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# Good Educational Practices for the Development of Inclusive Heritage Education at School through the Museum: A Multi-Case Study in Bologna

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**Abstract:** This article presents the outcomes and conclusions of a research work designed to determine and describe good inclusive practices for the development of heritage education in schools through museums in the city of Bologna. To this end, we applied a qualitative methodology through the study of four cases, four museums in the city of Bologna, selected for their good practices in educational programmes for schools. Instruments such as interviews, observation, and documentary analysis were used. The results emphasise a close school-museum relationship, with heritage as an agent that enhances people's identity, a fundamental element in the citizenship development of Bolognese society, and a key aspect for the development of inclusive principles and the care of all people, although improvements in the processes and some limitations in the development of the programmes are perceived. The outcomes highlight the importance of school and museum relations and the development of an inclusive heritage education that advocates a holistic, integrative, and complex approach to heritage, as an essential element in the development of the individual and of society.

**Keywords:** heritage education; museum; school; identity; citizenship; inclusive education

## 1. Introduction

Heritage education is an emerging line that has been growing by leaps and bounds in recent years. Development of the National Education and Heritage Plan carried out by the Cultural Heritage Institute of Spain, belonging to the Ministry of Education, Culture and Sports [1], the large number of national and international research works in this field reflected in recent studies by [2,3] and international and European initiatives [4], or the creation of the Heritage Education Observatory [5] and the International Heritage Education Network (RIEP-INHE), show that this field is booming [6].

In the international scope, we find research works studying heritage education in both the formal setting [7–12] and the non-formal [13–19], constituting a great breakthrough in this line.

Research in the non-formal sphere has been fruitful in relation to the analysis of didactic proposals in heritage interpretation centres and museums [20,21]. The studies in museums are very diverse, as they are carried out from different perspectives [22]. Analyses of didactic museum materials such as those performed by [23] show the importance of heritage in the educational area and the interest of research in this field.

The links between the formal and non-formal settings in terms of heritage, identity and their relationships with educational proposals for the formation of citizens have been analysed by works such as [24] or [21], along the same lines as the research by [25,26], who analysed the relationships in the formal, non-formal and informal spheres in heritage education and their connections with identity scales.

Specifically, In Italy, we observed the importance of heritage education and heritage as a fundamental agent in the development of the city [27–31]. Heritage is conceptualised as a reference for the assumption of cultural identities by different social structures and of the citizens themselves, as well as constituting the identity or symbolic value of a society [32]. The ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums makes reference to the importance of museum accessibility in Italy for the development of all people, especially those with a specific need, thus being able to form a collective identity and, in turn, the development of territorial intelligence (<http://www.icom-italia.org/traduzione-italiana-codice-etico/>).

Recent research has highlighted that heritage education is a powerful vehicle through which to work on such important aspects for the development of inclusion as identity, citizenship and cultural relations [33]. The value of heritage and its complexity is mainly due to the fact that its value is found, for the most part, in people, having multiple natures that leads to a kaleidoscopic vision [26] and a holistic perspective of the same [34]. UNESCO texts show concern for the need to introduce culture into public and social life as a means for sustainable, national and international, inclusive and egalitarian development, acknowledging its importance for social cohesion (<http://www.unesco.org/new/es/culture/themes/cultural-diversity/cultural-expressions/the-convention/convention-text> and <http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/es/kit>). Heritage Education is an appropriate means to achieve one of the objectives set out in the Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action for achieving the sustainable development goal 4. This is related to education for all, which advocates ensuring that all students acquire theoretical and practical knowledge to promote sustainable development through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, the promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and the appreciation of cultural diversity and the contribution of culture to sustainable development (UNESCO, 2016, objective 4, goal 4.7) (UNESCO, 2016. Incheon Declaration and Framework for Action for the realisation of Sustainable Development Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote opportunities. ED-2016/WS/28 <https://www.gcedclearinghouse.org/sites/default/files/resources/245656s.pdf>).

Undoubtedly, one of the important areas of action within heritage education is the forging of relationships between schools and museums, as these institutions bear the greatest responsibility when making didactic proposals focused on heritage. [35]. UNESCO thus acknowledges the social function of museums, which are considered a tool for development and social integration.

Educational practice in museums is a studied subject, but still with multiple shortcomings in terms of research [23]. The school goes to the museum without clear purposes, which entails a traditional approach to teaching, although the change in context and the possibility of direct observation of the heritage is a great opportunity for learning development [36]. The development of a heritage education based on hands-on experience in museums, with proposals where the visitor is an active participant, leads to greater learning in students [7], making the museum an opportunity for people with different abilities [37–40].

