, documents, memories and descriptions can help preserve community knowledge and identity
- Digitise a printed photograph or document using a scanner or smartphone
- Use basic image-editing functions, including crop, rotation, resizing and gentle tonal adjustment

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0. Before You Begin: My Starting Point

Before starting the module, rate each statement from 1 to 5. Use 1 when you cannot do the task yet and 5 when you can do it independently. This is not a test. It is a way to notice your starting point and later recognise your progress.

- I can explain whether an online activity only informs people or gives them a real opportunity to influence something.
- I can choose a suitable online platform and an offline or assisted alternative for a small community task.
- I can identify people who may be missing from a participation process and suggest a realistic way to include them.
- I can write a clear invitation and participation questions that explain what people are being asked to do and what will happen with their input.
- I can map the opportunities in my community and the ways in which people can participate in them
- I can prepare a small participation activity that gives other people a clear way to contribute

Keep your ratings. You will return to the same statements at the end of the module.

1. What is Community Participation?

Community participation means that people who are affected by, interested in or connected to a community issue have a chance to contribute to the activities, processes or outcomes around it. Participation becomes meaningful when people can contribute something that is actually relevant to the process, rather than simply receiving information after decisions have already been made (Lachapelle & Austin, 2014; OECD, 2022).

This happens in ordinary situations. Residents may comment on a plan for a public square, suggest priorities for a cultural programme, correct a name in a community archive, contribute a photograph to a local exhibition, report an accessibility problem, join a volunteer activity or help decide which local stories should be documented first. Cultural heritage is especially suitable for participatory work because the people connected to a place, tradition or memory often hold knowledge that cannot be found in official records. The Faro Convention therefore places strong emphasis on heritage communities and shared responsibility for heritage (Council of Europe, 2005).

The important point is that participation can take several forms. Sometimes people need clear information before anything else can happen. At other times they may be asked to share experience, correct local information, propose ideas, choose between options, co-create an activity or evaluate the result. What matters is that the invitation matches the real opportunity to influence the process. The OECD (2022) recommends organising participation when there is genuine room for people to contribute meaningfully and when organisers can explain how that contribution will be used.

Possible contribution	Everyday community example
Receive information	Read a clear explanation of a proposed local cultural activity.
Share an opinion or experience	Respond to a municipal survey about public space or heritage.
Contribute local knowledge	Correct a name, date or location on a community memory map.
Suggest an idea	Recommend a tradition or story for a local exhibition.

Possible contribution	Everyday community example
Prioritise options	Vote on which five stories should be documented first.
Co-create an activity	Plan the exhibition themes together with residents and associations.
Evaluate what happened	Explain what worked, who was missing and what should change next time.

Remember: *Participation does not mean that everybody must agree. A fair process can include disagreement, criticism and different interpretations. What organisers owe participants is clarity about the purpose, the limits and who will make the final decision.*



Practical Task

Think of one recent community activity or decision that you know. In one or two sentences, describe what residents were actually able to do. Could they only receive information, could they comment, could they help decide, or could they lead part of the work?

2. Why Participation Matters for Local Heritage

Participation matters because decisions about community life should not be shaped only by institutions, experts or the most confident voices. People who experience a situation often hold knowledge that is not visible in official documents. They may know which places are difficult to access, which stories are missing, why an earlier activity failed or which form of communication residents actually trust.

Well-designed participation can make processes more transparent, inclusive, legitimate and accountable. It can also strengthen trust by giving people a real role in public decision-making and by showing that their knowledge has been considered (OECD, 2022). In heritage work, participation allows communities to influence what is documented, whose voice is heard and how local identity is represented (Council of Europe, 2005).

Important aspects of participation

- knowing what is happening before decisions are finished
- asking questions and challenging unclear assumptions
- making local needs and experiences visible
- supporting people who are often left out
- protecting stories, places, traditions and knowledge that matter
- connecting residents, associations and institutions

In the context of heritage, participation is especially important for local memory. A photograph may survive physically while its meaning disappears. If nobody records who is in the image, where it was taken or why the event mattered, future viewers may see the picture but not understand the memory. A community archive can therefore preserve more than files. It can preserve context, language, relationships and different perspectives.

