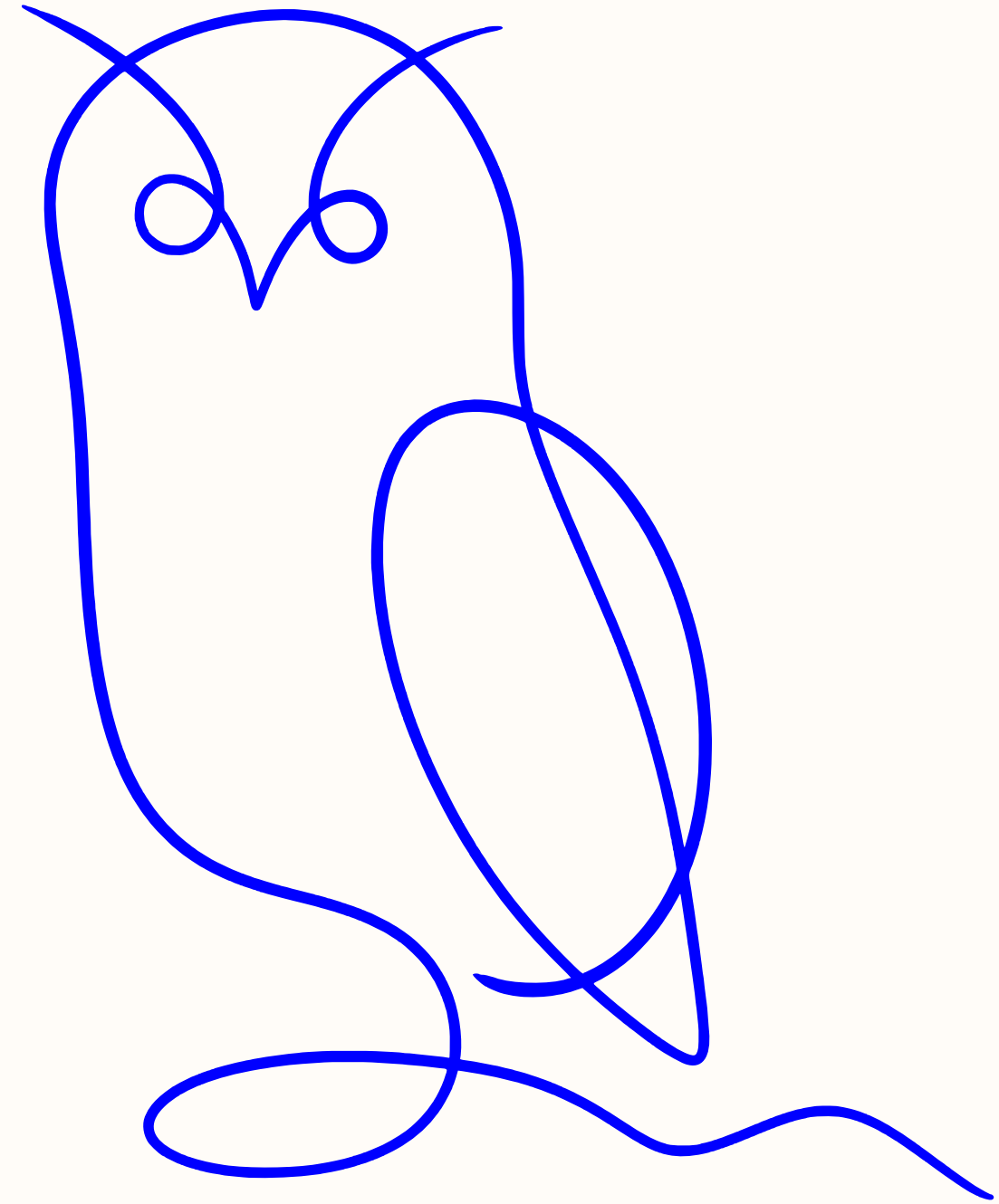




Science Communication and Public Awareness

Interdisciplinary Cultural Mediation Model

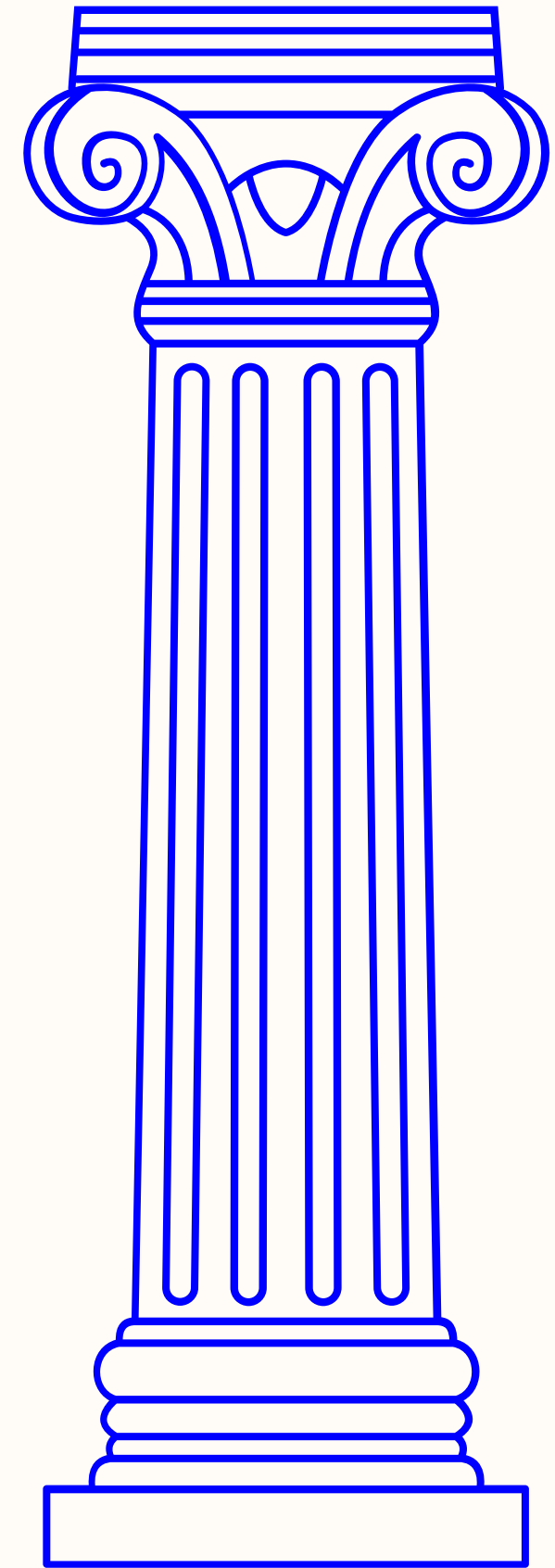




History of the cultural subject linked to a specific element of European heritage

