

Quality for Culture

Standards, Accreditation Schemes and Quality Management Systems for the Cultural Sector

White Paper
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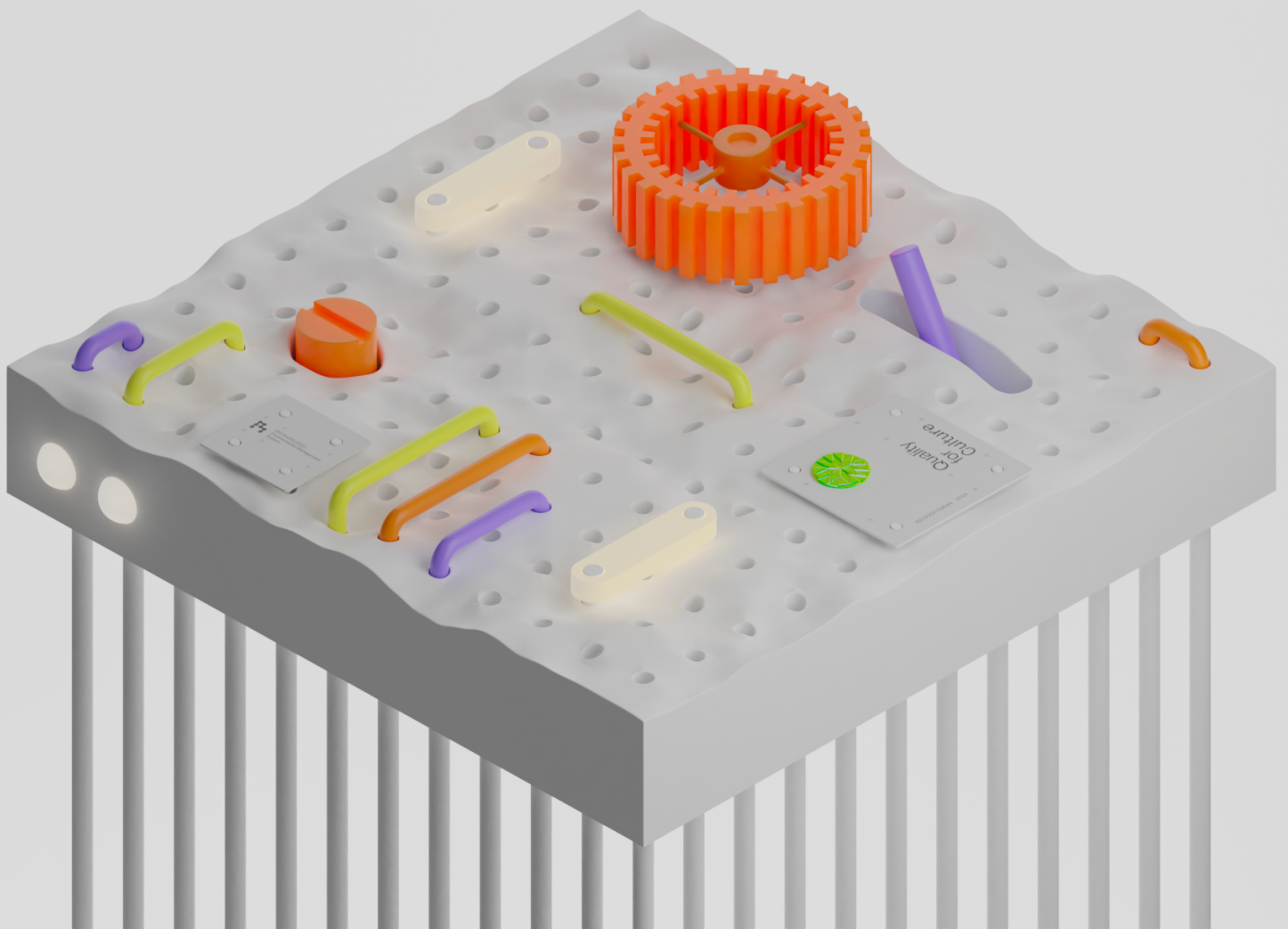
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Content

01.	Foreword	3
02.	Introduction	4
03.	Quality is a way of thinking (and acting)	5
04.	What are Quality Standards and why they matter	8
05.	Benefits of Standards and Quality Management Systems (QMS)	11
06.	Standards, Accreditations Schemes and QMS for the cultural sector	13
07.	Quality Management Myths	22
08.	Cases: Cultural Organisations certified to ISO 9001	25
09.	Recommendations & Tips	30
10.	Actions towards Quality Management	33
11.	Conclusion	38

“A project about quality management for the arts, seriously?” When Beth Ponte approached me in 2017 with the idea to apply for a German Chancellor Fellowship at the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation, she had some convincing to do. I did not doubt for a moment her ability to be a brilliant fellow in the programme, which is aimed at “tomorrow’s leaders” – I knew Beth Ponte from the ‘Global Cultural Leadership Programme’, a training and peer-learning programme organised by the EU’s Cultural Diplomacy Platform, where she was a participant in the first edition in 2016. Based on my encounter with her, I was impressed with her professionalism, her thirst for knowledge, her enthusiasm, and her visionary ideas for the cultural sector. Building on her experience as a young cultural leader with Brazilian orchestras, to me, she was not primarily a leader of tomorrow for the cultural field, but an aspiring and inspiring leader of today.

And quality management is the most exciting topic this person could think of for one year of research in Germany? I was somewhat disappointed. Was there a lot more to say about this topic than what had been discussed in a short, but quite influential wave of conferences and publications on the relevance of ISO norms for cultural organisations a few years ago? Wasn’t this a topic for administrators, controlling experts and consultants rather than a burning issue in the context of cultural leadership? Yet in the process of numerous conversations, Beth Ponte was able to convince me that I was at fault and that indeed, quality management for the arts is a topic that is relevant and has a hidden potential to play a substantial part in innovation and transformation for cultural organisations. Rather than looking at “quality management” as a concept foreign to the arts, that is forced upon cultural organisations from the outside – which it surely sometimes is –, she encouraged and challenged me to look at what “quality management” could become, when we look at it through the lenses of cultural sector. In its core, Quality Management can genuinely challenge the daily routines and help us to ask the big questions: What is our purpose? Who are our communities? How can we change our institutions for the better? In this light, quality management can become a critical perspective for innovation in cultural institutions in the 21st century.

I dare the reader to let go of their preconceptions of what Quality Management might or might not be, and to follow Beth Ponte’s line of argument with an open mind. In the White Paper, she makes a compelling case on how quality standards and practices are already a fundamental part of some sectors in cultural industry and how it can become a method supporting cultural leadership, innovation, and transformation. The Resource Guide Beth Ponte has compiled makes accessible a vast body of knowledge, tools, and best practice cases from the arts and for the arts. Both documents deserve a broad audience from arts management and cultural policy alike. Everyone with an open mind and interest in the ongoing development of the cultural sector will be rewarded with a rich toolbox and an essential source of methods to inspire and improve their organisations and projects.

Prof. Dr. Martin Zierold
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Few subjects in arts management are so feared and still so scarcely known as Quality Management Systems, Quality Standards and Quality Assessment. Many cultural leaders fear the “cultural standardisation” and see the adoption of Quality Management Systems (QMS) as a menace to artistic freedom and creativity. Some are interested in ways to improve the performance of their organisations, but assume that Quality Management is meant only for private or big institutions. Because standards and QMS were created and initially used in the industrial sector, it may be still difficult for cultural and creative industries to understand and use them – in all their variety – as tools for their own development.