Remember: *A photograph is not a complete memory record by itself. The image becomes more useful when people can add reliable context: names, dates, places, stories, corrections, permissions and information about what is still unknown.*



Practical Task

Think of one local photograph, object, tradition or memory that could lose important context over time. What piece of information would be most valuable to record now? Who might know it?

3. From Information to Influence: Arnstein's Ladder

A participation process can look open without giving people much influence. This is why it helps to ask a simple question before contributing: what can my input actually change? Sherry Arnstein's (1969) classic ladder of citizen participation was created to show that not every activity described as 'participation' gives citizens the same amount of power. The ladder moves from processes that create only the appearance of participation, through informing and consultation, to partnership and forms in which citizens hold substantial decision-making power.

The ladder is not a rule saying that every community activity must reach the highest rung. A municipality may genuinely be able to consult residents on one part of a plan while legal or budget decisions remain fixed. The important lesson is honesty. Do not invite people to “co-create” something when the main decisions have already been made. Instead, explain what is open for influence, what is fixed and who will decide.

Rung	Form	Category	Meaning for community participation
8	Citizen control	<i>Degrees of citizen power</i>	The community leads the process and controls key decisions.
7	Delegated power	<i>Degrees of citizen power</i>	Citizens hold decision-making authority over a defined part of the process.
6	Partnership	<i>Degrees of citizen power</i>	Citizens and institutions negotiate and plan together.
5	Placation	<i>Degrees of tokenism</i>	People can advise, but decision-makers retain the final power.
4	Consultation	<i>Degrees of tokenism</i>	People are asked for views, but influence is not guaranteed.
3	Informing	<i>Degrees of tokenism</i>	People receive information, often without a way to influence the decision.
2	Therapy	<i>Non-participation</i>	The process focuses on changing people rather than giving them influence.
1	Manipulation	<i>Non-participation</i>	Participation is used to create the appearance of support.

No single level is always “correct.” A municipality may genuinely be able to consult residents on only one part of a larger plan. A library may invite people to correct captions but keep responsibility for the final archive. What matters is honesty. If a decision is already fixed, the invitation should not pretend that people are being asked to decide it.



Practical Task

Read these three statements and decide where they belong on the ladder:

“The new opening hours will begin on Monday.”

“Tell us which two workshop topics you would prefer next month.”

“Residents and the cultural centre will choose the final programme together.”

Explain what gives people influence in each case.

For the final activity in this module, the key form of participation is contributing local knowledge to a shared memory resource. The organiser may still moderate the final portal, but the contribution is meaningful because the photograph, description, correction or context becomes part of what the community can know and remember.



Practical Task

Read these three examples and decide what kind of participation they represent:

- (1) “The archive is now online.”
- (2) “Please tell us if any names or dates in these captions are wrong.”
- (3) “Residents and the library will decide together which family collections should be digitised next.”

Explain what people can actually influence in each case.

4. Where Can Community Participation Happen?

Participation does not happen on one special website. The right place depends on the issue. If you want to comment on a municipal plan, the responsible route may be on the municipality's website or in a public meeting. If you want to contribute a photograph or memory, the route may be organised by a library, museum or community association. If you want to discuss an EU policy proposal, the route may be an official European Commission platform.

A useful first step is therefore to identify who is responsible for the issue. Once you know the responsible organisation, you can look for its official website, contact page, consultation section, public notices, meetings or participation forms. In smaller rural communities, the route may also involve a cultural centre, library, Local Action Group, association or other trusted local organisation.