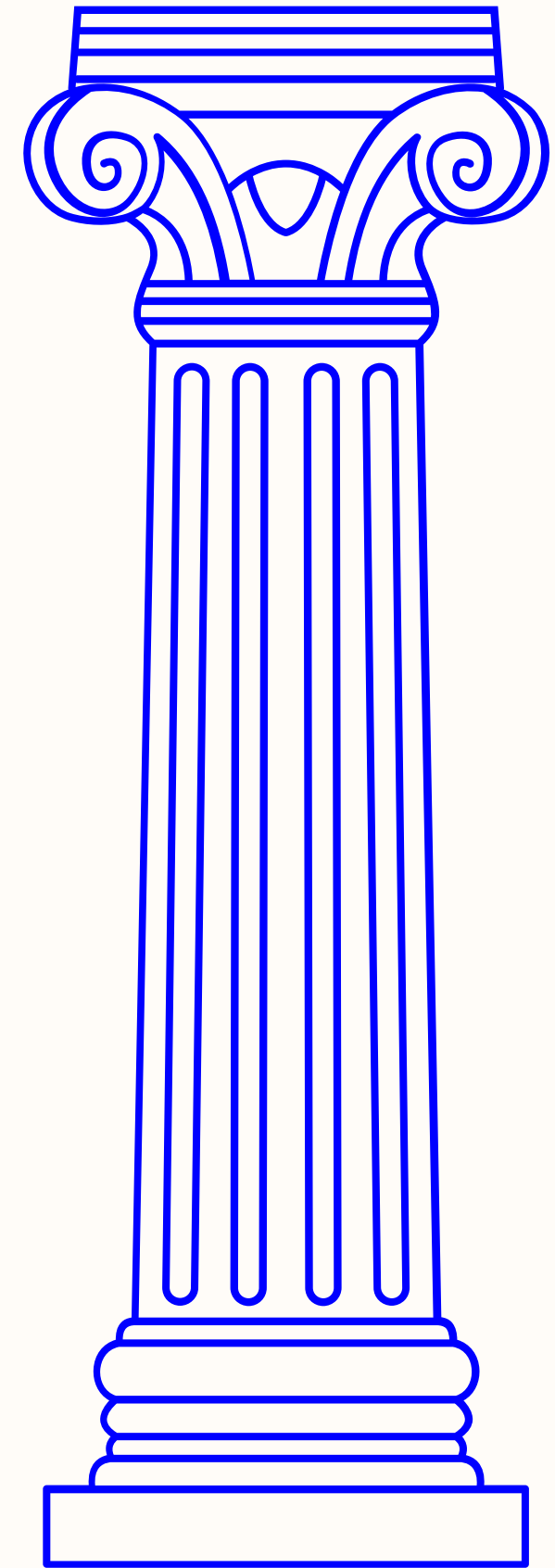
In this workshop, we explore the illegal wildlife trade. Some specimens are protected under the CITES Convention, an international agreement signed by many countries to safeguard endangered species. Some are native, while others are tropical species often wrongly sold in Europe as decorative items.

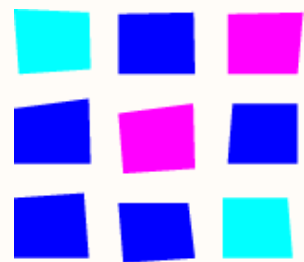
But these aren't just objects, they are powerful tools for learning about biology, animal behavior, conservation, and anatomy. They also reveal how nature inspires technology, as many human inventions mimic natural movement systems.



And that's not all: these specimens can open the door to language learning (through the origins of species names), cultural stories and legends (such as the wolf in folklore), music (for example, instruments made from shells), painting, and even dance. With just one specimen, you can explore months' worth of topics across many disciplines.

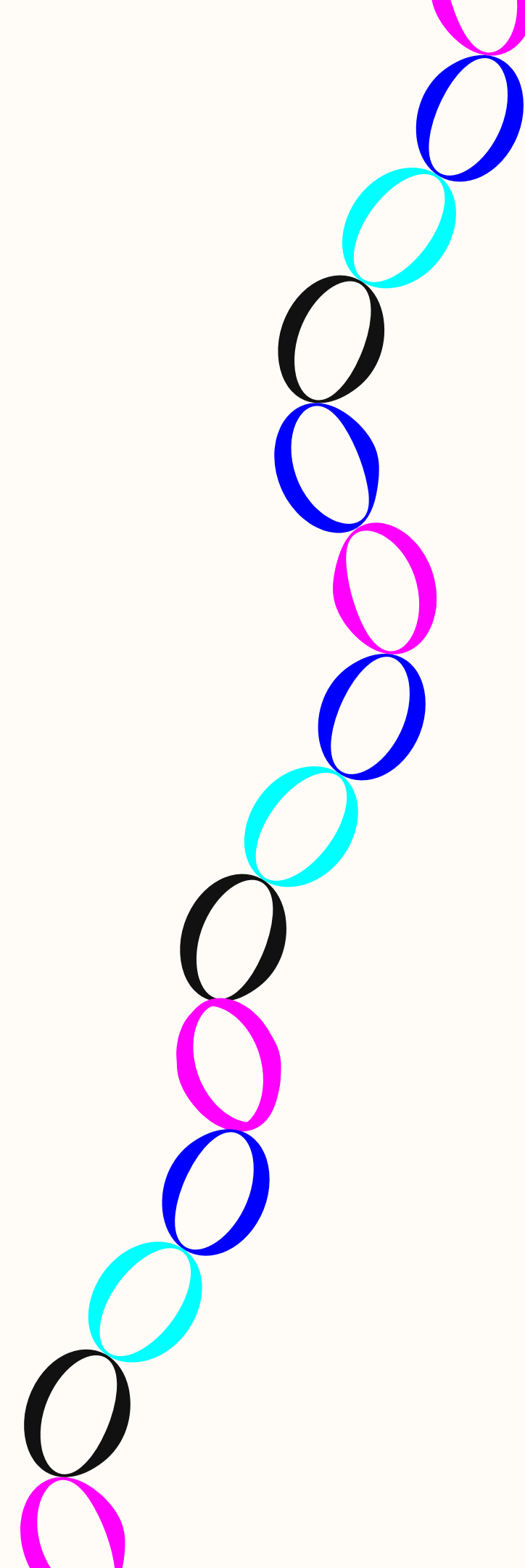
For this reason, many museums use these specimens not only to teach across multiple subjects, but also to raise awareness about the dangers of illegal purchasing.

