

Conference Presentations 2025 – Abstracts

TIME TRAVELS AND THEIR ROLE IN ADDRESSING SOCIETAL ISSUES: A KWAZULU-NATAL STORY

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ABSTRACT

KwaZulu-Natal is a world-renowned beautiful province rich in its history and culture. From its iconic beaches, rolling hills and cascading landscapes steeped with traces of the of the iconic King Shaka kaSenzangakhona Zulu, the province has labelled itself as a must-see tourist destination. However, all that glitters is not gold.

The Province as a community is riddled with poverty, HIV/AIDS, poor service delivery, violence, crime, drugs, domestic violence and rape. Statistics place the province amongst the highest in the world. Interventions for addressing these issues are often few and far between.

The Time Travel method was in its essence designed to teach on local history and make heritage education much easier, however, the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Sport, Arts and Culture in addressing its vision of “A healthy, creative , winning and socially cohesive province through sport, arts and culture”, has alternatively been using the method to host Time Travel events that not only speak to educating participants about the past but also address current issues plaguing the province.

This paper will look to show how the Time Travel method has been used as an interventive measure to create awareness and address societal issues affecting the Province of KwaZulu-Natal.

GENDER INCLUSION IN CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION

Pendaeli Kuyan, ELCT Gender Justice Program, Tanzania

Future Vision:

Women take the lead in renewable energy, biodiversity, and agroforestry projects, empowered by gender-sensitive training, modern tools, and supportive policies like gender quotas.

Key Reflections:

- Learnings: Merging traditional knowledge with modern practices boosts sustainability.
- Challenges: Gender disparities in resources, education, and leadership persist.



- Vision: Gender-inclusive approaches enhance climate resilience and position women as leaders in environmental conservation.

Actionable Steps:

- Implement gender-sensitive climate policies.
- Provide women with education and technical training.
- Promote women-led initiatives in renewable energy, agroforestry, and water management.

Transforming Communities through Time Travel and Applied Heritage: An Impactful and Holistic Approach to Community Building and Education

Gulshera Kahn, Port Shepstone Twinning Association, South Africa, Bridging Ages International President 2019-2024

I am honoured to submit this abstract on behalf of the PS Twinning Association, showcasing our achievements in implementing the Time Travel (TT) and Applied Heritage approach. Our approach combines community building and educational support, employing social work methodologies of community development and group work to drive transformative impact. I will highlight our NGO's progress, community engagement, and national influence, demonstrating the versatility of the TT method across disciplines. This could be in museum services, education, heritage, research, health, social work, tertiary, tourism and religious institutions, et al.

Additionally, I will share our pioneering work in therapy at two children's institutions and the tourist potential of Time Travel and Applied Heritage, including its economic impact. As a former President of Bridging Ages International, current Board member and social worker, I will also discuss the broader implications of this approach.

Link between Ebbe's Time Travel method, reflection, and sustainability- its impact for the future

Dr B Gounden, South Africa

Ebbe's Time Travel Method, a pedagogical approach that immerses learners in historical events through role-playing and storytelling, offers profound opportunities for reflection, which can foster sustainability. By engaging participants in past scenarios, it encourages them to critically assess historical decisions, analyse their present-day relevance, and plan for future actions that prioritize sustainability. This method inherently promotes reflective practice, where learners are prompted to consider the long-term impact of their actions and decisions.

Reflection within this framework allows for a deeper understanding of the past, enabling participants to identify both sustainable and unsustainable practices. This knowledge encourages more informed decision-making in the present, helping individuals and



organizations align their actions with long-term sustainability goals. Furthermore, reflective practice fosters strategic foresight, essential for planning future actions that benefit both society and the environment. The link between Ebbe's Time Travel Method, reflection, and sustainability lies in its ability to engage learners actively. Through the process of experiential, relational, reflective, transformative and critical, learning participants examine the interconnectedness of time periods—past, present, and future. This enhances their understanding of how historical actions influence current challenges and future solutions, particularly in addressing sustainability.

In conclusion, Ebbe's Time Travel Method, when integrated with reflective practice, becomes a powerful tool not only for historical learning but also for promoting sustainable thinking. It allows learners to reflect on the past, critically assess the present, and make forward-thinking decisions that support a more sustainable future.

Between Tradition and Innovation: Using audio recordings in Time travel method by project (Success of project „Migrant“)

Dr Raimonda Nabažaitė, Klaipėda University, Lithuania

Klaipėda University has developed a new version of the Time travel product incorporating audio recordings as part of the international project 'Crossroads of History.' The 'Migrant' project introduces a new practice for all Time travel user communities and provides fresh insights into how we can adapt innovations for using the traditional Time travel method."