This white paper – alongside the **Quality for Culture: Resource Guide** – is the result of a productive year as German Chancellor Fellow (2018/2019) of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation and as visiting researcher at the Institute of Arts and Media Management (KMM) in Hamburg. As a piece of research, it offers an introduction about the topic and lists several standards, quality management approaches and accreditation schemes for cultural sector, aiming to share practical content with cultural leaders, arts managers and practitioners. The study cases, practical tips and recommendations available in this study can help arts organisations to adopt a Quality Management approach, to pursue a quality certification or any other specific accreditation.

My relationship with Quality Management came from practice. I worked for several years as institutional director of a nonprofit organisation in Brazil dedicated to music education for children and young people. Between 2013 and 2015, we faced the great challenge of conducting a change management process across all the levels of our organisation. With the generous guidance of one of our dedicated board members, we began a learning and transforming journey through the creation (and later revision) of our mission and vision statements, the building of our very first strategic plan, radical and incremental changes in our governance model, sustainability strategies, communication policies and organisational structure. Without knowing it yet, we were adopting quality management principles, in a process that proved to be challenging, time consuming and continuous, but incredibly positive and transformational for our organisation.

Having had this experience, I was surprised to discover that so many arts organisations, in different countries and scales, still do not apply these management practices that helped us so much. I was even more surprised when I discovered that, on the other hand, there were arts organisations in Germany and in other European countries that adopted Quality Management Systems and were even certified to ISO 9001 standards. Would it be positive and feasible for every arts organisation? Where to begin? How does it work in the management daily life? These and other questions guided me throughout this research, which included visits to several arts organisations certified to ISO 9001, interviews with cultural leaders, consultants, quality management auditors and researchers, besides a wide extent of readings. It is a pleasure to share some of my discoveries – and new questions – with you.

Beth Ponte,
December 2019

Quality is a way of thinking (and acting)

Standards, Accreditations Schemes and Quality Management Systems are not the same thing, but they all have **quality** as a goal and share the same purpose to improve the management of organisations. Therefore, it is important to start by discussing the meaning(s) of quality in general, for the cultural field and for this study.

In its more general definition, according to Cambridge Dictionary, quality can be understood as “the degree of excellence of something”. This plain definition is useful for its flexibility: There are many ways to understand excellence, as well as many degrees in which it can be described and measure. In real life in the cultural sector, one can easily find two different approaches around the concept of quality. *Quality* is something always to be pursued. On the other hand, *quality assessment* is often something normally to be avoided.

No one engages into artistic creation not seeking to achieve excellence, which is something way different from being perceived by others as “good” or “bad”. And the agents – organisations and professionals – responsible for the promotion, distribution and protection of culture, also aim to perform their tasks with quality. Artists and managers: they all want to do their best. Nevertheless, when it comes to having the quality of their work discussed and assessed, resistance arises. And there are many valid reasons for this sort of reaction.

Not only is the notion of “artistic quality” subjective and personal but is also conditioned by social and historical contexts. This per se makes the idea of quality assessment for artistic works a controversial topic. Poor assessment can be misleading and damaging, especially when conducted by unprepared people/bodies, using questionable criteria or – as History reminds us – when used as instrument of control and suppression of freedom. Besides these factors, the idea and the practice of assessment is seldom related to what should be its main goal: learning and improvement. But it is time to look at quality – and quality management – from a different perspective.

“When used in the arts sector, the term ‘quality’ is commonly perceived as meaning something fit for purpose, meeting specifications and stakeholder expectations, achieving the very best results and outcomes, and quality is also applied to how an organisation is managed, how services or projects are run, and those who deliver the work.”

– Mary Schwarz, 2014, p.8).

This study addresses the topic of quality and quality assessment from the perspective of arts management. There are several recent initiatives focusing on how to define, measure and plan artistic quality, as well as quality metrics for work with children and young audiences, for participatory arts, for assessing peers and audience’s opinions, and for measuring the “artistic vibrancy” and artistic impact of projects

Quality is a way of thinking (and acting)

and organisations. If you are interested in artistic quality discussions and frameworks, check the Quality for Culture Resource Guide (Quality Management Principle 5 – Improvement) and our bibliography.

When it comes to arts organisations, quality of management should be as highly pursued as the artistic quality they aim to produce and share. From offices to stages (and backstage), quality should cross all the levels of an organisation. And for this to happen, it is important to understand some key ideas about quality management:

- Quality management is not perfection, a standard, a procedure, or a system: It is a way of thinking (and acting). It can take many forms and shapes and can have many names. What really matters is the attitude of reflecting upon our work and looking for ways to improve it continuously.
- Quality does not happen by chance: It should be intended, planned and assessed in order to produce improvement or change.
- Quality does not exist in isolation: It depends on key interconnected conditions and on clear communication throughout the whole organisation.
- Quality is multidimensional: There are several qualities, according to the aims and perspectives, and therefore several ways to achieve and measure quality.

Quality should be seen, planned and assessed through different “lenses”, as suggested by Rachel Blanche (2014) in the report *‘Developing a Foundation for Quality Guidance for arts organisations and artists in Scotland working in participatory settings’*, commissioned by Creative Scotland. It brings the useful concept – developed earlier by Seidel (2010) – of “lenses of quality”. It suggests that the question to be addressed when planning and assessing quality in the arts should then be *“what quality looks like from the perspective of... (our audience/our peers/our community/our partners/etc)?”*

“Ideas about what constitutes quality can and should vary across settings, depending on the purposes and values of the programme and its community. The task, then, is to produce a common framework for evaluating and assessing quality that accords with diversity of need and purpose across genres and settings. The approach must be a holistic one that enables different ‘qualities’ of each piece of work to be acknowledged, as well as recognising that experiences and expectations of quality will vary according to different stakeholders in the project.”

– (Rachel Blanche, 2014, p. 10)

Quality is a way of thinking (and acting)

A similar idea is present in Kenneth Hudson's (in Negri, 2009) concept of "public and private qualities" for museums. The public quality is related to the way a museum is experienced and perceived by its audiences. The private qualities are linked to the museum's operations regarding collection, conservation, research etc. The private qualities are intrinsically related to the qualification of the museum's personnel and are normally not visible to the regular audience. Though both dimensions of quality are interconnected, quality cannot be taken for granted: a high private quality – quality management – does not mean necessarily a high public quality – artistic and social relevance.

'Understanding the value and impacts of cultural experiences: A literature review', by John D. Carnwath and Alan S. Brown for Arts Council England (2014) also addresses value and quality from an organisational perspective. Based on Winn and Cameron (1998), the authors distinguish four types of quality: Quality of the product/artistic work; Service quality; Quality of the experience; and Creative capacity. They dedicate special attention to the latter, defined as "an organisation's ability to conceptualise and present excellent programmes that engage participants in culturally valuable, impactful experiences". According to them, the conditions for 'creative capacity' can be discerned in two categories – core elements that do not vary from organisation to organisation (such as technical proficiency, skill and artistry; community relevance; and critical feedback and commitment to continuous improvement), and conditional elements that may or may not apply to a given organisation, depending on its mission and programmatic focus (as supportive networks and sufficient risk capital).

The development of the cultural industry as an economic sector and as part of our public policies and civic lives, as well as the expansion and internationalisation of its activities, brought challenges for the management of its organisations. Similar to other industries, the cultural sector has been looking for ways to improve its practices and management. This study aims to show that the cultural industries are more familiar with standards, accreditations and quality management systems than imagined and that their strategic use can benefit not only the institutions but foster the development of the whole cultural sector.

What are Quality Standards and why they matter

Quality Standards are published documents that establish specifications and procedures designed to ensure the quality and reliability of materials, products, methods, and/or services. Standards are present in almost every industry, from technology to food safety, from agriculture to healthcare.