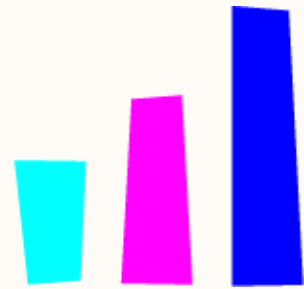




Link to active citizenship

By studying these European illegal purchasing problem, young people come into contact with big ideas about nature conservation, ideas that matter for every environment, and for all of us. When you understand the living world, you start to care about it. And when you care, you protect it.



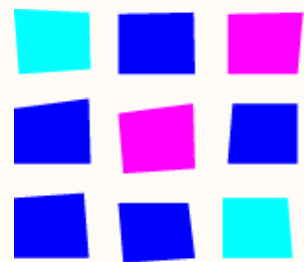


Innovative aspect of the activity

What makes this activity innovative is that you're not just participating, you're becoming a science communicator.

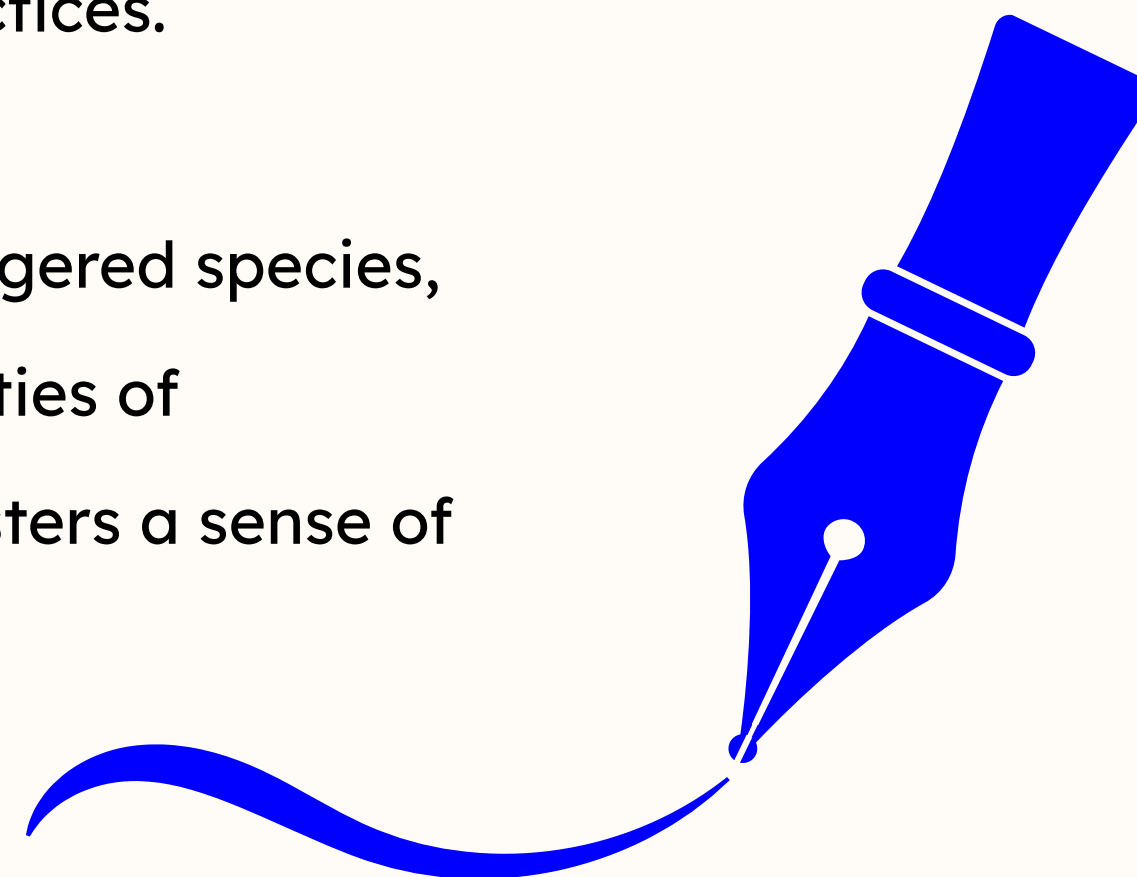
You'll learn, then pass on that knowledge to others in your own way. Your personal perspective makes the message even stronger and more meaningful.