In this sense, the research carried out by [41] shows how the planning of a proposal for a school-museum connection, based on work from interdisciplinary, participatory, dynamic, and interactive perspectives, allows students to make an identity heritage discourse and socially engaged in underprivileged environments their own, thus making heritage the unifying nucleus to address many other relevant contents for citizen training.

When discussing a diverse public, a public with different capacities, an inclusive heritage perspective is necessary, understanding that inclusion entails a response to the needs of all, conceiving the difference from a positive standpoint, and considering that they give rise to the development and enrichment of each individual making up society [42]. The number of studies in the national [39,40,43–50] and international [38,51–55] scope related to inclusive patrimony is increasing daily, situating heritage as an essential element for personal development that enhances each person's individual characteristics and leads to evolution in all the processes that intervene in the construction of people, in the connection of the diversity of heritages with the diversity of

people [44]. In this sense, the Faro Convention 2005 emphasised important aspects of heritage in relation to human rights and democracy and encouraged us to recognise cultural patrimony beyond the heritage asset per se, giving value to the meanings and uses that people attribute to them and the values they represent, thus becoming an important resource to respond to the needs of all people (<https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/rms/0900001680083746>). Heritage, therefore, must be accessible to all, encouraging all people to take part in the process of identification, study, interpretation, protection, conservation, and presentation of cultural heritage, and to this end, it is important to take steps to improve the access to heritage, especially among young people and the disadvantaged, in order to raise awareness about its value, the need to maintain and preserve it, and the benefits which may be derived from it (Council of Europe, 2005, art. 12, p. 5) (<https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/rms/0900001680083746>).

The study we carried out is based on the direct links between heritage, identity, and citizenship, considering patrimony and heritage education from a systemic, participatory, interactive, complex and socio-critical perspective, understanding the concept of heritage from a holistic [56] and systemic [57] approach. The main aim of the research is to determine and describe good inclusive practices of didactic proposals in heritage education that connect the formal sphere of school and heritage institutions, for training in critical and participatory citizenship in Italy.

## 2. Materials and Methods

This work is framed within a qualitative approach to research [58]. The aim is to get to know and describe the museum-school relations for the development of inclusive didactic proposals in heritage education and determine how heritage is linked with the development of emotional intelligence in people with different capacities. This way, we can approach the existing relationships between heritage and emotion that are developed in the centres with visitors of different capacities from formal institutions. To this end, a multiple-case study was carried out [59], with the participation of the education managers from four Italian museums, all with over four years of experience in the job, and five members of the museums' teaching teams. As researchers, we chose the appropriate methods and theories, acknowledging and analysing the different perspectives and the pertinent reflections of the research for the production of knowledge and the comparison of approaches and methods [60].

Thus, the research presented describes the results of the study of the didactic proposals of four Italian heritage institutions linked with a formal setting, which form part of a national research project funded by the Ministry of Economy and Competitiveness entitled "Heritage education for the territorial and emotional intelligence of citizens. Analysis of good practices, design and intervention in compulsory education". Five countries are taking part in this project: Spain, Portugal, Italy, Chile, and the United States.

The four institutions selected in Italy consisted of four museums in the historical-artistic area, specifically in the cities of Bologna, Ravenna, and Rimini. These cities were chosen for their high degree of involvement in the use of heritage as an enhancer of identity and citizenship. The selection of the participating institutions that act as informants in each city was made based on three specific criteria: development of inclusive good practices of heritage education with formal institutions, collaboration with the University of Bologna, and accessibility to the field. These museums are the International Music Museum and Library of Bologna, the Industrial Heritage Museum of Bologna, the City Museum of Rimini and the National Museum of Ravenna.

Data gathering was performed through semi-structured interviews with the educational managers of the different museums and some members of the teaching teams (8 interviews), and observation of the exhibition rooms of the selected museum institutions and analysis of the materials, programmes, and advertising that have been designed and offered to the formal institutions (Early Childhood, Primary and Secondary Education). The design and application of observational records and data drawn up by the EPITEC Project team were used as instruments. To analyse the information, the system of categories likewise prepared by the EPITEC Project team was used, which had already been

previously validated and based on a previous category system used by earlier studies with similar characteristics [20,21,61–64]. Some emerging subcategories that cropped up in the process and two new categories of analysis were included for the specific study of issues related to inclusive heritage. The information was processed using Atlas Ti software. The category system (Table 1) structures the data analysis and interpretation process, where it can be observed that we focus on the general categories of what to teach, how to teach, and why to teach, as well as the specific categories of this study, namely to what extent educational inclusion and accessibility to heritage is perceived and what relationships exist between heritage, emotional education and inclusion.