Originally, standards were meant to create a common understanding for (today) obvious things like weights and measures. With time, they developed into national or international norms for design and manufacturing of products, to ensure they do not represent harm or hazards to consumers. Nowadays standards are part of our modern life. From the tires in our car and buses to healthcare equipment or our wi-fi connection, it is likely that several products we use today were developed and improved due to the creation of industry standards. They provide common specifications for products, services and processes, to ensure their quality, safety and efficiency besides playing an instrumental role in facilitating international trade. Standards are not rules written in stone and are not enemies of innovation inside organisations. They are also constantly changed and improved and, as we will see later, they also play an important role in cultural industries.

There are several organisations worldwide responsible for the development of standards. The most prominent is ISO (International Organisation for Standardization), created in 1946 in London by delegates from 25 countries 'to facilitate the international coordination and unification of industrial standards'. Though originally oriented to industrial sector, the form and use of standards developed over the last five decades. From the exclusive focus on products, they became a tool for assessment and improvement of **processes** as well and have expanded their reach from the industrial to the service sector. In this shift from standards focused exclusively on **quality of products** to the embracing of **quality of processes** comes what today is called Quality Management.

Originated in the industrial sector of Japan in the 50's, the **Total Quality Management (TQM)** is described as a management approach to long-term success through customer satisfaction. It transcended the classical product quality approach, recognising all the sectors in the organisation as responsible for quality: Administration, Communications, Distribution, Manufacturing, Marketing, Planning, Training etc. Following the success of TQM, several quality management approaches were created, such as ISO 9000 Standards, EFQM Excellence Model, Six-Sigma, Lean, and others. It did not take long for the quality management mindset to influence other sectors and businesses.

If quality is the goal, a **Quality Management System (QMS)** helps you to plan a route. A common misconception around quality management systems – often reproduced in the cultural sector – is that a QMS depends on technology to exist or even that it is an IT system or software. It is also wrong to say that it is sort of a manual with restricted rules to be followed by an organisation – and from this angle, it is easy to understand why they are so repelled by cultural leaders. The truth is that a QMS is nor the former, neither the last. A QMS is simply a set of practices to organise and improve the quality of all the processes deployed by

What are Quality Standards and why they matter

an organisation to offer their services, products and overall activities. In a museum, for example, it would involve processes related to its main activities, such as collection acquisition, preservation, exhibitions, education, research, and also support processes for marketing, fundraising, staff management, safety and security etc. How to ensure that all these interconnected processes are done at their best? A Quality Management System offers pathways for that.

It is called a system because it refers to a group of interacting, interrelated or interdependent organisational processes and practices. These processes can be written in order to facilitate their sharing. They can be organized in a management book or uploaded to an intranet. But the documents per se are not the QMS, neither are the platforms we chose to share them: they are just a media to deliver a message. Using the journey metaphor, it does not matter that much if we use GPS navigator or a printed roadmap. The most important thing is to know where we want to go and the safe and (why not?) fun real journey that takes us there.

Quality Glossary

Quality Management System (QMS) is the collection of processes deployed by an organisation to offer their services, products and overall activities with quality.

Quality assessment is the action of measuring your work against a given standard – a statement of what is seen as effective delivery (by an individual or organisation) – and can include benchmarking, comparing activities, results or outcomes against what has already been achieved (by yourself, your organisation or another).

Quality indicators are agreed-upon measures for processes or outcomes used to determine the level of quality.

Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) is a proactive, cyclical routine of planning, doing, reviewing and improving – or enhancing – what is delivered and how it is delivered.

(Adapted from Schwarz M., 2014, p.9)

What are Quality Standards and why they matter

Differently from the prescriptive product standards, **quality management standards** are suggested guidelines of how organisations should manage their key activities. A given organisation that adopts quality standards can then seek recognition through an accreditation process, i.e. a formal verification that the institution meets established standards. A Quality Management audit is made by independent third-party certification bodies that provide confirmation of quality management requirements and can then certify the organisation, for instance, to ISO 9001.

Examples of some Quality Management frameworks used by nonprofit, cultural and public sectors

The **ISO 9001**, introduced in 1987, is the most famous international standard specifying requirements for quality management. The current version of ISO 9001 was released in September 2015 and there are nowadays more than one million companies and organisations, from a wide range of sectors in over 170 countries certified to ISO 9001.

www.iso.org

The **European Foundation for Quality Management (EFQM)** developed its own model for Quality Management in 1988. The EFQM Excellence Model is defined as “a non-prescriptive framework that can be used to gain a holistic view of any organisation regardless of size, sector or maturity”.

www.efqm.org

The **Common Assessment Framework (CAF)** launched in 2000 in Lisbon is the common European Quality Management instrument for the public sector. Over 2000 public sector organisations from 43 different nationalities or from the EU institutions were registered as CAF users.

www.eupan.eu/caf

Created in 2010, the **European Quality in Social Service (EQUASS)** is a sector-specific quality system designed for the social services sector and addresses quality principles that are specific to service deliver to vulnerable groups. EQUASS is an initiative of the European Platform for Rehabilitation (EPR).

www.equass.be

Benefits of Standards and Quality Management Systems (QMS)

Standards and QMS may not be mandatory for the cultural industries, but their adoption can benefit organisations and the sector in several ways. Among the main benefits, we can list the following:

- Standards establish important safety recommendations concerning buildings and collections, contributing towards the **protection and promotion of cultural heritage**.
- The adoption of standards or QMS, as well as an accreditation or certification process, can be a **capacity building process** for organisations, bringing self-awareness, team cohesion and helping them to improve their way of working.
- Some standards are necessary to ensure that organisations meet the **minimum requirements to become an integral part of an industry or to receive public funding**.
- Standards also help to **disseminate knowledge and best practices** within and between industries and sectors.
- QMS helps to **implement organisational changes** or to deal with changes triggered by economic or governance crises.
- They also provide people and organisations a basis for mutual understanding and are used as tools to **facilitate communication**. Clear processes and responsibilities help to reduce potential conflict between teams.
- QMS contributes to **strengthen organisational memory**. Individual knowledge becomes organisational knowledge and the risk of knowledge loss caused by staff turnover is reduced.
- A QMS certification or other types of accreditations helps to create a **positive public image** and validates of the organisation's work and accomplishments. It can increase the credibility among peers, audiences, funders, donors and sponsors.

Benefits of Standards and Quality Management Systems (QMS)

The seven Quality Management Principles

In the free publication **Quality Management Principles**, ISO presents the seven principles that serve as foundation for ISO 9000, ISO 9001 and related quality management standards. Quality management principles are a set of fundamental beliefs, norms and values that are accepted as true and can be used as a basis for quality management.

The Principles are:

QMP 1 – Customer focus

QMP 2 – Leadership

QMP 3 – Engagement of people

QMP 4 – Process approach

QMP 5 – Improvement

QMP 6 – Evidence-based decision making

QMP 7 – Relationship management

By taking actions aligned to each of these principles, organisations already begin to implement a quality management practice. In the final section of this Paper you have access to a list of actions towards Quality Management. Check also our **Quality for Culture: Resource Guide** to access 180 free arts management resources related to each principle.

Standards, Accreditations Schemes and QMS for the cultural sector

The cultural industry is very wide and comprises different types of organisations, with their own needs and management strategies. Even if standards and QM practices are adaptable to every organisation, of any size and from any industry, they are still often seen with mistrust by cultural institutions. They are considered by many as opposite to artistic freedom, creative innovation and incompatible with the unique features of arts as a professional field. Is that really so?

In this section we will see how quality standards are very familiar to some cultural organisations, such as museums and libraries, which have long developed their own standards, norms and accreditations schemes and how they have helped the development of these sectors. We will also show how arts organisations of different sizes and areas are making good use of quality management approaches lately, including not only the pursuit of ISO 9001 certifications, but the tailoring of specific Quality Management Systems for the cultural sector.

Standards

Museums and libraries were the pioneers on the creation of management standards in the cultural sector. The nature of their activities, the need for safety and conservation of their collections, alongside their longevity and wide international presence can explain the importance of standards and accreditation schemes among these organisations.