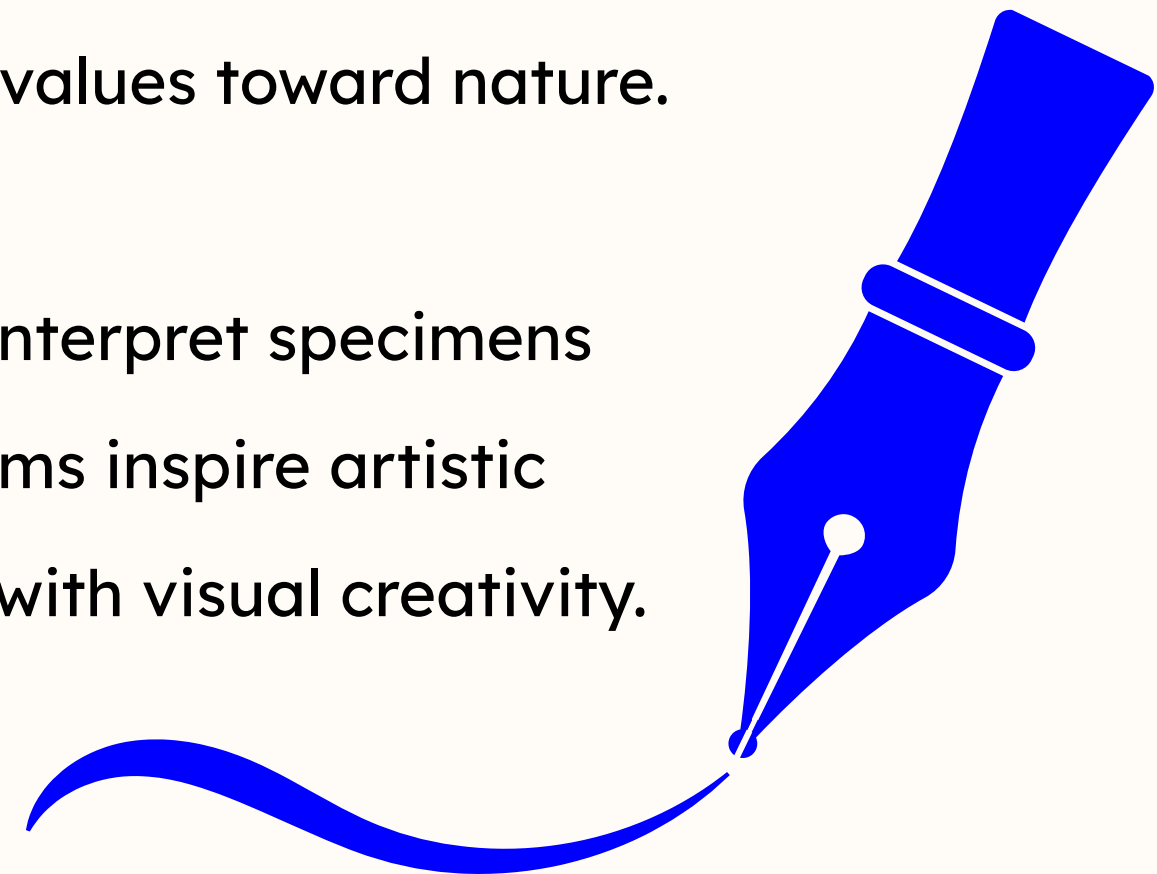


Specific subjects developed

- Environmental Science: Participants learn about ecosystems, biodiversity, and the impact of human activities by examining the illegal wildlife trade and its consequences on natural environments. This raises awareness of global ecological challenges and the importance of sustainable practices.
- Conservation: The activity addresses the protection of endangered species, international agreements such as CITES, and the responsibilities of individuals and communities in preventing illegal trade. It fosters a sense of stewardship towards wildlife and natural resources.



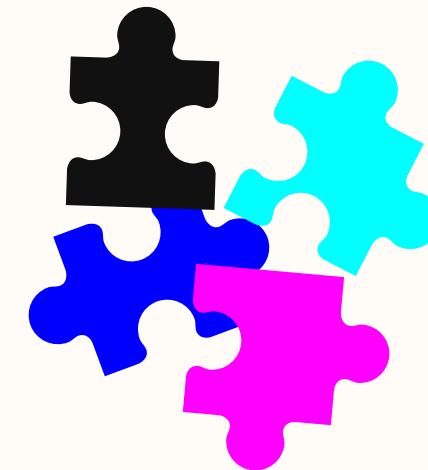
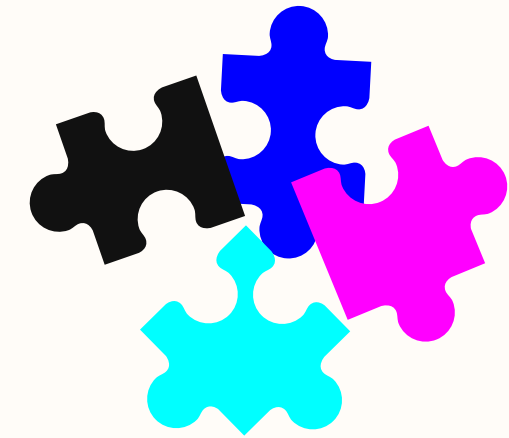
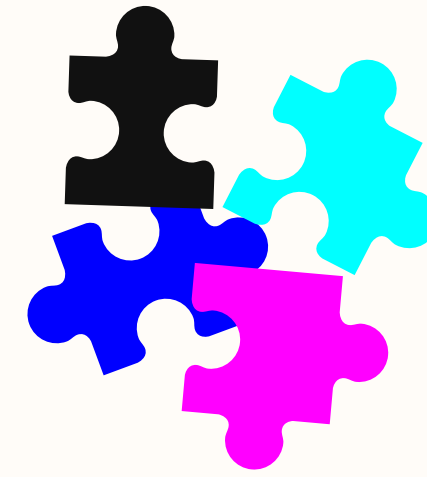
- Music: Some specimen examples, like shells or animal parts, have been traditionally used to create musical instruments. Exploring these examples reveals how cultures transform natural materials into tools of artistic expression, blending science with sound.
- History: Specimens are often connected to cultural heritage, trade routes, and historical uses of natural resources. They can tell stories about human–animal relationships, ancient practices, and the evolution of societal values toward nature.
- Art: The creative workshop element invites participants to reinterpret specimens through crafting and design. It demonstrates how natural forms inspire artistic techniques and aesthetics, bridging scientific understanding with visual creativity.

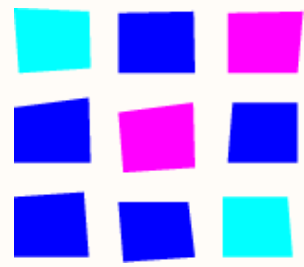




Accessibility

It's interactive, sensory, and full of storytelling. That makes it easy to adapt to different audiences, young or old, curious or cautious. And it's also designed so you can explore it on your own terms, deciding how and what you want to discover.

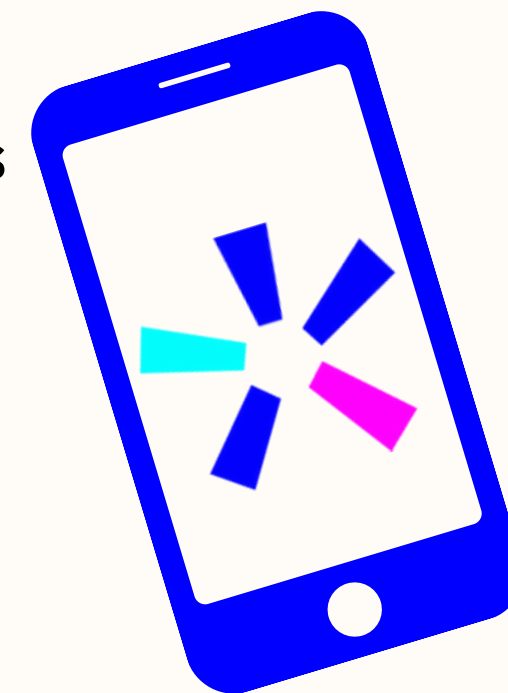
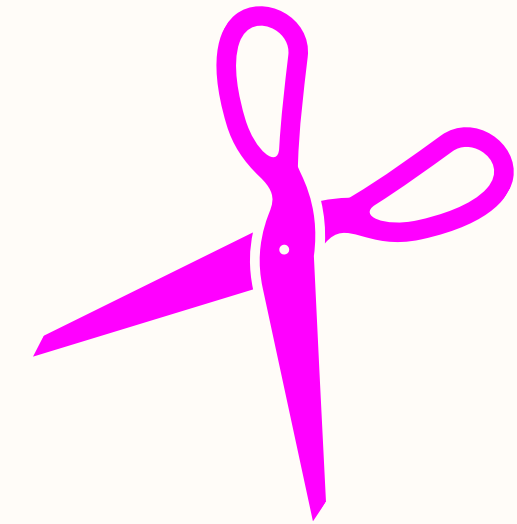




Materials required

We build the specimens impression together through a hands-on creative workshop, making impressions of them with reusable materials, much like in a tinkering lab. For this activity, we use items such as cardboard, bamboo sticks, wooden craft sticks, corks, string, foam sheets, bottle caps, and sturdy straws.

