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## Special issue editorial message

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## Special issue editorial message

Dear Colleagues,

JIIM, the Journal of Information and Integrated Information Management, is an international, multidisciplinary, peer-reviewed open-access journal that publishes research on all facets of Information Science and Integrated Information Management. Previously hosted by the University of West Attica (UNIWA) at [this portal](#), JIIM has now transitioned to the Greek National Documentation Centre (EKT) ePublishing platform, accessible [here](#).

In recent years, the proliferation of digital cultural products for heritage and historical tours has surged, marking a significant intersection of multiple disciplines and organizations. Exploring the emerging possibilities within information science is crucial as digital and virtual guides, exhibitions, applications, and other tools establish a novel framework for the interplay between historical and contemporary experiences through advanced information technologies. Utilizing databases, network analysis maps, and the broader semantic web, these tools enable the creation of intricate links between sources, events, places, dates, and individuals. This multidisciplinary approach involves a diverse array of collaborators, including memory institutions, universities, research institutions, informal groups, and both for-profit and non-profit organizations, forming a complex network of cooperative endeavors.

The current special issue publishes research papers that explore the convergence of information technologies, data management, and digital storytelling in the context of cultural heritage tours and trails. The rapid advancement of digital technologies has transformed the way we preserve, interpret, and engage with cultural heritage. This issue highlights innovative approaches and case studies that exemplify how these technologies can enhance our understanding and appreciation of cultural heritage.

Together, the six research papers included offer a comprehensive examination of the multifaceted impacts of digital technologies on cultural heritage management and engagement. They provide an in-depth analysis of current methodologies and innovations, addressing both theoretical and practical dimensions. These studies highlight the potential of integrating digital storytelling, data management, and interactive applications to create immersive and

accessible heritage experiences. By presenting diverse case studies and approaches, this special issue aims to deepen our understanding of how digital tools can be leveraged to preserve, interpret, and promote cultural heritage across various contexts.

The paper "Enhancing Cultural Heritage through the Integration of Digital Technologies, Arts, and Storytelling" by Polyxeni Mantzou et al. provides an overarching view of how digital technologies and storytelling can synergistically enhance the preservation and dissemination of cultural heritage. The authors discuss various digital tools and artistic practices that can be integrated to create engaging and educational heritage experiences, offering a theoretical foundation and practical insights.

"Digital Cultural Heritage Management for Local Heritage: Overcoming the Barriers to Accessibility through Regional Digital Infrastructures" by Mariana Ziku et al. delves into the challenges and solutions related to making local heritage accessible through regional digital infrastructures. This paper examines technical and organizational barriers and proposes strategies to overcome them, ensuring wider accessibility and engagement with local heritage sites.

In "OpenLab Evaluation of CAnTi: Advancing Conservation of Ancient Tiryns through Virtual and Mixed Reality Interactive Applications," Markos Konstantakis et al. present a case study on the use of virtual and mixed reality applications to enhance the conservation and public engagement of Ancient Tiryns. The authors evaluate the effectiveness of these applications in communicating conservation efforts and enhancing visitor experiences, offering valuable insights into the intersection of technology and heritage conservation.

The fourth paper by Angeliki Antoniou et al. explores the Digistoryteller project, which uses digital storytelling to document and share the experiences of refugees of 1922-1924 in Attica. Combining walking tours with multimedia narratives, the project creates an immersive and empathetic experience for participants, highlighting the potential of digital storytelling in social and cultural contexts.

"Unveiling Urban Narratives: eLEONAS ppWebGIS - A Multifaceted Digital Storytelling Journey through Eleonas" by Giorgos Velegrakis, Theodoros Vakas, and Antonis Faras introduces the eLEONAS ppWebGIS project, which uses digital storytelling and webGIS technologies to explore the urban landscape of

Eleonas. The project highlights the social, architectural, and environmental narratives of the area, engaging the public in a participatory exploration of its transformation, and demonstrating the power of digital tools in urban heritage storytelling.

Finally, the last research paper by Georgios Dermitzoglou examines the role of cultural routes and activities in showcasing sepulchral heritage, focusing on the Anastasis Cemetery in Piraeus. This study gathers and analyzes audience opinions to understand how these routes can enhance public engagement and appreciation of sepulchral sites, offering insights into public perceptions of heritage and its presentation.

We would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to the editorial board for their support and guidance in bringing this special issue to fruition. Their dedication and expertise have been invaluable in curating this collection of insightful and impactful research papers. We hope this special issue will inspire further research and innovation in the field of digital cultural heritage. The integration of information technologies, data management, and digital storytelling offers immense potential for preserving our past and enriching our understanding of it in the present and future.

Special Issue Editors

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The Editorial Board welcome special Issue proposals that should be emailed to Associate Professor Dimitrios Kouis ([dkouis@uniwa.gr](mailto:dkouis@uniwa.gr)) or Assistant Professor Artemis Chalepioglou ([artemischal@uniwa.gr](mailto:artemischal@uniwa.gr)). Finally, we expect your contribution and active support, as well as remarks and points of improvement.