Leveraging AI and Technology for Immersive Historical Education: Enhancing Time Travel Experiences

Adv. Thabiso Maake, South Africa

As we commemorate the 20th anniversary of the Bridging Ages conference, this presentation explores the transformative potential of AI and technology in historical education through time travel experiences. By integrating advanced digital tools such as artificial intelligence, virtual reality (VR), and augmented reality (AR), educators can create immersive and interactive learning environments that bring the past to life.

AI-driven simulations and VR/AR technologies provide a unique way for learners to engage with historical content, enhancing memory retention and comprehension. These tools enable learners to explore historical settings and interact with AI-generated avatars, personalising educational content for a deeper understanding of history.

Furthermore, digital solutions democratise access to historical education, allowing learners from diverse geographical locations to experience high-quality historical narratives and simulations. This inclusivity extends to underrepresented perspectives, enriching the historical narrative with diverse voices and stories.



The presentation also highlights the role of AI in preserving and restoring historical artefacts and sites, ensuring that future generations can continue to learn from and engage with our shared heritage. Additionally, it examines how AI can simulate alternative historical scenarios, fostering critical thinking and a nuanced appreciation of historical causality.

By leveraging AI and technology, we can transform historical education, making it more engaging, accessible, and insightful. This approach enhances learning outcomes and fosters empathy and cultural understanding, bridging the past with the present to inspire future generations.

Are you prepared? A roleplay for young people in the period 1939-1945, used as a tool to reflect on a new security situation in Sweden today.

Malin Bäckström, Head of Education, Jamtli, Östersund, Sweden

Since 2022 Jamtli in Östersund offers a roleplay-program for nine-graders at the open air-museum. It "takes place" in the period 1939-1945 and is used as a tool to reflect on the new security situation in Sweden today, due to the war in Ukraine and other conflicts in the world.

"The Great Escape 1944, through the eyes of Estonian schoolchildren"

Pille Rothla, Audentes school, Estonia

Historical background: Late summer 1944 in Estonia, the retreat of German troops in Estonia and the powerful advance of Soviet troops have unleashed panic and anxiety across Estonia – memories of the events that took place during the previous Soviet occupation a few years ago (1940-1941) are still fresh in everyone's minds.

Big questions: What to do? Stay home or leave Estonia? With what and where to flee? And for how long? I would like to celebrate Christmas back home!

Topics covered in the presentation: The content of the scenario, the relevance of the topic based on today's political situation. How does this event speak to us today? What have we learned? What are children's fears and how to deal with them based on historical experience? Feedback from teachers, students and museum staff. Choices of TT topics and their justifications in schools.

Time Traveling to the Klondike Gold Rush

Scott Green, Bridging Ages U.S. and Canada

Join Gold Rush Stampeder Tin Cup Kelly as he looks at the value of the Time Travel Method from a time traveler's perspective. See how the Time Travel Method works for students in remote areas of Alaska and the Yukon.



Dressing Up History: The Educational Value of Clothing Studies. Case Studies on Teaching History from the World of Reenactment and Fashion Schools

Dr.ssa Sara Paci Piccolo, Independent Researcher, and Fashion Institute of Technology, New York/Florence, Italy

The interdisciplinary nature of dress research opens to us an intriguing landscape of inquiry, where historical methodology converges with more modern approaches to study, combining with different disciplines and recognizing clothing as an integral part of understanding social structures, power dynamics, the forging of identities, and technological advances through time.

Dress is a set of signs by which we 'express' our history, whether we are dressing today, for role-play, reenactment, or the stage, and “historical” dress is an important tool of this expression.

In my dual experience as a teacher and Public Historian, I have often wondered about the role of dress in our imagination. For the fashion creative, the history of dress offers aesthetic inspiration, but it is also an important tool for reflection on the Other: the materiality of dress, the economics of its production, the characterization of gender, religion, and census, allows us to analyse more clearly the future toward which we are heading.

Working with reenactment groups and history-inspired events, I have often observed different mechanisms in the choice of dress for an event, in the creation of a 'profile' for which it becomes logical to choose one character - and one dress - over another.

Again, dress allows for the expression of a deeper self.

Through two case studies, we will discuss how the study of history can become a respectable educational experience, even when it comes through the neglected field of dress and fashion studies.

Guardian Adventures designs emotionally engaging educational and transformative experiences for all ages through the power of culturally relevant story-telling and games.

Meghan Gardner, Transformative Design Director, Guardian Adventures, USA

Transformative Design is about creating games and experiences that cause a sustained change in people's perspective. In this presentation, she will talk about her work with Kalmar Läns museum as well as other organizations like The Smithsonian and CERN's Large Hadron Collider in creating engaging games and interactions for students and guests.