The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), founded in 1927, is the leading international body representing the interests of library and information services and their users. They have developed a wide range of quality standards, since the first standards for public libraries back in 1948. In partnership with UNESCO, IFLA developed the “Paris Principles”, a basis for international standardisation in cataloguing, approved by the International Conference on Cataloguing Principles in 1961. They have dozens of current standards and guidelines for different activities or services, from requirements for bibliographic records to guidelines for children’s library services.

Created in 1947, the International Council of Museums (ICOM) is a membership association and a non-governmental organisation which establishes professional and ethical standards for museum activities. Through its standards and guidelines, developed by internal committees and approved by its Executive Board, ICOM provides best practices to museum professionals in terms of objects acquisition, documentation of collections, descriptions, terminology, collections, security, conservation, personnel management and training, among others. Since its Guidelines for Loans (1974), ICOM has developed a series of standards on areas such as documentation and security, ethics, education and cultural action.

Standards, Accreditations Schemes and QMS for the cultural sector

The development of conservation standards for museums was also supported by UNESCO, that back in 1981 published the “Procedures and conservation standards for museum collections in transit and on exhibition”, written by Nathan Stolow. Below you can check examples of other standards for museums, such as the series of Conservation of Cultural Heritage Standards (CEN/TC 346) from the European Committee for Standardization, and the ISO Standards for International Museum Statistics (ISO 18461:2016).

*“A concern often arises when standardization is viewed as establishing restrictive measures by which the museum and museum staff are required to act and operate. Standardization is by definition the means to remove variations and irregularities and make all types or examples of a particular act or activity the same or bring them into conformity with one another. In other words, standardization on an individual level can be described as expecting the target group to perform a certain activity in the same or similar way. **There is a great difference between standardized practices and standardized outcomes, and it is the outcome – result – that is of importance to the museum profession.**”*

– Gary Edson, 2010, p. 18

Standards can also be used to create a common framework in other areas, such as arts education. In the US, the National Core Arts Standards were published in 1994, as nation's first standards for the design, delivery, and assessment of arts education in schools. The standards were updated in 2014, by a broad coalition of arts education associations partnered with leadership organisations and are currently adopted by 27 states in the country.

In all the examples, the development of standards responds to demands and needs of the sectors themselves and not to regulatory norms from governments and public bodies. Standards are dynamic and are also constantly under review. Their changes also reflect the development of the sectors over the decades; if in the beginning most museum standards dealt mostly with cataloguing or preservation procedures, nowadays they also focus on topics related to ethics, community impact, educational activities and governance.

Standards, Accreditations Schemes and QMS for the cultural sector

Examples of main standards for cultural industries:

Standards	Sector	Origin	Year
<u>IFLA Standards - International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions</u>	Libraries	International	1927
<u>ICOM Standards - International Council of Museums</u>	Museums	International	1947
<u>Core Standards for Museums - American Alliance of Museums</u>	Museums	USA	1996
<u>Spectrum - Museum Collection Standards</u>	Museums	UK	1994
<u>European Committee for Standardization - CEN/TC 346 - Conservation of Cultural Heritage Standards</u>	Cultural Heritage	Europe	2009 - 2018
<u>National Core Arts Standards</u>	Arts Education	USA	2014
<u>ISO 21127:2014 Information and Documentation – A reference ontology for the interchange of cultural heritage information</u>	Cultural Heritage	International	2014
<u>National Standards for Australian Museums and Galleries</u>	Museums	Australia	2016
<u>ISO 18461:2016 International Museum Statistics</u>	Museums	International	2016

Standards, Accreditations Schemes and QMS for the cultural sector

Accreditation schemes

Following the development and adoption of standards, several accreditation schemes were created, mostly for museums, to foster organisational development and provide recognition within the sector. An accreditation scheme is a tool that assesses the minimal standards of how a professional organisation should work. Ideally, the accreditation process enables cultural organisations to assess their current performance, working as an educational process for leaderships, personnel and governance bodies. The achievement of the accreditation, normally followed by a certificate, gives peers and other stakeholders more trust and can inspire confidence of the public, funders and governing bodies. The museum sector has a leading role on the development and adoption of accreditation schemes. The American Alliance of Museums accreditation was created in 1971, based on the Core Standards for Museums. It is a voluntary process, centered on self-study and peer review and should be done every 10 years.

One of the main references, for its reach and relationship with public policies, is the UK Museum Accreditation Scheme. Created in 1988 in response to demands from the sector itself, it is nowadays managed as a partnership between Arts Council England, the Welsh Government, Museums Galleries Scotland and Northern Ireland Museums Council. The accreditation covers all types and sizes of public museums and galleries and there are currently more than 1700 museums participating in the scheme across the UK. It has also been reviewed and incremented in the last years. In its beginning, it focused mainly on agreed standards on how museums and galleries should manage their collections. Today, the accreditation criteria include topics on governance and community engagement. Over the decades, the scheme contributed not only to the professionalisation of museums in UK, but also to the maturity and development of the whole sector. The accreditation helped to create a rich “museum ecosystem” in UK, in which institutions, government, and supporting agents, such as museum development providers (network organisations that support the development of non-national museums across England), and accreditation advisers, take part.

The UK scheme has been used as a model and source of inspiration in other European countries, such as the Netherlands, France, Austria, Germany and others. In some countries, accreditation systems were introduced in a top-down mode, to provide funding bodies with elements to manage public investment for museums. This may represent a risk, because when accreditation is not developed and supported by the sector itself, it can easily become a mere bureaucratic certification process, instead of a development and learning opportunity for organisations.

An interesting example of accreditation for other cultural organisations is the W.A.G.E. Certification. Created by Working Artists and the Greater Economy (W.A.G.E.), a New York-based activist organisation, the certification recognises nonprofit arts organisations committed to voluntarily paying artist fees that meet minimum payment standards. Since its creation, 73 arts organisations have been certified.

Standards, Accreditations Schemes and QMS for the cultural sector

Examples of main accreditation schemes for cultural industries:

Accreditation/Certification Schemes	Sector	Origin	Year
<u>Accreditation Program - American Alliance of Museums</u>	Museums	USA	1971
<u>UK Museum Accreditation Scheme</u>	Museums	UK	1998
<u>Museum Accreditation System</u>	Museums	Finland	1992
<u>HERITY International Certification</u>	Museums and Heritage	Italy	1994
<u>Museums Registration</u>	Museums	Poland	1996
<u>Decree for the recognition and subsidisation of museums (Heritage Decree)</u>	Museums	Belgium	1996
<u>Netherlands Museum Register</u>	Museums	Netherlands	1997
<u>Appellation Musée de France</u>	Museums	France	2002
<u>Österreichisches Museumsgütesiegel</u>	Museums	Australia	2002
<u>Museum Accreditation (Credenciação de Museus)</u>	Museums	Portugal	2006
<u>Museumsgütesiegel Niedersachsen und Bremen</u>	Museums	Germany	2006
<u>Museum Standards Programme for Ireland (MSPI)</u>	Museums	Ireland	2007
<u>Regione Emilia Romagna - Accreditation and Quality Standards</u>	Museums	Italy	2009
<u>W.A.G.E Certification – Working Artists and the Greater Economy (W.A.G.E.)</u>	Nonprofits and Arts Organisations	USA	2010

“Generally speaking, one could say that Accreditation Schemes and Quality Management Systems take a snapshot of an organisation from different angles and in a different way: the former tends to obtain a still image of an organisation, whereas the later can offer more of a moving picture. (...)”

Standards, Accreditations Schemes and QMS for the cultural sector

Accreditation systems are very well detailed when it comes to typical museum issues, such as conservation, documentation, etc., but, on the other hand, rather poor when it comes to identifying outcomes with regard to the audience and the community the museum serves. To put it very simply, standard systems are more concerned with the WHAT and Total Quality Models with the HOW. (...) Museum accreditation systems and Total Quality Models, indeed, should be seen as complementary and, where possible, should be used jointly to bring museums' performances to their full potential."

