

# How to start a project

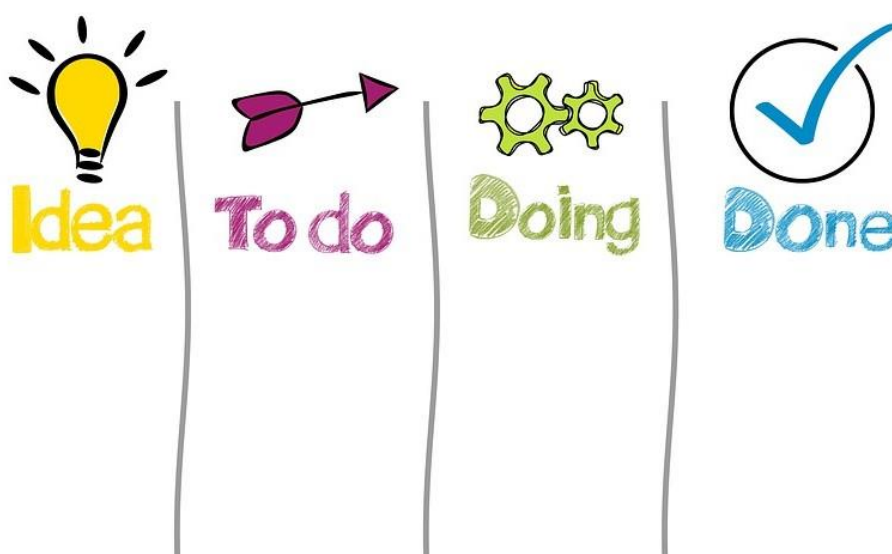


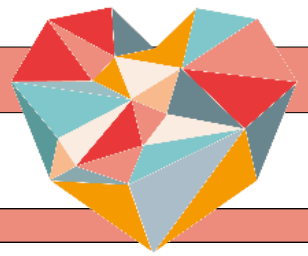
The heritage sector and the health care sector can join forces to develop a wide range of cultural participation for people with dementia. Local heritage actors in particular can add enormous value to the reminiscence effect. After all, they have the knowledge about the local history and the ideal material in-house to develop a range of reminiscence, especially tailored to family carers and people with dementia.

Healthcare providers have the know-how about dementia, so are also necessary partners. But how do you start such a project?

The local embedding is very important. In this way, local archives, museums and (heritage) libraries can offer inclusive activities, develop tailor-made services for people with dementia and their informal carers and thus get them out of their social isolation.

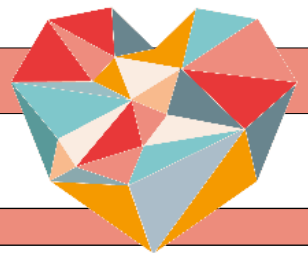
At the same time, they help raise awareness of dementia and create a dementia-inclusive society.





## Tips on how to start a project

- A good reminiscence offer is above all a sustainable offer. After all, it takes time to master all the skills of the reminiscence work. Building a relationship of trust with care institutions, informal carers and people with dementia also requires a long-term commitment from all partners.
- Therefore, always carefully check whether your cultural institution is capable of making a sustainable commitment for a longer period of time. Because nothing is more frustrating than a project that ends abruptly because the money has run out, or because the cultural institution has now found another interesting target group.
- Ideally, the offer for people with dementia and their informal carers is part of the regular operation of archives, museums, heritage libraries and care institutions. This means that it is not limited to an occasional project that "comes in" when additional resources are available.



## To work!

**To help you make a well-considered choice, here is a short step-by-step plan with an accompanying checklist. The chance that you will develop something new is very small. So look for inspiration from similar projects. Let yourself be inspired by colleagues.**

### *Know yourself*

Make a list of the possibilities and potential of the organization together with all involved volunteers and permanent employees. This will give you a picture of the internal context, which helps to avoid formulating overconfident or unrealistic ideas in the next step.

- *Why do we want to do this as an organisation?*
- *Which employees are willing / able to participate in the development of an offer? What is the profile of those employees (public employees, collection employees...)?*
- *Is the theme of dementia widely supported in the organization or is it an idea of one employee?*
- *What expertise do we already have in-house? Can employees receive additional training?*
- *Are there financial resources? On the budget or through project subsidies? How long are these financial resources available (6 months, 1 year, fixed in the budget...)?*
- *Are adapted rooms in the institution available for workshops?*
- *Is there room for adjustments in the workflow of the organization?*



## Develop an idea

Organize an internal reflection moment and involve one or more experts in dementia, people with dementia, informal caregivers or an experienced expert in developing reminiscence and cultural tools. Try to formulate one or more ideas for a cultural offer together, taking into account as many parameters as possible.

- *Take the local context into account. Is our operating area rural or urban?*
- *Which target groups qualify for us? Are we working out something that informal carers can work with themselves?*
- *Which collections could or would we like to use?*
- *What are the possible local or regional partners? Think as broadly as possible: other partners in the heritage sector, the cultural sector, the healthcare sector, expertise centers for dementia, and so on.*
- *Do we want to develop a receptive (target group to cultural institution) or non-receptive (to the target group) offer?*
- *Which cultural tools do we want to develop? Do we focus on digital tools, do we prefer physical collections (or facsimiles) or a combination of both?*
- *How do we make it sustainable? Is a business model possible?*

## From idea to concept

- Develop one (or all ideas) into a concept that you can present to a wider audience. In that concept, you also include why you, as a cultural institution, want to develop an offer for people with dementia and their informal carers.
- Present this concept to the widest possible group of possible partners that you have defined in your concept, supplemented with experts and experts by experience.
- Investigate whether the concept meets the needs and expectations of the healthcare sector and informal carers. If not, you have to redo your work. However, it may be that a dementia organization or care institution notices another element in your institution, for example a certain collection or a service that you already offer that you have not thought of yourself. Therefore also provide an accessible but complete presentation of the operation of your organisation and your collections.

## From concept to offer

- If the concept is successful, the next phase will then begin, in which you can further develop the range. The same rules apply for this as for the development of any arbitrary offer to specific target groups. In other words: work in very close consultation with partners and dementia experts and build in sufficient time to test and collect feedback.  
Constant monitoring and adjustment of the offer is also a requirement. Because what works for one, therefore does not work for the other. Don't be afraid to change course if, after intensive testing, the offer does not ultimately produce the desired result.

