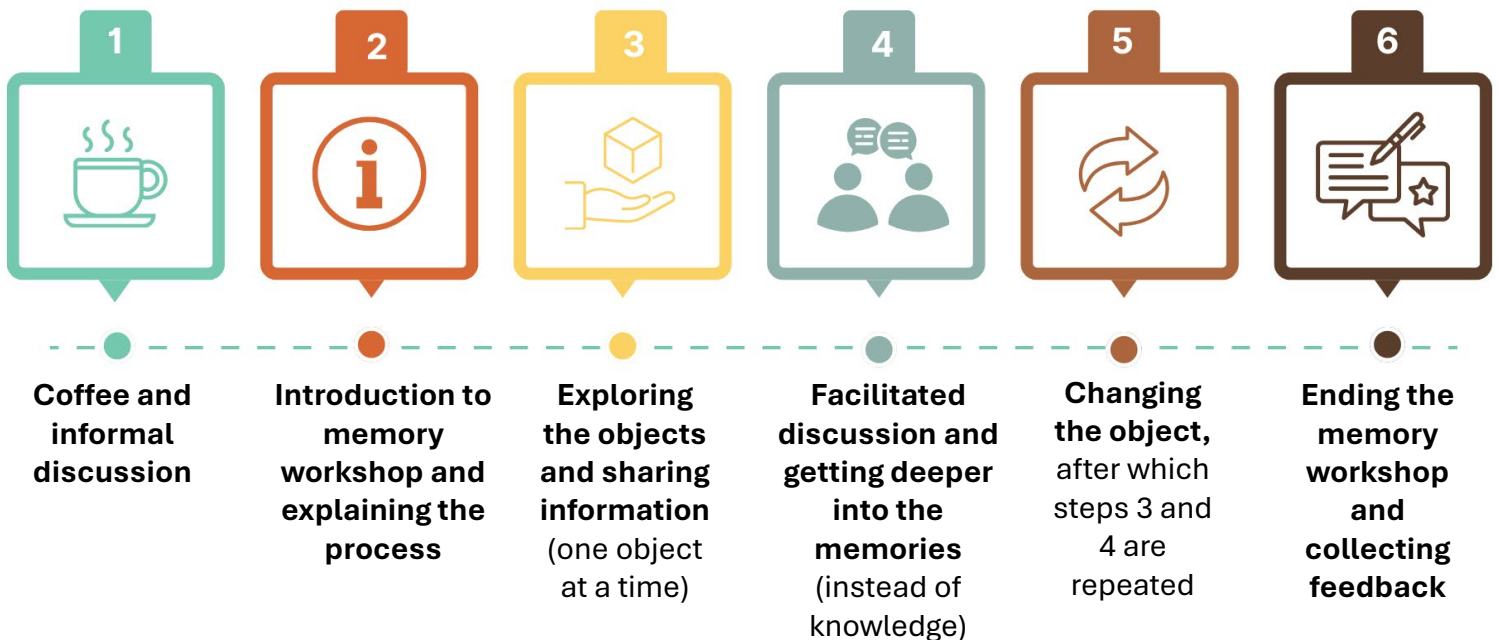


# Lives of Objects – Memory workshop

**Objectives:** To learn about old objects; share stories and experiences through objects; reminiscing together; strengthen the sense of community; to record the stories of elderly men for the museum; to attract elderly men to the museum

**Target group:** Elderly men who are interested in old objects and sharing their own memories. Especially suitable for already existing groups (e.g., men's groups, hobby groups, association groups).

## Memory workshop flow step-by-step



**Key contents and themes:** Sharing knowledge related to objects by both men and experts, reminiscence related to objects, personal stories

### Participant:

- Shares knowledge about the objects
- Shares memories related to the objects
- Listens to others
- Actively participates in the discussion



### Facilitator:

- Shares knowledge about the objects
- Guides the discussion and, if necessary, brings it back to the topic
- Ensures that everyone is heard and, if needed, allocates speaking turns
- Encourages and supports

## Materials and objects:

Items brought by the participants (e.g., ice cream maker, old cigarette box) and additional items from the museum (e.g., ice cream packages, other brand old cigarette boxes)

## OR

The museum's own objects decided in advance, e.g., around a specific theme (such as childhood toys, outdoor gear and fishing equipment)

Feedback survey

**Note!**  
**Up to 2-3**  
**items**  
**maximum**

**Objects should be touchable.** If the object is a piece of equipment, men are often interested in trying its disassembly/ assembly/ technology in general.