- Margherita Sani, 2009, pg. 54

Quality Management Systems

As we have seen, through the development of concept of excellence and quality for organisational processes (and not only for products), Quality Management Systems have become more flexible and suitable to the wide service sector. The museum sector was also a pioneer on the adoption of QMS and the adoption of ISO 9001 quality standards and similar certifications.

"QM models constitute non-prescriptive benchmarks (i.e. they do not define rules for implementation), which acknowledge the many ways to achieve excellence. They are valid for any type of organisation, as they provide a set of general criteria, which can be applied to large and small private businesses, public administration structures, non-profit organisations, etc. (...) As these models can be applied to so many structures, they need to be personalized. Therefore, each organisation should adapt the contents of the model to its own culture, nature, type of product/service, market, userneeds. The organisation should analyze the various elements of the model to see whether they can be applied, i.e. if they are able to add value to its performance, but most of all to see how to apply them without adding more bureaucracy to the organisation."

- Quality in Museums, 2009, p. 63

In 2000, an experimental use of the European Frame of Quality Management (EFQM) for museums was carried out in Italy as part of a project supported by the Cultural Heritage Institute of the Emilia Romagna Region. In the following years, some major arts organisations in Europe began to adopt QMS and achieve QM certifications. The Guggenheim Museum Bilbao was awarded in 2004 the Quality Silver Q, based on the EFQM, which made it the first European museum to have been certified in total quality. In the same year, the museum was also certified to ISO 14001, the international standard for environmental management system. Differently from standards and accreditation schemes, targeted basically to museums, cultural organisations from other sectors have been adopting Quality Management Systems. The list below presents examples of arts organisations from several countries that are or have already been certified.

Standards, Accreditations Schemes and QMS for the cultural sector

Examples of main cultural organisations certified to ISO 9001:

Country	Organisation	Sector	ISO Standard	Year
Germany	<u>Staatsgalerie Stuttgart</u>	Museums	ISO 9001:2015 / ISO 14.001	2014
	<u>Deutsches Bergbaumuseum Bochum</u>	Museums	ISO 9001:2015	1998
	<u>Festspielhaus Baden-Baden</u>	Performing Arts	ISO 9001:2015	2011
	<u>Concerto Köln</u>	Music	ISO: 90012008	2012
Austria	<u>Wiener Konzerthaus</u>	Performing Arts	ISO 9001:2015	2016
Greece	<u>Goulandris Natural History Museum</u>	Museums	ISO 9001:2015	2017
Kenia	<u>National Museums of Kenya (NMK)</u>	Museums	ISO 9001:2008	2009
Italy	<u>Pergolesi Spontini Foundation</u>	Performing Arts	ISO 9001:2008	2009
Romania	<u>ION Dacian National Operetta Theatre</u>	Performing Arts	ISO 9001:2008	2010
Switzerland	<u>Theater Winterthur</u>	Performing Arts	ISO 9001:2008	2009
	<u>Verkehrshaus der Schweiz</u>	Museums	ISO 9001:2015	2009
	<u>Augusta Raurica</u>	Museums and Heritage	ISO 9001:2008	2009
Spain	<u>Guggenheim Bilbao</u>	Museums	EFQM/ ISO 14.001	2004
	<u>MARQ Museo Arqueológico de Alicante</u>	Museums and Heritage	ISO 9001:2008	2006
Sweden	<u>Swedish National Maritime Museums</u>	Museums	ISO 14.001:2004	2016
Singapore	<u>Singapore Chinese Orchestra</u>	Music	ISO 9001:2000	2005

Standards, Accreditations Schemes and QMS for the cultural sector

There are also interesting examples of arts organisations that adopted a Quality Management practices, despite not seeking for external certification. It is the case, for instance, of the **Acropolis Museum**, in Athens, that created a special Department for Service Quality, and of two major German arts organisations: The **Staatstheater Stuttgart**, in Stuttgart, and the **Bayerische Staatsoper**, in Munich. Both have in their staff a Quality Management Officer, an employee responsible for the maintenance and update of quality practices.

The adoption of QMS to cultural sector is not limited to the application of ISO standards to arts organisations. Especially in German speaking countries there were also recent experiences of creation of tailored QMS for arts and culture organisations, such as the Quality System in Music Schools, in Germany; the Theatre Quality Frame, in Switzerland; and ONR 41000 (ISO for culture), in Austria.

Examples of QMS tailored for the cultural sector

Quality System in Music Schools (Qualitätssystem Musikschule): In Germany, the Association of German Music Schools (VdM) has developed the „Qualitätssystem Musikschule“ (QsM) in 2001. Based on the EFQM and self-assessment, the system evaluates around 300 aspects of good work at a music school. The system is general and works like an orientation, without prescribing details. In the end, the music school has a self-assessment with concrete evidence and actions to take towards quality. As a result, an EFQM certificate can be optionally purchased later.

Theatre Quality Frame - QMS for theatres and event venues: The Center for Cultural Management of the Zurich University of Applied Sciences (ZHAW) and the TQU GROUP Winterthur, with the Theater Winterthur as a pilot organisation, developed Theater Quality Frame in 2015. It is an impact-oriented quality management system for theatres and event venues, which is compatible with the ISO 9001 standard.

ISO for culture - ONR 41000 quality management for cultural enterprises: On initiative of the consulting firm Audiencing and with participation of a working group of 60 cultural leaders, the Austrian Standards Institute developed a quality management standard for cultural enterprises. The ONR 41000 „Quality management in cultural institutions according to ISO 9001:2015“ was published in 2015, in German, and is a manual for the implementation of the ISO 9001: 2015 standard in cultural enterprises.

Quality management synergy: The case of Finnish museums

Through the adoption of standards, an accreditation scheme and QM approaches, Finland is an interesting case for holistic development of the museum sector.

The Finnish legislation on museums dating 1992 (then reviewed in 1996 and 1998) already established minimum standards concerning the collections, the number and qualification of staff etc. – which rule public subsidy to Finnish museums. In 2005, an accreditation system based on self-evaluation and inspired by the Total Quality Management - EFQM Model was introduced. Developed in close cooperation with the museum practitioners, the model was tested during 2005 and 2006, and later opened up to all institutions in the country.

The system identifies the 239 criteria for assessing a museum (90 of which pertain to the management area and 149 to the museum's core activities). Particular attention is given to the context in which the museum operates, in order to assess its social role and the benefits it produces for the community. The evaluation was updated in 2016. The new evaluation model emphasises the importance of the operating environment, as well as the museum's own experience and content in developing a successful operational concept.

The Finnish case demonstrates that, even though standards linked to the subsidisation of museums already existed in the national legislation, the combination with quality management approaches and self-evaluation tools can support the continuous improvement of the sector.

www.museoarviointi.fi

Quality Management Myths

“We do not want to die for administration”.

The statement above was said by a cultural leader when mentioning the initial resistance of his team towards a quality management certification process (required by their main funder). It illustrates one of many common assumptions around quality management and standards for cultural organisations.

No organisation wants to “die for administration”, for sure. And what happens when a QMS is properly planned and developed in any organisation is quite the opposite: the organisation is healthier, and more time is left for creativity and innovation. Let’s then check some of the main assumptions and critics surrounding Quality Management and Standards in the cultural field and discover to what extent they are true or not.