Where participation may happen	What you might be able to do	How to start looking
Municipality or regional authority	Comment on a plan, service, public space, cultural programme or consultation.	Start with the official website, public notices or contact details.
Library, museum or cultural centre	Contribute stories, photographs, corrections, ideas or volunteer time.	Check current projects, events, calls for contributions or ask staff.
Association, Local Action Group or community initiative	Join an activity, propose an idea, volunteer, discuss priorities or help develop a project.	Look for the organisation's official page, meeting information or named contact person.
National public institution	Respond to consultations, programmes or public feedback processes.	Use the responsible ministry, agency or official national portal.
European Union	Give feedback on EU initiatives, join online debates or support a formal citizens' initiative.	Use official EU participation platforms and read the current rules before taking part.

Three current EU examples:

1. The European Commission's *Have Your Say* route allows citizens and stakeholders to give feedback on EU initiatives and public consultations.
2. The *Citizens' Engagement Platform* allows people to post, comment on and endorse contributions in EU debates.
3. The *European Citizens' Initiative* is a formal route through which EU citizens can support or organise an initiative asking the European Commission to consider proposing legislation when the legal conditions are met.

Note: These routes serve different purposes; always read the current rules on the official website before participating (European Commission, n.d.-a, n.d.-b, n.d.-c).

6. What Is an Online Participation Platform?

An **online participation platform** is simply a digital space that helps people give, discuss, organise or respond to community input. It may be a specialised consultation portal, but it can also be an ordinary form, email address, digital map, messaging group, shared board or community archive. The platform matters only because it supports a participation task.

This distinction is important. A Facebook post can be useful for telling people that a consultation exists, but comments under the post may not count as official submissions. A messaging group can be excellent for coordinating volunteers but unsuitable for collecting sensitive personal information. A digital map can help residents identify places or barriers but may expose exact locations that should not be public. The tool should fit what participants are being asked to do.

Digital route	What you may be able to do	What to check before using it
Official consultation page	Read documents and submit formal feedback.	Who can participate, what is open for influence, the deadline and how results will be reported.
Online form or survey	Share an opinion, correction, idea, registration or short experience.	Who receives the answers, whether the form works on a phone and what personal data are requested.
Email or contact form	Send a question, comment, proposal or supporting information.	That the address belongs to the responsible organisation and whether there is a deadline or required format.
Social-media page or group	Follow updates, discuss, comment or join a community activity.	Whether comments are part of the formal process, who can see your contribution and who moderates the space.
Messaging group	Coordinate, ask questions and discuss within a defined group.	Whether your phone number or profile is visible, what the group is for and who moderates it.

Digital route	What you may be able to do	What to check before using it
Digital map or community archive	Add places, stories, photographs, corrections or local knowledge.	Publication rules, permissions, location privacy and how material can later be corrected or removed.
Hybrid process	Use online and offline routes within the same participation process.	Whether contributions from different channels are treated fairly and combined into the same decision or result.

Remember: For a community memory project, the most useful platform may be very simple. A moderated page plus a short contribution form can be better than a complicated system that residents cannot use. The platform should make contribution easier, not become a barrier.



Practical Task

Imagine residents are being asked to choose which five local stories should be documented first.

Which digital route from the table would you use?

What would you offer to someone who cannot or does not want to use that route?

7. When One Online Route Does Not Reach Everyone

Online participation can remove one barrier and create another. A form may save someone a long journey but still be difficult to use on a phone. A social-media invitation may reach active residents quickly while missing people who do not use that network. A platform may technically be available but still be difficult because of language, registration, disability, low confidence, cost or fear of making a mistake.

For rural participation, a useful question is therefore not “Can everyone use this platform?” but “Is there another realistic way into the same process?” A hybrid approach allows people to contribute through more than one route. The aim is not to create a separate decision for each channel, but to give people fair ways to reach the same process (OECD, 2018; OECD, 2022).

Possible barrier	A practical response
Slow or unreliable connection	Use a short form, small files, email, telephone or a paper option.
Only a smartphone is available	Test the route on a phone and avoid large downloads or wide documents.
Low digital confidence	Offer a supported session or a trusted helper without asking for passwords.
Language barrier	Use plain language, translation or a bilingual contact person where possible.
Disability or access need	Provide accessible formats and another contribution route. Follow basic web accessibility principles (W3C, 2023).
No social-media account	Do not require one if a public form, email, telephone or paper route can do the job.