It is also interesting to see the same object in different eras: how has it changed over time.

## The participants' own items or museum objects?

If participants bring their own objects, the memory workshop will require more coordination. In an hour-long discussion, there is only time to discuss a maximum of three objects, so participants must know in advance if everyone's objects are not included in the discussion.

From the point of view of implementation, an easier way is to use the museum's own objects. In this case, special attention should be paid to marketing: which objects are of interest and what should be told about them in advance? A clear theme is probably a good approach here as well.

## Resources

Personnel	Facilitator for the memory workshop (with museum expertise and group guidance skills) (Documenter) (Support)staff for planning, marketing and implementation
Time*	Memory workshop 1,5–2 h Planning and preparation ~6–8 h Marketing and reaching participants ~3–5 h Feedback and documentation ~1–4 h
Space and equipment	An accessible space where participants sit around one table. Participants should be able to see each other and materials clearly. Good lighting and the possibility to showcase objects appropriately. Objects can be presented first as images using a video projector. For possible audio recording, a recorder or phone, which should preferably be placed in the center of the table.
Budget*	Implementation is possible with a modest or larger budget depending on choices : coffee service, acquisitions of the objects, and documentation tools. Rough estimate for personnel costs 220–400 €.

\* The workload and budget of the memory workshop depend a lot on the choices made: refreshments can be modest, and the objects may already exist. The need for coordination decreases if the museum's own objects are used, and marketing efforts can be reduced if a suitable partner is found to help reach the groups. The method of documentation, the facilitator's experience and how much material is already prepared also have an impact.

## Highlights from the feedback

THIS WORKED QUITE WELL

**REMINISCING ABOUT OLD THINGS**

OLD ICE CREAM MEMORIES CAME BACK

Discussion about past times and childhood **COLORFUL DISCUSSION**

Objects' usage history and changes over decades

**Small hand tools** Old machines **INTERESTING DISCUSSIONS**

Hiking/fishing equipment Sports equipment from over the years

**DIFFERENT THEMES FOR REMINISCING FROM VARIOUS FIELDS**

Could have more objects

Things never seen/experienced before

## Recommendations and tips:

- It's best to keep the group size small (around 6 participants). If stories are being recorded at the same time, the group can be even smaller.
- Allocate at least 1 hour for the discussion part of the memory workshop.
- Seating should be carefully planned before the workshop: sitting around one table ensures everyone can participate equally.
- Try running the workshop with different themes (e.g., childhood, school years, work-related objects).
- Accessibility can be improved by first showing the object as an image using a projector, so everyone sees it simultaneously and it can be enlarged if needed.
- If participants don't know each other, more time will be needed for "warming up." Serving coffee at the start works as an icebreaker and creates an inclusive atmosphere.
- Documentation of the discussion may not work well with just a recorder, so it's helpful if another person documents alongside the facilitator.
- Consider participants' special needs (e.g., assistive devices, possible memory issues) whenever possible.

**Permissions:** If stories are, for example, recorded, remember to obtain (written) permissions for recording the discussions and for any future use of the recordings.