Assumptions		True	Partially True	False
QMS comes from the private sector		●		
Why	As we have seen earlier, the Total Quality Management approach was created for the industry sector back in the 50's. But since then it has evolved and today is not only applicable for the service sector but has also been adopted by public and nonprofit sectors. The pursuit of quality belongs to every professional organisation.			
QM imposes rules and standards not adequate to nonprofit and cultural organisations				●
Why	Quality management does not impose any rules. It is made to improve the processes that are already adopted by the institution and prescribes best practices that can be adapted to each organisation's reality. The organisations themselves define what quality means and how they want to measure it, as well as which processes are relevant and should be described. In the museum and library sectors most of standards were created by peer organisations themselves, responding to real demands of the sector.			
The work in arts organisations cannot be standardised and should not have its quality measured			●	
Why	Despite some of cultural organisations' unique features, we must admit that not every work in arts organisations is creative work. Concerning their management procedures, they must work as any other institution and fulfil financial, legal and safety requirements. When those areas work well, it sets more time for creative work and for the fulfilment of the organisation's mission. Foremost, quality management systems do not define or evaluate the quality of art. There are though some assessment models and quality metrics for artistic, educational and participatory work, but they are not part of any Quality Management Systems.			

Quality Management Myths



Assumptions		True	Partially True	False
ISO Standards and other QM frameworks are meant just for private or big organisations				●
Why	They are meant for organisations of all sizes and areas, public, nonprofit or private. The size of the organisation impacts though the duration and complexity of the system. In small organisations the QM adoption can be even more simple: the processes are not so numerous or so complex, the sharing of processes can be done without IT systems or external resources.			
It is too time-consuming (and will steal time we could be using for creation or other activities directly related to the organisation's mission)			●	
Why	Indeed, the adoption of a quality management system (as also the pursuit of a sector accreditation) takes time. Accredited organisations normally say the most time-consuming phases are the beginning (creation or review of mission and vision statements) and the selection and writing of processes to be described and shared. A realistic minimum planning horizon for obtaining a QM certification is one year. But it does not have to stop other activities and projects. Many institutions say they do not have time to think about QM, but it frequently happens because they spent too much time solving the same problems in the same way.			
QM will increase the bureaucracy of processes				●
Why	Quality management should not be a "paper tiger" and is not meant to bring more bureaucracy to any organisation. Its intention is not to create new processes, but to improve the existing ones. Quality management also does not specify strictly how management and leadership are done. How the implementation takes place is left to each cultural enterprise itself, depending on its needs, size and context. Each organisation designs its own processes and adapts them to ensure continuous improvement. You can choose to map only the key and most central process for your organisation, or all of them.			
A QM Certification is expensive			●	
Why	The certification is not for free and should be renewed every year. But its price depends on the size of organisation (normally measured by the number of employees or processes), making it affordable even for small institutions. The certification is also not obligatory: organisation should pursue it only if it has a real need, for instance, in order to provide an internal incentive or to boost organisational image for partners and funders. If the reasons are clear, the certification costs should be considered an investment (as well as the other costs eventually involved in QMS).			



Quality Management Myths



Assumptions		True	Partially True	False
It requires extra personnel or external consultants (that the organisation cannot afford)				
Why	<p>Quality management does not require large personnel resources. The most important thing is to have the full support of the organisation's leaders. It is also recommended that someone inside the organisation takes care of quality maintenance (sharing and updating processes, helping sectors to improve their work and supporting external audits, if a certificate is to be pursued). The dedication of this person will decrease during the development of the Quality Management System. In most organisations, the QM officer dedicates a few hours of his/her week schedule or have a part-time job. Depending on the organisational capacity and management skills, it could be also useful to have an external consultant to guide the process or to train members of the staff, but it can be also managed through pro-bono work, support of partners and board members or even sharing consultancy costs with other organisation.</p>			
It requires investment in IT (software, intranet etc.)				
Why	<p>QM software or tailored software can help the sharing of processes and information, but they are not the only possibility. The bigger the organisation is, the more important is to find the right communication tools, but good communication does not require IT systems. You can share the main QM documents through a simple printed process book, upload the docs to the cloud, or through your own intranet system (if you have one).</p>			
It will make the organisation change its way of working				
Why	<p>It is true in the sense that the organisation changes for the better. Quality Management is not meant though to change your organisational culture and values, but to improve processes, facilitate the communication between sectors and to give the whole organisation a clear focus.</p>			
My team won't "buy it"				
Why	<p>It is perfectly normal to face resistance among some members of your team, but you will also find supporters (more than you imagine). People fear change, but in general they want to improve their work. Most of the time, they simply do not know what QM means in practice, so efficient and clear communication are the best allies in QM processes. The added value will be felt during the process and will certainly be reinforced when the results begin to appear and through the regular audits.</p>			

Cases: Cultural Organisations certified to ISO 9001

In this section we will present three different short cases to illustrate the adoption of ISO 9001 in cultural organisations. Based in Germany and Austria, these organisations show how Quality Management Systems can be feasible for big and small institutions in different profiles, from museums to performing arts, from public or private management.

(Case 1)

Wiener Konzerthaus

Founded in 1913, the Wiener Konzerthaus is one of the largest and most prestigious musical venues in Vienna, Austria. Since its foundation, it has been managed by the Wiener Konzerthaus Society, a non-profit organisation with only 11% of its expenditure covered by public funds (in 2018/2019). They have 120 employees and 120 ushers that, during the course of a season, are responsible for hosting around 940 wide-ranging events for ~ 600.000 visitors.

www.konzerthaus.at

Drivers for the adoption of QM:

Different factors influenced the organisation's decision to adopt a QM approach and to seek the certification to ISO 9001. In 2013, a new general manager was appointed, who was already familiar with Quality Management through his professional trajectory. The institution also faced some financial and operational challenges – declining subsidies and a rise of events per season, as a strategy to increase the revenues. The adoption of QM was also recommended and supported by board members related to corporate sector and started in the beginning of 2015. In December 2016, following independent audits by Quality Austria, they were the first Austrian arts organisation to be certified to ISO 9001:2015.

“When we started working on Quality Management at the Wiener Konzerthaus, we were not expecting enormous changes, just greater efficiency in our daily procedures. But looking back today on the changes that have occurred within the organisation since that time, we realise that we have actually achieved quite a transformation. We are not only working far more efficiently due to the implementation of process descriptions and working procedures, but participating in this project also influenced the people working at the Konzerthaus: Today, our staff is focused on a single strategy, people are aware of their responsibility and they are no longer afraid of proposing changes to certain procedures as the organisation as a whole is now clear and transparent. Taken all together, quality management clearly has allowed the Wiener Konzerthausgesellschaft to become more agile and flexible than before.”

- Eleonore van der Linden
Artistic Planning & Production / Quality Manager at Wiener Konzerthaus

Cases: Cultural Organisations certified to ISO 9001

Challenges	Strategies
By the time the QM process began, Wiener Konzerthaus was 102 years-old and had an established organisational culture, making the change process more challenging.	They started the process by reviewing and then changing the organisation's mission and from the very beginning carried out communication actions about the QM process with the whole staff.
They underestimated the complexity and duration of the process, especially regarding the mapping of processes and procedures.	In the beginning, they counted on the support of consultants. For mapping processes and procedures, they created a work group of 8 people (not necessarily the head of the departments) and paid special attention to the interface between processes and different sectors.
	According to their own context, they developed different planning processes for long-term projects (big productions and events with international guests, normally planned 3 to 5 years in advance), for their annual season and for their daily and weekly activities (rehearsals, maintenance, guided visits, etc.)
There was skepticism about QM and resistance to the organisational changes among some members of the staff.	Besides investing in clear communication with the team since the beginning, they appointed a member of staff with deep organisational knowledge, then responsible for artistic planning, as the QM officer. It helped to build trust among the staff.
	They also realised that some sectors – the stage and building management teams, for instance – were already used to fixed procedures, check lists and norms and they were allies in showing benefits of QM process throughout the organisation.
How to make all the processes and procedures available for all the employees in a big organisation.	They adapted an event management software they have already used for years and have plans to build an intranet.