Practical Task

Think of one barrier that could make digital participation difficult for someone in your community. Identify one alternative route or trusted helper that could support participation without taking over the person's contribution.

7. Before I Contribute: What Should I Check?

Before you spend time writing a comment, uploading a photograph or filling in a form, check that you understand the process. A trustworthy invitation should make the basic conditions visible. If important information is missing, it is reasonable to ask the organiser before contributing.

A Simple Check List:

1. Organiser

Who is asking for input? Can I confirm that this person or organisation is responsible for the activity or decision?

2. Purpose

Why are people being asked to participate? What issue, activity or decision is being discussed?

3. Influence

What can my contribution actually affect, and what has already been decided?

4. Task

What am I being asked to do: comment, suggest, correct, vote, contribute material or join an activity?

5. Timing

When does participation close, and are there any steps after submission?

6. Personal data and publication

What information about me is required? Will my name, comment, photograph or other material be public?

7. Follow-up

Will the organiser explain what happened with the contributions and where can I find that information?

Participation sometimes involves personal data such as names, email addresses, photographs, recordings, locations or opinions. Under the GDPR, personal data must have a lawful purpose and should be limited to what is necessary. When consent is used, it must be freely given, specific, informed and unambiguous (European Parliament & Council of the European Union, 2016). You do not need to become a data-protection expert to participate, but you should understand what you are being asked to share and what will happen to it.

8. Contributing Local Knowledge Responsibly

Knowing where to participate is only half of the skill. The next step is expressing your **contribution** clearly enough that another person can understand what you have observed, why it matters and what you are asking them to consider. A useful contribution does not have to sound formal. It is usually stronger when it is specific.

Memory is valuable, but it is not always exact. Dates can be approximate, names can be misspelled and two people may remember the same event differently. In such cases, the solution does not have to be to reject personal memory. The solution can be to label it honestly. A caption can say “believed to be around 1968”, “identified by the contributor as...”, “location not yet confirmed” or “family memory; exact date unknown”. When a fact matters, compare it with another source if one is available. A municipal chronicle, archive catalogue, newspaper, museum record, family note or another knowledgeable resident may help.

Good descriptive information, often called metadata, helps a digital object remain understandable and findable. Europeana's publishing guidance emphasises accurate, descriptive and contextual metadata because it improves discovery and trust in digital cultural heritage (Europeana Foundation, 2026b).

Information to record	Example
Working title	Village harvest celebration near the old school
Approximate date	Around 1974; exact year not confirmed
Place	Main street, [village name]
People / event	Local harvest celebration; three people identified by family members
Source / contributor	Original print provided by a local resident
Creator	Photographer unknown
Short context	The celebration took place after the seasonal harvest and included music and shared food.
Confidence / uncertainty	Event known; exact year and two names still need checking
Keywords	harvest; village life; local celebration; 1970s; community
Permission / rights note	Approved for educational use; public publication still to be confirmed