**Table 1.** Category system for information analysis.

Categories	Subcategories	Indicators
I. Why teach?	1. What approaches is the proposal focused on?	Emotional intelligence Scientific and cultural literacy Citizen education Environmental education Territorial intelligence
	2. What is the aim of the educational process?	Academic Propaganda Practical-conservationist Socio-critical
	3. What makes something heritage?	Fetishist-exceptionalist Monumentalist Aesthetic Temporal Diversity Symbolic—identity
	4. What heritage is taught?	Natural-Historical-Artistic Ethnological Scientific-technological Holistic
II. What to teach?	5. What degree of interrelation is there between the heritage taught?	Unidisciplinary Multidisciplinary Interdisciplinary
	6. How are the contents integrated?	No integration Simple integration Complex integration
	7. How are the contents contextualised?	Functionally Temporally Spatially Socially
III. How to teach?	8. What presence does heritage have in the educational programme?	Anecdotic presence Didactic resource Specific objective Educational content
	9. What roles are played by teachers and pupils?	Unidirectional communication Two-way communication Multidirectional communication
	10. What type of activities are carried out?	Low cognitive level complexity Analytical level complexity Systemic level complexity

Table 1. Cont.

Categories	Subcategories	Indicators
III. How to teach?	11. What resources are utilised?	Traditional passive
		Passive ICTS
		Traditional active
		Active ICTS
VI What educational inclusion and accessibility to heritage is there?	19. How does heritage reach all people?	It is totally accessible It is partially accessible It is not accessible
	20. Are accessibility and inclusion of current points of interest? Why or why not?	Average priority High priority Low priority
	21. How does the heritage institution contribute to social and educational inclusion? And to accessibility?	Segregation Social and educational integration Social and educational inclusion
	22. Do they have any guide (document) on which their actions to be carried out with differently-abled persons are based?	Segregatory guide Integrative guide Inclusive guide
	23. Do you think heritage contributes to the development of emotional intelligence? How? Can you give an example?	Overall development Social development Personal development Emotional development Artistic heritage Historical heritage Ethnological heritage Scientific-technological heritage Natural heritage Holistic perspective
VII. What relationships are there between heritage, emotional education and inclusion?	24. In people with different capacities, does heritage excite or move them emotionally? What kind is most exciting?	

This instrument is organised as a progression hypothesis [65] composed of three levels of development, establishing an evolution of heritage education processes from the simplest to the most complex conceptualisation [61]. The complete category system is made up of 7 categories and 24 subcategories, of which we focus on 5 categories and 17 subcategories, broken down into different indicators that enable us to assign and interpret the information units in the data analysis process, performing a systematic and rigorous analysis of the data collected.

The first category affords in-depth knowledge of the patrimonial content that is used in heritage institutions, observing the concept of heritage, the type of heritage used, the relationships between the heritage used, and its integration and contextualisation in the environment. The second category is framed in why to teach, allowing us to determine the purpose of learning and the motivational setting in which it takes place. The third category focuses on how to teach, which leads us to describe the type of activities that the museums engage in with formal institutions, the relationships that exist between school and museum, and what the teaching resources they use are like. The fourth category analysed provided information on how the heritage reaches all people and its degree of accessibility. Finally, the fifth category allows us to see whether heritage provokes emotions in people with different capacities.

### 3. Results

To analyse the outcomes, we used the five categories explained in the previous section: what to teach, why to teach, how to teach, what inclusion, and what relationships exist between heritage, emotional education, and inclusion. These categories allowed us to carry out an analysis of the conceptualisation of heritage by the heritage institutions examined, to determine the existing relationships between schools and museums, the type of joint activities they develop, to visualise

the objectives of learning for them, the area where they focus it, how the processes of inclusion and accessibility are developed through heritage, and what relationships exist between heritage, emotional education, and inclusion.

Following the structure of [61], we present the main results in the categories of each of the museums studied (Table 2).

### 3.1. Category 1

The first category analysed was “why teach”. Here, we focused on analysing the learning dimension, that is, which aspects of learning are fundamental for each museum and what is the purpose of the educational process they develop.

The four museums present a social dimension of learning. All highlight the importance of interaction with the social context and the students’ awareness of it. They explain the importance of the students knowing their environment, their heritage, so that they respect, value, and can enjoy it: “Most of the projects that we have discussed focus on the knowledge of their territory and heritage; it is important that the students should know and enjoy it” (Informant: Manager D, Ravenna Museum). However, the International Museum and Music Library of Bologna highlights the emotional side as the most important dimension of learning in its museum. The majority of the data obtained make reference to the importance of people, insofar as the children who visit the museum should increase their liking for music while developing skills such as curiosity, imagination, the capacity for empathy, etc. “It is much more interesting to create pleasure around music mainly through practice and then, little by little, to be able to include a series of information, rather than in relation to the museum pieces, so I would say that the guided tour is a point of arrival, never of departure. It is important to get excited, acquire the language”. (Informant: Manager A, Music Museum). On the other hand, at the Industrial Heritage Museum of Bologna, the importance of the cognitive dimension is also emphasised, as it is important that students become acquainted with the processes through research, knowing how to formulate and analyse arguments, making deductions, asking questions, solving problems, etc. One example is “A project that focuses on the last year of middle school and we did it within the institutional energy plan to raise the issues of new energy, energy-saving, emission control and so on” (Informant: Manager B, Industrial Museum).