Cases: Cultural Organisations certified to ISO 9001

(Case 2) Staatsgalerie Stuttgart

The Staatsgalerie Stuttgart celebrated its 175th anniversary in 2018 as one of the biggest public museums in Germany. Their varied collection with more than 400.000 works is presented in three different buildings: a classic building of 1843, the famous post-modern Stirling Building, and the Steib Halls constructed in 2002. The Staatsgalerie is maintained by the state of Baden-Württemberg and organised as a state enterprise financed by public funds, entrance fees, donations and sponsorship. They have around 220.000 visitors per year and 220 staff members.

www.staatsgalerie.de

Drivers for the adoption of QM:

Since 1984, with the renovation and construction of new buildings, the Staatsgalerie has tripled its size and doubled its personnel. In 2008, they got more administrative and financial autonomy with the transformation into a state enterprise. These factors turned the operation and communication processes more complex and raised the already existing needs for planning and management procedures. The adoption of a Quality Management System was suggested by the top management and supported by the government bodies. The process began in 2012 and, in 2014, they achieved the 1st ISO 9001 certification, followed by ISO 14001 (environmental management) and ISO 50001 (energy management) certifications. Nowadays, the museum is a reference in Germany and offers guidance in controlling and management to other public museums in the region.

“The Staatsgalerie was certified for the first time according to ISO 9001 in 2014. The time after certification has shown that the QM for the Staatsgalerie Stuttgart has met the objectives of preparing the institution for social and political change, without losing sight of its educational and scientific mission.”

- Dr. Sabine Hirschle,
Head of Administration Department and Quality Manager, Staatsgalerie Stuttgart

Cases: Cultural Organisations certified to ISO 9001

Challenges	Strategies
As happens in many public funded organisations, despite their long history they did not have a clear organisational identity, mission statement and process map.	They started the QM from the very beginning, building a mission statement and organisational identity, in a process that involved different sectors. A kick-off event was made to announce and explain the Quality Management process for the whole organisation.
There was skepticism about QM due to previous change management processes conducted by external consultants in the past.	They appointed someone from the team as responsible for QM. This person was supported by consultants.
	They began mapping and documenting processes that could bring direct benefits for employees (vacations, training requests etc.). This helped the team to see the positive impact of clear processes and procedures.
How to make all the processes and procedures available for all the employees in a big organisation.	They opted for developing a software (QM Webportal) for sharing and managing QM documents, that now works as an internal communication tool.

(Case 3) Concerto Köln

Concerto Köln is a Baroque music chamber ensemble based in the city of Cologne, Germany. Founded in 1985 by students of the Cologne Conservatoire, the orchestra is a private association formed by the own musicians (currently a core group of 13 musicians). The orchestra is a reference in historically informed performance practice and has been awarded major national and international prizes, including the Grammy Award. They are mainly funded by touring activities, tickets and album sales (80% of their revenues), sponsorships and a small percentage of government subsidies for special projects. They have a small and efficient management team, varying from 4 to 7 staff members.

www.concerto-koeln.de

Cases: Cultural Organisations certified to ISO 9001

Drivers for the adoption of QM:

The idea of adopting a Quality Management approach and seeking certification was brought by one of the sponsors of the orchestra, the TÜV Rheinland, a company responsible for technical inspections and for ISO 9001 accreditations. Being a longtime partner of Concerto Köln and being interested in supporting this pilot project, they offered a discount and organisational assistance. The QM process was also supported by a small public grant, as a pilot experience for small cultural organisations. The QM process began in 2011 and in April 2012 they were the 1st German orchestra ever to be certified to ISO 9001. They renewed it until 2017, when they decided not to pursue a new certification, though keeping the Quality Management approach in their administrative activities.

“Two aspects of quality management have significantly influenced our work: the thorough examination of our internal structure including the defining of processes and responsibilities, and the continuous monitoring and evaluation of the defined processes. Both aspects are invaluable for every ensemble in order to eliminate errors and allocate resources responsibly. Whether this is assessed through certification or by means of a self-defined controlling system is both a question of financial resources and of self-discipline.”

- Jochen Schäfsmeier,
Managing Director , Concerto Köln

Challenges	Strategies
Finding the real motivation for Quality Management	The idea of pursuing a QM certification began as a marketing strategy and a pilot project, but it only worked and brought positive impacts when it was understood as a learning and capacity building process.
Lack of knowledge about QM	Besides having the support of a consultant – as result of the partnership with their sponsor – the CEO also attended training activities about QM to be better prepared to conduct the process.
Mapping and sharing processes	They decided to map only the main management process, excluding the artistic activities. In total, they mapped 22 key processes and 11 procedures (regarding touring, booking concerts, etc) and documented them in a QM Book, available for the team.

In case your organisation decides to adopt a Quality Management System and achieve an external certification, or even to be accredited in some specific scheme in your field, it is important to be prepared and learn from experiences of other organisations. In this section we share some concrete lessons from the implementation of Quality Management in cultural organisations, based on interviews with ISO 9001 certified arts organisations and on information available in the book “ISO for Culture” (Knava, I; Heskia, T, 2016).

Starting point

- The quality management process has better chances to succeed when it is a self-initiated project. But if the certification or accreditation is requested by some external agent (public bodies or funders), take it as a chance for capacity building and for conducting some changes your organisation may already need. The motivation for quality should be clear to the whole organisation.
- Leadership involvement and full support to QM is key and sets the example for the whole organisation.
- At the beginning of the process, a kick-off event with the whole team is recommended, with enough time for questions. After that, the staff should be informed regularly about the current status of QM implementation.
- Look for partnerships to decrease or eliminate the costs of QM implementation. Board members, sponsors or corporate partners that could coach members of your team. Try to get information with other certified organisations or even share consultancy costs with partner organisations interested in QM.

Human Resources

- It is important to have an employee in the organisation that can take care of the QM – the so called QM officer or QM manager. This person can dedicate part of his/her time to QM activities and should have enough knowledge about the organisation and a good relationship with the other sectors. Frustration can arise when energy for change is invested and these changes are not implemented.
- The QM officer should be entrusted with enough power to perform his/her tasks. It is important that he/she is authorized to give instructions to ensure the quality management system and the defined processes.

Mapping processes and sharing QM documents

- You do not have to map all organisational processes. Focus on the areas or on the processes that do not work well or that could work better; processes that are always prone to mistakes or those related to a real and actual risk. By improving these processes, you will show the positive impacts of QM and inspire the team.
- When producing key QM documents or drawing the processes, use terms that are familiar to your sector and make its language accessible for all the members of your organisation.
- An effective communication is what keeps QM alive. Look for communication solutions that better fit to your organisation profile and way of working. It can be a printed QM book, a shared folder on your server or in the cloud; your existing intranet or even a tailored software. The most important is to guarantee that all the information is available for the teams through a channel that they will really use on a daily basis.

Certification

- Quality Management can be adopted without certification. Evaluate if there is a real need for it before engaging in an audit process. For most of organisations it works as an internal incentive for continuously reviewing and improving their process and seeking quality. It can also help to boost your image with your stakeholders, but in no case should the certification be the end in itself.
- Audits cannot be turned into a stressful process; they must be seen as a chance for improvement and learning.