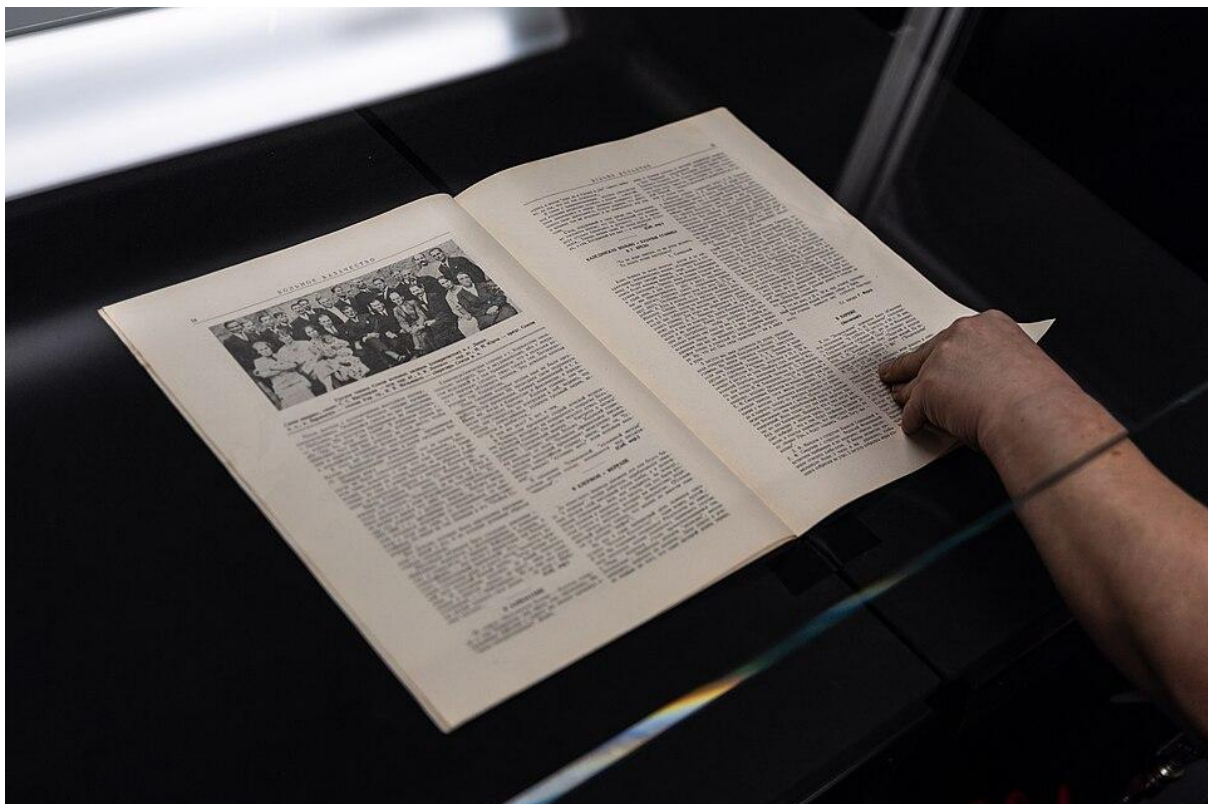
9. From a Physical Photograph to a Digital Record

Digitisation means creating a digital version of physical material so that it can be stored, described, copied and accessed through digital tools. For a community memory project, the most common starting materials are printed photographs, postcards, letters, certificates, newspaper clippings and pages from family or local collections.

Digitisation does not replace the original. The physical item remains the source object. The digital file is a surrogate that can make the material easier to preserve, describe and share. Before scanning, ask what the digital copy will be used for, who will use it and how it will be stored. These are the same basic questions used in professional digitisation planning (Library of Congress, n.d.-a).

Figure 1

Example of Digitization



Note. From [Book_scanner_digitization_National_library_of_the_Czech_republic.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Book_scanner_digitization_National_library_of_the_Czech_republic.jpg), by Skot, 2024, Wikimedia Commons (https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Book_scanner_digitization_National_library_of_the_Czech_republic.jpg). CC BY-SA 4.0.

Before you scan

- Use clean, dry hands and handle the photograph by the edges where possible.
- Do not force a fragile photograph out of an album, frame or sleeve. If removal may damage it, ask the responsible person for help.
- Remove loose dust only when it can be done safely. Do not use water, household cleaners or adhesive tape on the original.
- Decide where the files will be saved before you start. Create one folder for the item or small collection.