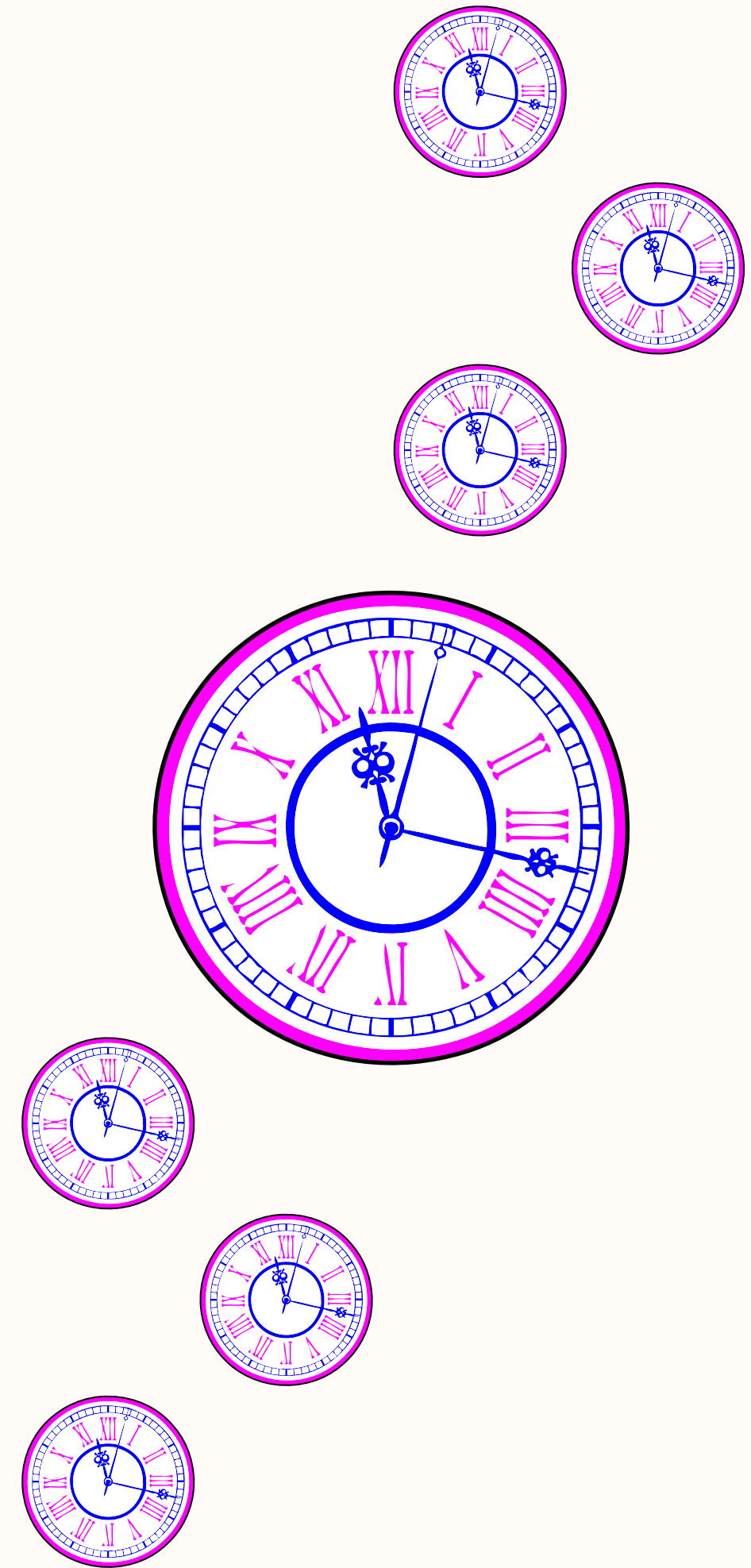
These materials are easy to cut, shape, and combine, allowing participants to experiment freely and create detailed reproductions of the specimens. The aim is to encourage creativity and craftsmanship, so we avoid using recyclable waste or fragile disposable items, focusing instead on versatile, durable components that can be reused in future projects.

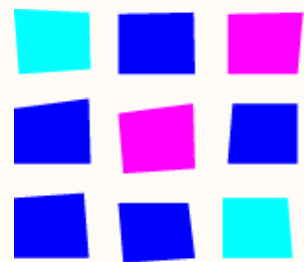




Duration of the activity

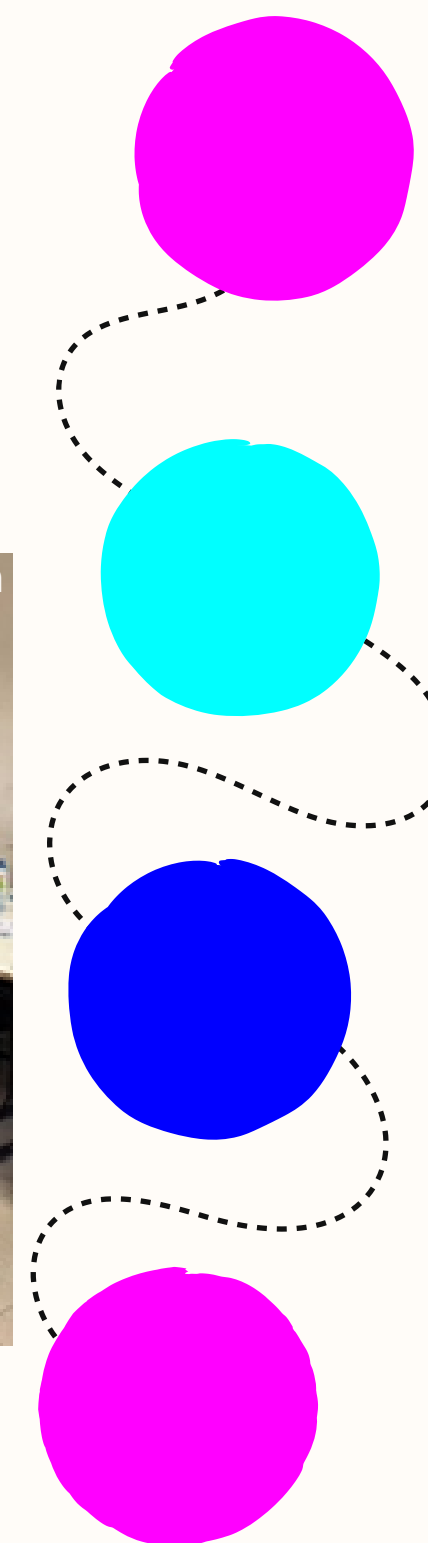
It can be anything from a 2-hour session to four full workshop days, depending on how many participants there are and how complex the dissemination project is.





Description of the activity

- At the beginning of the program, participants take part in an introductory course on informal science education, covering methods, hands-on activities and the Reggio approach, the naturalistic method, and communication skills. It is an accessible and engaging introduction to good practices for science communicators. Participants are introduced to the basics of science communication, exploring both museum education and public outreach. The approach blends theory with hands-on practice, encouraging active participation through interactive discussions and real-life tasks.



