Stories of educational spaces (SES)
Use and adaptive reuse of existing buildings/architectural elements

Description of Tool (what is it for and why?)

Stories of educational spaces is about tracking the archived and lived architectural and educational (hi)stories of a building for developing the future use and adaptive reuse of it.

In the tool activities, liked and/or interesting (learning) spots in the school in question are selected and their past, present and potential future use are tracked, described, discussed and developed. The spots are visited physically and processed on a worksheet. Assessment of the selected spots and their future potential happens through a wrap up-exhibition.

The tool can be used for local and self-driven development as well as for inputs into both smaller and larger renovation projects of existing buildings. The tool also has an important educative value, rising awareness and developing competences of the pedagogical use of the physical environment. The tool primarily involves teachers, but can also be used with pupils, school leaders, and architects and the workshops can be held with a mix of people across these different groups.

Tool instructions (how to use it)

The tool includes 3 consecutive activities: Preparation (step 1), workshop (step 2) and exhibition (step 3). The preparation (step 1) is performed individually or in pairs. Groups of 3-5 people are suitable for the workshop (step 2). Several parallel groups can meet for the final exhibition (step 3).

The worksheet for the workshop consists of 4 pages: A front cover with room to include a (large) photo of the chosen spot. Page 1 (‘the past’) for filling in the historical account, page 2 (‘the present’) for depicting the current condition and usage, and page 3 (‘the future’). Each page is split in two as to give room for both visuals (photos, drawings etc.) and written text/notes/stories.

Page 3 of the worksheet is duplicated so that everyone in the group has a single paper to work on in the last part of the workshop.
Step 1: Preparation (individual or in pairs)

Each participant chooses a spot at the school and takes a photo of it. Afterwards they fill out the pages about past and present usages of the spot in the worksheets for the workshop, page 1 and 2. The preparation is individual (or in pairs) and can take place any time before the workshop.

Criteria for choosing a spot: The following criteria for the spots to be chosen are only guiding and therefore open to be redefined in each individual case. The spots can be chosen on the basis of being perceived as a place for past, present or future important / interesting/ stimulating etc. educational activities. The spot may also be associated with a particular form of attachment or the like.

Step 2: Workshop (groups of 3-5 people)

The participants meet at the school in groups of 3-5 people. They visit the spots chosen by the participants in the group. For each spot/stop:

a) The participant responsible for choosing the spot shares his/her information about past and present usages.

b) Then there is a collective sharing and discussion of
   - earlier experiences and observations of usages
   - brainstorm on potential future usages

c) Finally, everybody draws or describes their idea of the best future usage of the spot. This is done on page 3 of the worksheet. The drawing/writing can present/describe one or multiple situations linked to the use of the spot.

Step 3: Exhibition (and assessment)

For each spot, the stories about past and present usages are exhibited together with all the suggestions for future usages.

All participants walk around the exhibition. They have three coloured stickers to place on the spots (or one of the suggestions) they find most valuable / potential and therefore recommend for further development.

Tool instructions (how to analyse it)

After the workshop and exhibition, the material should be gathered and the ranking and final conclusions written down. This will be the documentation and proposal for further action (whether this is in the hands of the participants themselves, a local committee or external partners such as architects or the like). It is important to appoint a person responsible for this part of the process. A sheet for recording ‘the results’ will be available.

Links to the project: https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/projects/eplus-project-details/#project/2019-1-UK01-KA201-061954 Twitter: @ILEHIGSE1 #CollaborativeReDesignwithSchools

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