Route A: Flatbed Scanner

1. Clean the scanner glass carefully so that dust does not become part of the scan.
2. Place the photograph flat and straight. Do not press down on fragile or raised material.
3. Choose colour for colour photographs. For a simple black-and-white print, grayscale may be used, although colour can preserve staining or tone that may later be useful.
4. If the scanner offers resolution settings, around 600 ppi is a useful high-quality target for a small printed photograph. If the equipment offers only simpler options, choose the highest practical quality available.
5. Preview the scan. Check the edges, focus, dust and orientation before saving.
6. Save the first scan as the master. If TIFF or PNG is available, it can be useful for a high-quality master; if the device produces only JPEG, keep the highest-quality original it creates. Do not repeatedly edit and resave the master.

Route B: Smartphone

1. Place the photograph on a flat, plain surface in even light. Avoid direct sunlight and strong reflections.
2. Turn off flash if it creates glare. If possible, use light from both sides rather than one strong lamp.
3. Hold the phone parallel to the photograph. Keep all four edges visible and fill as much of the frame as possible.

4. Use the highest practical camera quality and hold the phone steady. Take more than one version if needed.
5. Check sharpness by zooming in before putting the photograph away.
6. Keep the first good image as your master and make a copy for cropping or editing.

Some phones also include document-scanning functions. Google Drive can scan documents and offers crop and rotation controls, while Apple Notes can scan documents with the iPhone camera. These functions can be useful for letters and flat documents. For photographic prints, compare the result with a normal high-quality camera photograph and use the version that keeps the image most faithfully.

Naming and Storing the Files

A useful file name tells you what the file is without opening it. Avoid names such as IMG_5827.jpg when you can replace them with something meaningful. One simple pattern is: approximate-year_place_subject_version.ext

Example File Names

1974_VillageName_Harvest_master.tif

1974_VillageName_Harvest_working.jpg

1974_VillageName_Harvest_web.jpg

10. Preparing the Image: Basic Editing

After scanning or photographing an old photograph or document, you may need to make a few simple adjustments before it is ready to view or share online. The purpose of basic editing is not to make an old photograph look new or to remove every sign of age. It is to prepare a clear and usable digital copy while respecting the appearance and information contained in the original. Before editing, keep the original digital capture unchanged. This file is your **master copy**. Make a second copy for editing so that you can always return to the original if something goes wrong or if you later need a higher-quality version.

Basic editing may include:

Rotation and straightening: Correct an image that is sideways or slightly crooked so that it is easier to view.

Cropping: Remove unnecessary scanner borders, table surfaces or empty background around the photograph. Be careful not to remove handwritten notes, damaged edges, stamps or other details that may contain useful information.

Brightness and tonal adjustment: If the scan is very dark, faded or difficult to read, a small adjustment to brightness, contrast or tonal levels may improve visibility. Changes should remain gentle. The aim is to make the image easier to see, not to change how the original object looked.

Resizing: A high-quality scan may be too large for a website, email or online platform. Instead of reducing the master file, create a smaller copy specifically for online use.

File format and export: JPEG is commonly suitable for photographs and creates relatively small files. PNG can be useful when preserving text, graphics or images where clearer edges are important. The original high-quality file should still be kept separately.

A Simple Editing Workflow

1. Keep the original scan or photograph as the master file.
2. Make a copy and give it a clear working filename.
3. Rotate or straighten the image if necessary.
4. Crop unnecessary background without removing meaningful details.
5. Make only small brightness, contrast or tonal adjustments where needed.
6. Create a smaller copy if the file is too large for online use.
7. Save or export the finished version without replacing the master file.
8. Check the image once more before publishing: can the important details still be seen, and does the edited copy still represent the original accurately?

Problem	What to do	What to avoid
Image is crooked	Rotate or straighten the working copy.	Cropping away important edges just to make it look neat.
Scanner border is visible	Crop to the physical photograph or document edge.	Cutting out handwritten notes or damage that may carry information.
Image is slightly dark	Use a gentle levels or tonal adjustment.	Strong filters that change the original look.
File is too large for upload	Create a smaller web copy.	Replacing the only high-quality master with the small version.
Dust or damage is visible	Leave it if removal would change historical content; document it.	Aggressive retouching that makes the item look different from the original.

Mini tip: Always keep the unedited master. Editing is easier to reverse when the original digital capture still exists.