- Next, the focus shifts to the illegal wildlife trade: how European guidelines work, which types of trade are most common, and where they occur. Participants then decide what kind of exhibit they want to create. Will it be about the illegal leather trade? Or about food fraud?

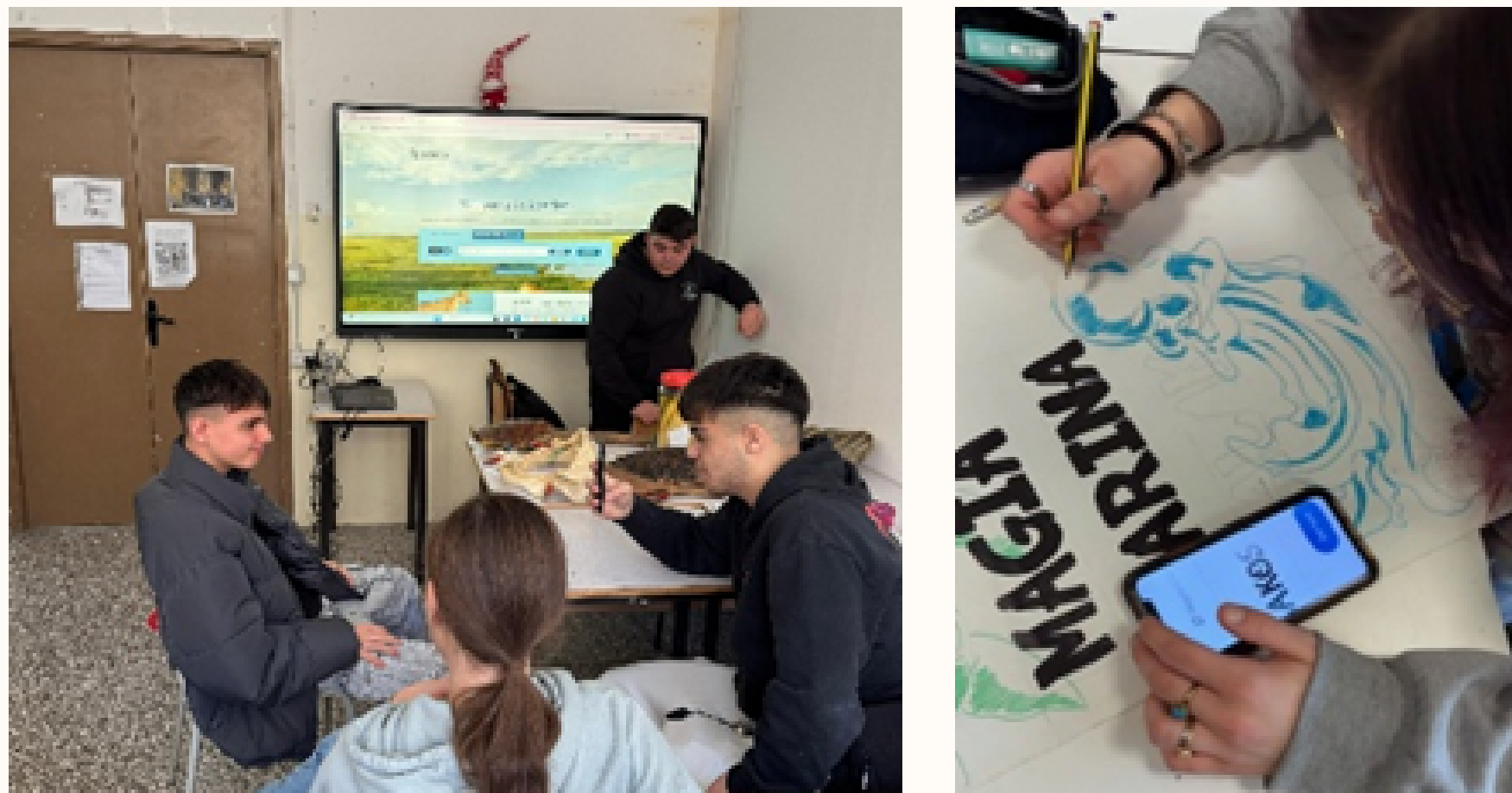
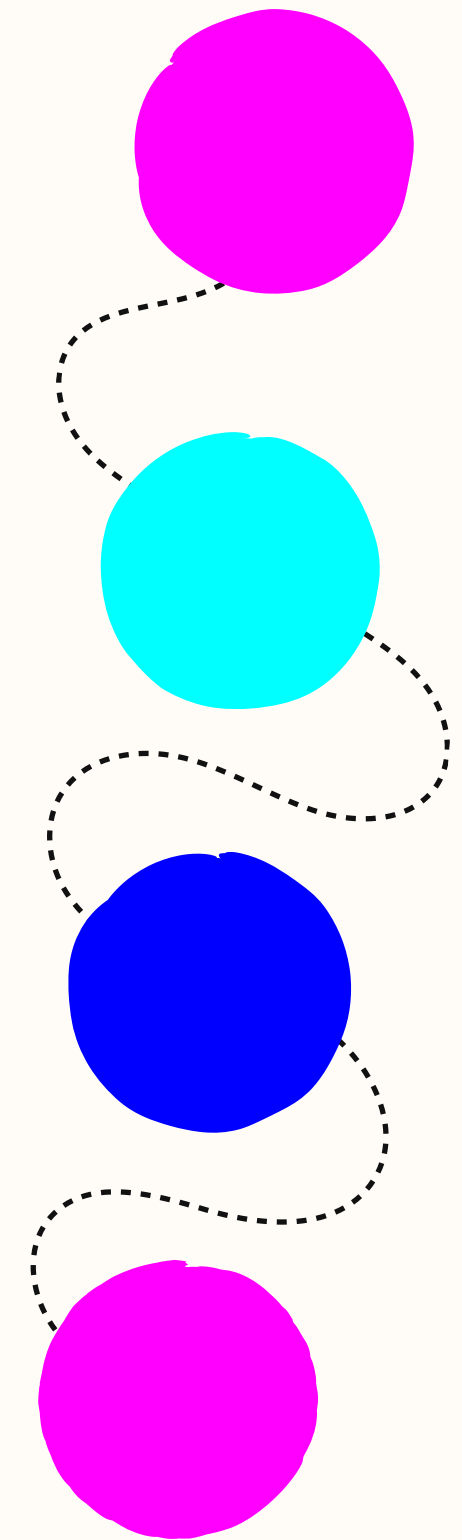
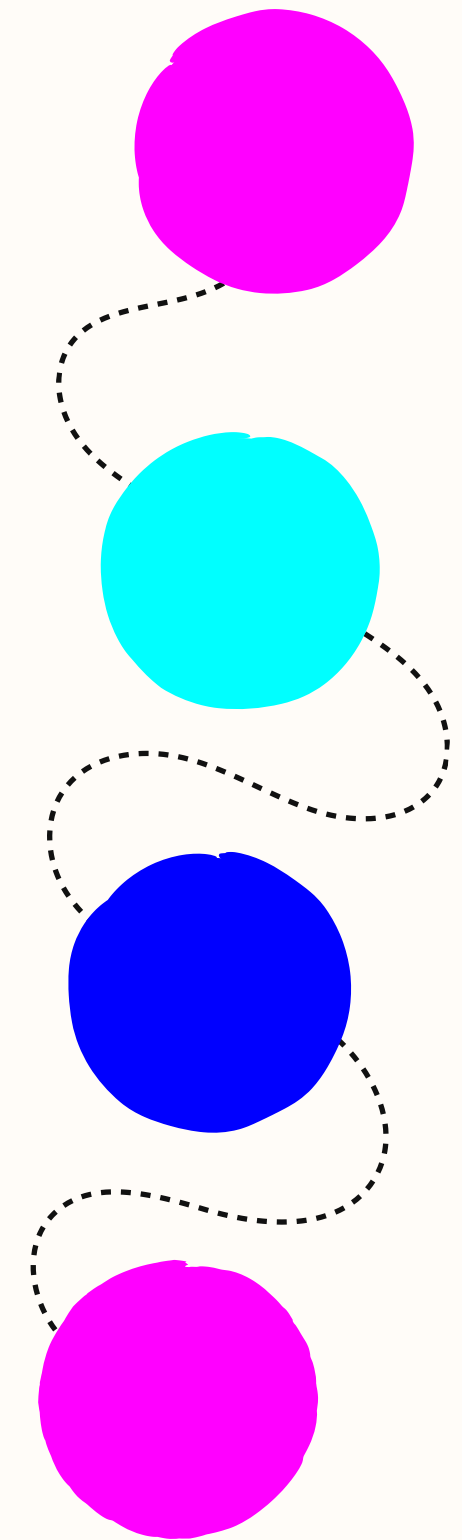