### Partners and reaching the target group:

- Pensioners' associations
- Housing services and home care for the elderly
- Hobby groups and associations
- Men's groups
- Local Facebook groups

### Appendices and materials

- [Example of work phases and time spent](#)
- [Facilitator support questions](#)
- [Feedback form](#)
- [Business Model Canvas](#)
- [Photos and experiences on the project's website](#)

## Appendix 1

# Example of work phases and time spent

### Estimate working hours for a memory workshop (total approximately 11–20 hours)

#### Planning and preparation (6–8 h):

- Designing the concept and structure
- Selecting and acquiring objects (from the museum or participants)
- Collecting and preparing information related to the objects
- Arranging the space and preparing materials (e.g., feedback forms)

#### Marketing and reaching out to participants (3–5 h):

- Designing and producing marketing materials (e.g., invitations, brochures) ~2 h
- Contacting the target group and managing registrations (~2–3 h)

#### Implementation (2–3 h):

- Facilitating the memory workshop (1–1.5 h)
- Serving coffee and collecting feedback (0.5 h)
- Preparing and clearing the space (0.5 h)
- Possible documentation (e.g., audio recording, photography, notes)

#### Feedback and documentation (1–4 h):

- Reviewing and summarizing feedback
- Recording possible development notes
- Reviewing recorded stories and categorizing them for potential future use

## Appendix 2

# Facilitator support questions

### Tips for the facilitator:

- Be present, show interest and understanding, nod
- Demonstrate active listening by repeating the narrator's expressions or words, e.g. "You just said...", "Could you tell more about that..."
- Support everyone's participation, including the quieter ones; let everyone share their own story about the object. Remind participants (if needed) about talking over others. You can redirect the conversation from those who dominate to quieter participants by asking direct questions from the quieter ones, e.g., "What thoughts does this object bring to your mind?"
- Respect that not everything is shared in a story. Respect silent moments.

### Stimulating the discussion:

- What do you know about this object?
- From what time period is the object? (guesses from the group if unknown)
- What was the object used for?
- What memories does the object evoke for you? What memories are connected to it:
  - What memories relate to the **era** the object is from?
  - What memories relate to the **person** who used the object and the context of its use?
  - How do you connect these memories to your **childhood family/mother/father/siblings?**
  - Are there memories of **childhood/youth games and experiences** linked to the object?
  - Are there memories related to **seasons?**
  - Are there memories connected to **taste, smell, or colors?**
- Expand the memories from the object to the topic itself; for example, from an ice cream maker to ice cream; from a cigarette box to smoking; from a washboard to laundry-related memories.
- What situations are these memories connected to? (e.g., "After every sauna, we got ice cream with my brother.")
- How does the object relate to your life?
- Who used the object in your memories, whose work was it connected to?
- Have you used the object yourself; how?
- How has the activity done with the object changed over time?
- Remember follow-up questions such as:
  - Can you tell me more...
  - Do you still remember...
  - Can you give an example...

# Appendix 3

(in Finnish)

## Palautelomake: Esineiden elämät – Miesten muistopaja

Päivämäärä \_\_\_\_\_

### 1. Yleisarvio

Minkälainen muistopaja oli mielestäsi kokonaisuutena?

ERITTÄIN  
HUONO

HUONO

KOHTALAINEN

HYVÄ

ERITTÄIN  
HYVÄ

Mikä oli muistopajassa parasta?

### 2. Muistopajan esineet

Olivatko valitut esineet mielestäsi kiinnostavia?

KYLLÄ

OSITTAIN

EI

Mitä muita esineitä ehdottaisit tällaiseen muistopajaan?

### 3. Keskusteluosuus

Pääsitkö mukaan keskusteluun?

KYLLÄ

OSITTAIN

EN

Oliko esineistä keskusteleminen sinulle mielekästä?

KYLLÄ

OSITTAIN

EI

#### 4. Hyöty ja merkitys

Tuntuiko työpaja merkitykselliseltä tai toiko se iloa?

KYLLÄ

OSITTAIN

EI

**Tuntuiko, että sinua kuunneltiin ja että tarinasi olivat arvokkaita ryhmässä?**

KYLLÄ

OSITTAIN

EN

**Haluaisitko osallistua vastaavaan tapahtumaan uudelleen?**

KYLLÄ

EHKÄ

EN

#### 5. Saavutettavuus

Kuulitko keskustelun riittävän hyvin?

KYLLÄ

OSITTAIN

EN

#### 6. Kehitysehdotukset

Miten muistopajasta voisi tehdä paremman? Mitä muuttaisit tai lisäisit muistopajaan?

**Kiitos palautteesta!**

## Appendix 4

# Business Model Canvas