11. Using AI as an Assistant for Community Memory

Artificial intelligence can support several small tasks in a community memory workflow. A generative AI tool can turn notes into a short caption, suggest keywords, draft alt text, simplify a long description, translate a caption or help organise information into a consistent format. These uses can save time and make a collection easier to access.

The important word is support. Generative AI does not know the local history simply because it can produce a confident sentence. UNESCO warns that generative AI can produce incorrect statements and should be used critically and with human oversight (Miao & Holmes, 2023). DigComp 2.2 similarly treats confident, critical and safe interaction with AI systems as part of digital competence (Vuorikari et al., 2022).

Remember: *AI can help you describe and organise a memory. It should not invent the memory.*

Useful AI Tasks

Task	A safe use	What must stay human
Caption draft	Turn verified notes into two clear sentences.	Check every name, date, place and relationship.
Alt text	Describe the visible content for someone who cannot see the image.	Confirm that the description is accurate and does not guess identities.
Keywords	Suggest search terms from the information you provide.	Remove irrelevant or misleading labels.
Translation	Draft a translation of a verified caption.	Check names, local terms and meaning with a competent speaker where possible.
Organisation	Place supplied facts into fields such as title, date, place and source.	Decide what information is appropriate to publish.
Image restoration	Create an optional enhanced version for interpretation or display.	Keep it separate from the master and label any reconstructed or AI-enhanced content clearly.

Example Prompt

I am preparing a community archive entry. Use only the facts I provide. Do not guess names, dates, places, relationships or historical events. If information is missing, write “unknown” or “not confirmed”. Draft: (1) a two-sentence caption, (2) alt text, and (3) five keywords. Facts: [paste your verified notes here].

Aspects that need to be verified before using the output

- Can every factual statement be traced back to the notes or another reliable source?
- Did the AI add a year, location, identity, relationship or event that you did not provide?
- Did it turn an uncertain memory into a definite statement?
- Are names and local-language words spelled correctly?
- Does the caption respect the people shown and avoid unnecessary sensitive information?
- If the AI edited or reconstructed the image, is that version clearly separated from the original scan?

Do not upload private or sensitive photographs to an external AI service unless the contributor understands that use and the organisation has decided that the tool is appropriate. If the privacy conditions of a tool are unclear, use a practice image or work only with text notes that contain no personal data.



Practical Task

Using a practice image, write three verified facts and one uncertainty. Give only those facts to an AI tool and ask for a short caption and alt text. Compare the output with your notes. Circle or remove anything the AI added without evidence.

12. Final Activity: Create a Community Memory Entry

In this activity, you will create one complete, ready-to-publish **Community Memory Entry**. Work individually or in pairs. Use a photograph or flat document supplied by the trainer, or a local item that is safe to use and has appropriate permission. Do not use sensitive family material for a public upload if permission is unclear. Your final outcome is not only an edited image. It is a small digital heritage record that combines the image, local knowledge, responsible use of AI, accessibility and a realistic platform route.

Stage 1: Choose and Check the Item

- Choose one printed photograph, postcard, document or other flat image suitable for the exercise.
- Identify the contributor or source.
- Confirm whether the item may be digitised for the workshop.
- Decide whether the result may be public, private to the workshop or only prepared as a draft. If public publication is unclear, mark it as pending.
- Write down what you already know and what is uncertain before opening any AI tool.

Stage 2: Digitalization

- Use a flatbed scanner where available. Otherwise use the smartphone method from Chapter 9.
- Check sharpness, glare, orientation and edges.
- Save a master file using a meaningful name.
- Create a separate working copy for editing.

Stage 3: Prepare the Image

1. Open the working copy in Krita or another basic editor.
2. Rotate or straighten if needed.
3. Crop only unnecessary borders or background.
4. Make gentle tonal adjustments if they improve readability.
5. Create a smaller web copy if the platform or internet connection requires it.
6. Do not overwrite the master.