Figure 2-3 Participants create graphics and posters using the method they prefer. Some of them choose to share their message by producing videos for social media



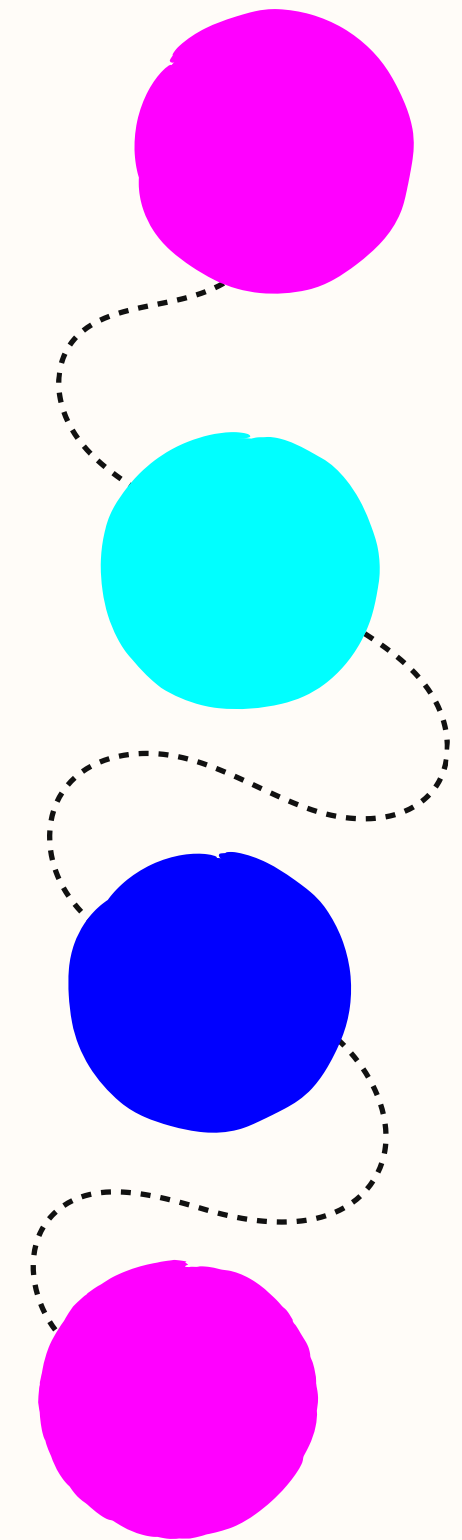
- They move on to creating mock-ups of specimens for their personal exhibits, using reusable materials and plenty of creativity. After this initial phase, participants are challenged to design their own exhibitions, working in groups and targeting a specific audience. They must combine art and craftsmanship with scientific themes to make the content more accessible and appealing—especially for those who might feel distant from traditional science education.



- In the final phase, the group brings their projects to life by setting up a real temporary exhibition. With support from the museum and access to its resources, they create visual materials, organize an opening event, and prepare a press release to share their work with the public.



Figure 4 Opening of the temporary exhibitions

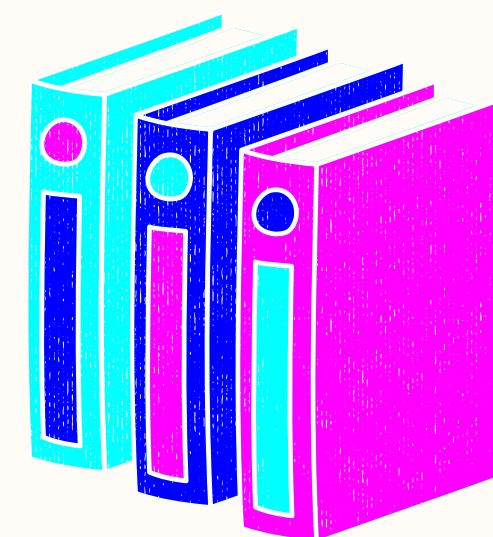
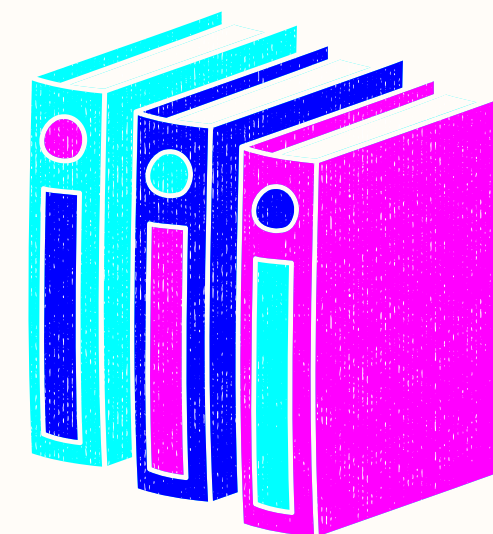