Change and resistance

- Despite being in the end, this is probably the topic that requires most attention for organisations looking to adopt quality management practices, because this is foremost an organisational change process. How the organisations plan themselves for change and how they manage it can be the difference between surviving and thriving in the attempt of pursuing quality management.
- Change management involves working with organisation's stakeholder groups – in this case, the employees – to help them understand what the change means for them, helping them make and sustain the transition and working to overcome any challenges involved.
- The underlying basis of change management is that people's capacity to change can be influenced by how change is presented to them. Therefore, it is central to present Quality Management in a transparent and feasible way, focusing on the benefits it will bring for the organisation.
- Successful change projects require a full, realistic understanding of the upcoming challenges and complexities, followed by specific actions to address them. Lack of early insight leads to a high risk that complexity will be underestimated or even overlooked.
- For some employees, change processes can mean loss of autonomy or competence limitations, and can also lead to resistance. The top management as well as the QM officers should consider these phases of change experienced by the staff when choosing the forms and measures of communication, as well as in project planning and implementation.
- Prioritise process design that can bring clear benefits to employees (e.g. internal training policies, vacation criteria etc.)
- Employees feel valued when their own work is presented and they have a chance to improve their performance. QM also sheds light on activities that are otherwise rarely considered and have received little appreciation. The added value of the QM will certainly be felt during the process and through regular audits.

Actions towards Quality Management

At the end of this White Paper, we offer a list of practical actions towards Quality Management. This list is an adaptation of the actions shared in the **ISO Quality Management Principles** publication. Published in 2015, it presents the seven quality principles that constitute the basis of all their quality management standards. Check also our **Quality for Culture: Resource Guide** to access resources from the cultural sector related to each principle.

Quality Principle	Statement
QMP 1 Customer focus	The primary focus of quality management is to meet customer requirements and to strive to exceed customer expectations.
Actions you can take	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Recognise direct and indirect beneficiaries (audience, visitors, community, users, students etc) as those who receive value from the organisation. ● Understand beneficiaries' current and future needs and expectations and communicate them throughout the organisation. ● Plan, design, develop, produce, deliver and support goods and services to meet beneficiaries' needs and expectations. ● Link the organisation's objectives to beneficiaries' needs and expectations. ● Include diverse audiences and communities. ● Pay attention to different needs of beneficiaries with disabilities and eliminate or reduce barriers for their presence and participation in your activities and events. ● Measure and monitor beneficiaries' satisfaction and take appropriate actions. ● Determine and take actions on stakeholder's needs and expectations that can affect beneficiaries' satisfaction. ● Actively manage relationships with beneficiaries to achieve sustained success. ● Create strategies to address and solve complaints and communicate them throughout the organisation.

Actions towards Quality Management

Quality Principle	Statement
QMP 2 Leadership	Leaders at all levels establish unity of purpose and direction and create conditions in which people are engaged in achieving the organisation's quality objectives.
Actions you can take	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Communicate the organisation's mission, vision, strategy, policies and processes throughout the organisation. ● Create and sustain shared values, fairness and ethical models for behaviour at all levels of the organisation. ● Open space for diversity in the boards and decision-making spaces in your organisation. ● Distribute leadership among your team and encourage the "lead from any chair" approach. ● Establish a culture of trust and integrity. ● Encourage an organisation-wide commitment to quality. ● Ensure that leaders at all levels are positive examples to people in the organisation. ● Provide people with the required resources, training and authority to act with accountability. ● Inspire, encourage and recognise people's contribution.

Quality Principle	Statement
QMP 3 Engagement of people	Competent, empowered and engaged people at all levels throughout the organisation are essential to enhance its capability to create and deliver value.
Actions you can take	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Communicate with people to promote understanding of the importance of their individual contribution. ● Promote collaboration throughout the organisation. ● Facilitate open discussion and sharing of knowledge and experience. ● Empower people to determine constraints to performance and to take initiatives without fear.

Actions towards Quality Management



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Adopt new work practices according to your activities and team's profile. ● Recognize and acknowledge people's contribution, learning and improvement. ● Stimulate diversity in the workplace, supporting applications of candidates from minorities and different backgrounds. ● Create your own Code of Practice and take concrete actions to prevent workplace discrimination, harassment and bullying. ● Enable self-evaluation of performance against personal objectives.
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Quality Principle	Statement
QMP 4 Process approach	Consistent and predictable results are achieved more effectively and efficiently when activities are understood and managed as interrelated processes that function as a coherent system.
Actions you can take	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Define the key organisational processes and create an organisational map. ● Describe the main processes and procedures and make them available for the whole organisation. ● Establish authority, responsibility and accountability for managing processes. ● Understand the organisation's capabilities and determine resource constraints prior to action. ● Determine process interdependencies and analyse the effect of modifications to individual processes. ● Manage processes and their interrelations as a system to achieve the organisation's mission effectively and efficiently. ● Ensure the necessary information is available to operate and improve the processes and to monitor, analyse and evaluate the organisational performance.

Actions towards Quality Management

Quality Principle	Statement
QMP 5 Improvement	Successful organisations have an ongoing focus on improvement.
Actions you can take	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote an evaluation culture throughout the organisation. Start every new project with the establishment of quality goals and its meaning for the teams involved. Establish improvement objectives at all levels of the organisation. Educate and train people at all levels on how to apply basic tools and methodologies to achieve improvement objectives. Ensure people are competent to successfully evaluate their projects and deploy the lessons learned from it. Track, review and – when needed – audit the planning, implementation, completion and results of projects. Integrate evaluation's considerations into the development of new projects, processes or activities. Recognize and acknowledge improvement.

Quality Principle	Statement
QMP 6 Evidence-based decision making	Decisions based on the analysis and evaluation of data and information are more likely to produce desired results.
Actions you can take	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine, measure and monitor key indicators to demonstrate the organisation's performance. Make all data needed available to the relevant people. Ensure that data and information are sufficiently accurate, reliable and secure. Analyse and evaluate data and information using suitable methods.

Actions towards Quality Management



Actions you can take	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Ensure people are competent to analyse and evaluate data as needed. ● Make decisions and take actions based on evidence, balanced with experience and intuition. ● Evaluate and manage risks that can affect the organisation.
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Quality Principle	Statement
QMP 7 Relationship Management	For sustained success, an organisation manages its relationships with interested parties, such as suppliers.
Actions you can take	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Determine relevant interested parties (such as suppliers, partners, customers, investors, employees and society as a whole) and their relationship with the organisation. ● Determine and prioritize interested parties' relationships that need to be managed. ● Establish relationships respecting your values and ethics guidelines. ● Pool and share information, expertise and resources with relevant interested parties. ● Measure performance and provide performance feedback to interested parties, as appropriate, to enhance improvement initiatives. ● Establish collaborative development and improvement activities with main stakeholders, partners and other interested parties. ● Encourage and recognize improvements and achievements by main stakeholders and partners.

Quality Management exists before and beyond standards, accreditations and systems. At the same time, it is important to acknowledge their importance for certain areas and organisations in the cultural sector. Its development in different countries and eras shows the continuing interest of the cultural sector in quality management practices.

Standards have proven to be very useful and necessary for the long-term development of specific sectors in the cultural and creative industries, as the case of museums and libraries. The adoption of standards helped bring security, standardisation and a common international basis to these organisations (responding to the internal demands of the sectors and its peculiarities). They were also strategically used as a tool for documenting and sharing the best practices that today are an essential part of these industries. An organisation does not have to adopt quality management standards, develop a quality management system and go through an accreditation process to be well managed. But all the sectors can benefit from the adoption of quality management principles.

The pursuit of quality management certifications as well as accreditation processes can also provide internal and external incentive for the organisational development of cultural institutions. Much more than having a certificate – that is, a public recognition of the quality of its management – those who face a quality management process as a learning and development process claim to be transformed for the better. They can serve as an example for other organisations who need to embrace change, improve their work or create their own quality strategies, either through existing quality management standards (ISO 9001 or EFQM Excellence Model) or not.

Standards, accreditations and quality management systems will make even more sense and are more likely to be embraced by the cultural sector at large if understood as tools for dialoguing with the future rather than framing the present – or even the past – of how our cultural organisations work. In the new challenging times, organisations that thrive will be those that fear no change, those that know what quality means to them and their communities, and those that work to incorporate it as a lifelong way of thinking (and acting) about all their work.

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[back to summary](#)

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