Stage 4: Build the Context

Complete the project sheet below. If something is unknown, write “unknown” or “not confirmed”. Do not invent a missing date, name or story simply to make the entry look complete.

Community Memory Entry	Your information
Working title	
Date / period	
Place	
People / event	
What the image shows	
Why it matters locally	
Source / contributor	
Creator / photographer if known	
What is uncertain	
Keywords	

Optional challenge: Use AI for one support task

Choose at least one of the following: caption draft, alt text, keywords, translation or organisation of your notes. Give the AI only the information you are comfortable sharing and explicitly tell it not to guess. Then verify the output line by line.

AI check	Your answer
What task did you ask AI to do?	
What facts did you provide?	
Did AI add anything that was not in your notes?	
What did you correct or remove?	
Final AI-use note for the record	

13. Share and Peer Review

Exchange your Community Memory Entry with another learner or pair. Ask them to review it before you explain the item. If the record works, another person should be able to understand what the image is, what is known, what remains uncertain and how it could be shared responsibly.

Peer-Review Questions

- Is the digital image clear enough to view without unnecessary filtering or distortion?
- Can we understand the basic context: what, where, when and who, as far as this is known?
- Is the source or contributor recorded?
- If AI was used, can we see what role it played and whether the output was checked?

13. Digital Wellbeing Tip



Digital Wellbeing Tip

Pause Before You Continue

Spending a long time looking at a screen can make it harder to concentrate and may lead to eye strain, tiredness or frustration. Short breaks can help you return to the task with better focus.

Try this: After a longer period of digital work, step away from the screen for a few minutes. Go out in nature, move your body, stretch your shoulders or simply rest your eyes. When you return, continue with one task at a time rather than opening several things at once.

Reflection question: What small habit could help you feel more focused and comfortable when using digital devices?

14. Basic Glossary

Accessibility: Designing information, tools and contribution routes so that people with different needs, abilities, devices and levels of digital confidence can take part.

AI-generated content: Text, image or other material produced by an artificial intelligence system in response to a prompt or input.

Alt text: A short text description of an image that helps people who use screen readers understand the important visible content.

Caption: Short text that explains what an image shows and provides necessary context.

Community archive: A collection of local photographs, documents, stories or other records created, maintained or enriched with community involvement.

Community participation: The involvement of people in activities, discussions, knowledge creation or decisions that affect their community or matters they care about.

Contribution: Information, experience, material, correction, suggestion or other input provided to a community process.

Digitisation: The process of creating a digital version of physical material such as a photograph or document.

Generative AI: Artificial intelligence that can generate new text, images or other content from prompts or supplied material.

Metadata: Information that describes a digital item, such as title, date, place, people, source, keywords and rights information.

Online participation platform: A digital space or tool that allows people to give, discuss, organise or respond to community input.

Offline or assisted route: An alternative way to participate without independently using the main digital tool, for example through a scanning session, paper form, telephone or help from a trained person.

Prompt: An instruction or set of information given to an AI system.

Provenance / source: Information about where an item or statement came from and who supplied it.

Working copy: A duplicate of the master file used for editing so that the master remains unchanged.

15. Module Closing

Community participation does not begin with a platform. It begins with something that matters to people and with a genuine opportunity for them to contribute. Throughout this module, you have looked at different ways in which people can take part in community life, from giving feedback and contributing local knowledge to suggesting ideas and helping shape activities. You have also learned to look beyond the appearance of participation and ask a more important question: what can people's contributions actually influence?

Digital tools can help preserve and connect these contributions. A scanner or smartphone can create a digital copy. An online platform can make the entry accessible and give other residents a route to add information. AI can help organise or express the material, but the local knowledge, decisions and verification must remain human.

By the end of this module, you should be able to recognise meaningful participation, choose a realistic contribution route, digitise a printed image, use AI for a limited support task, verify the result and create one complete Community Memory Entry. One photograph will not preserve an entire community history, but a careful record can keep a piece of that history understandable and available for the next person who wants to continue it.

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