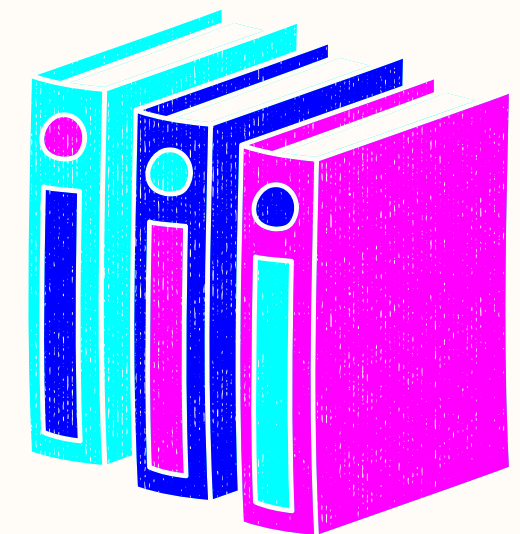
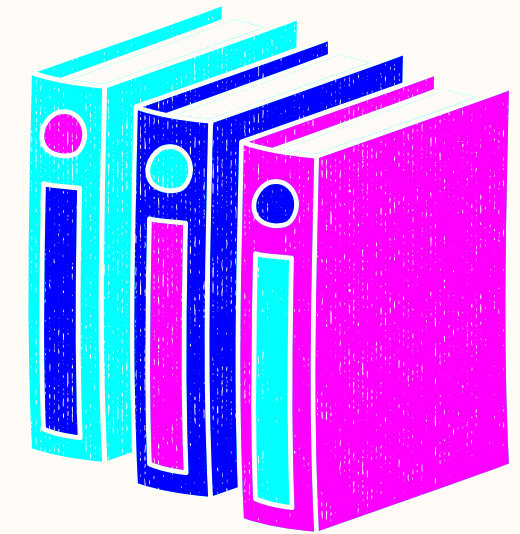
To go further & Resources

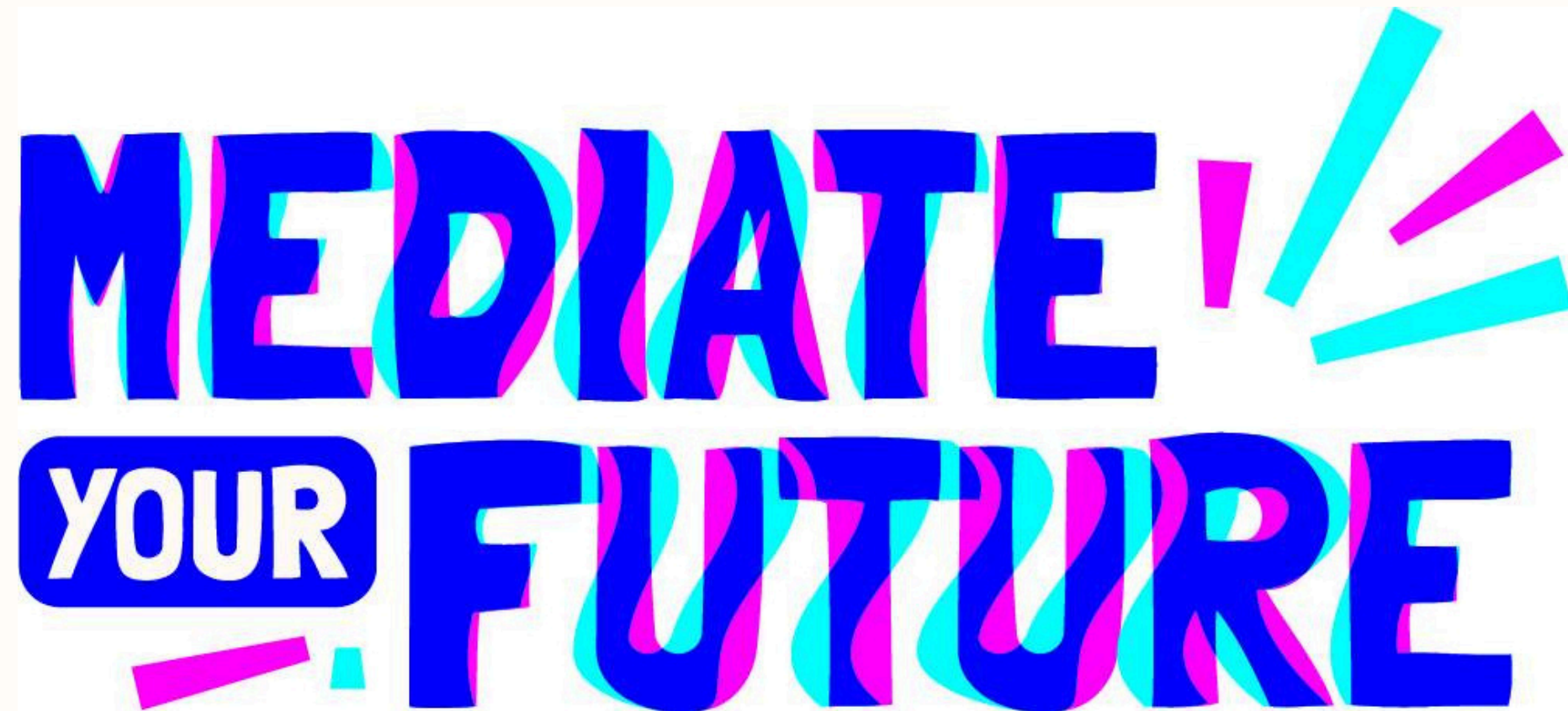
The same approach can be used to combine different skills and institutions. In a single city, several museums could collaborate to design a shared outdoor exhibition, set up in a public square or park. The space could include self-guided zones and interactive areas with live facilitation, organized by age groups and scheduled in a loop of recurring activities.

Schools and youth centres could be involved in the planning process (ideally from at least two different educational levels) developing the project throughout the school year. The initiative would culminate in a final public event that brings together families, local communities, and the entire city.



This model fosters active citizenship by engaging people of all ages, bringing knowledge and the museum itself into public space, rather than expecting people to come inside. It's a way to break down barriers, create shared experiences, and make culture and science visible and accessible to everyone.

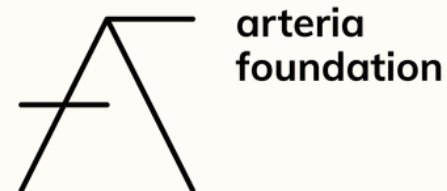




Check out more project resources at mediateyourfuture.eu



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