The aim of the educational process in the museum is different for each of the heritage institutions we studied. The International Music Museum and Library of Bologna prioritises identity links with the existing collection. It is true that it offers scientific and cultural literacy activities. However, it emphasises at all times that the cornerstone of the museum’s philosophy is that the collection is a means to create the—individual and collective—identity of the people who visit it, highlighting the grandeur of this place where visitors can enjoy the people and the legacy of those figures that have shaped the identity of Bolognese society.

The final didactic aim of the Bologna Industrial Heritage Museum is the scientific and cultural literacy that we can observe in the prioritisation of conceptual and procedural content in heritage, in its projects to further the knowledge of patrimony through research and inquiry. In addition, the creation of identity links is pursued through the knowledge of historical heritage, uniting the past with the present and even becoming acquainted with it from relatives who have lived through the times of the objects in the museum’s collection and, in turn, the social transformation seeking that knowledge of the past leads to improvement of the present.



**Table 2.** Main results by category in each of the museums studied.

Museum	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3	Category 4	Category 5
International Music Museum and Library of Bologna	Social and emotional dimension of learning.	Symbolic-identitary vision	Experiential and traditional activities (great difficulty)	Heritage is partially accessible.	Heritage as an element that enhances overall development of the person
	Identity links prioritised	Focused on historical-artistic heritage, although with hints of a holistic vision.	Specific materials and full integration (according to teacher availability).	They adapt the activity to the public.	Artistic heritage.
		Interdisciplinary: focuses on artistic heritage, but relates to historical and ethnological heritage.	Difficulty of connection between the school curriculum and the museum.	Low priority of accessibility.	People with ASD and cognitive disabilities stand out.
		Complex integration	Active resources.	Not currently a priority at a formal level.	
		Social		Social and educational inclusion	
Bologna Industrial Heritage Museum	Cognitive and social learning dimension.	Symbolic-identitary vision	Experiential activities. Some traditional.	Heritage is partially accessible.	Heritage as an element that enhances overall development of the person
	Scientific and cultural literacy, identity ties and social transformation.	Scientific-technological (Industrial) and Historical Heritage.	Specific workshops, materials and full integration depending on cases.	Priority of accessibility, an issue that is currently being worked on. Social and educational integration	Technological heritage because it is the collection that they keep for their speciality.
		Interdisciplinary	Inclined towards full integration.	No guide.	No specific public stands out.
		Simple integration (procedures and concepts)	Close relation between museum and school.		
		Functional and social	Creation of networks between teachers, museum and businesses.		
		Traditional active resources.			

Table 2. Cont.

Museum	Category 1	Category 2	Category 3	Category 4	Category 5
Rimini City Museum	Social learning dimension	Symbolic-identitary vision	Mainly traditional activities, although some experiential sporadically.	Heritage is partially accessible.	Heritage as an element that enhances overall development of the person
	Scientific and cultural literacy and social transformation	Historical-artistic heritage	Occasional workshops (itineraries)	There are barriers, although they try to adapt the activity to the public.	Artistic heritage.
		Interdisciplinary.	Currently little relation museum-school. Little knowledge of teachers.	Average priority of accessibility.	People with ASD and cognitive disabilities stand out.
		Simple integration (procedures and concepts)	Traditional passive and active resources.	It is not a priority.	
		Functional and social		Social and educational integration	
				No guide.	
National Museum of Ravenna	Social dimension	Symbolic-identitary vision	Experiential activities, some traditional activities of itineraries with a guide.	Heritage is fully accessible.	Heritage as an element that enhances overall development of the person
	Scientific and cultural literacy and identitary ties	Historical-artistic heritage	Sporadic workshops, but within the educational programme of the school.	They adapt the activity to the public.	Artistic heritage.
		Interdisciplinary	Traditional active resources.	High priority of accessibility.	Persons with ASD stand out.
		Simple integration		Drafting of a new project	
		Functional, temporal and social		Social and educational inclusion	
				Complete didactic guide that refers to the diversity of publics.	
				Adaptations for ASD.	



The aim of the educational process at the Rimini City Museum is framed within scientific and cultural literacy, placing great emphasis on knowledge of historical heritage in order to understand the past, seeking social transformation in the present. To do this, they use activities that invite reflection on what happened, to help understand what is happening today and see how it can change tomorrow. The intention is to eliminate certain prejudices that exist about the city of Rimini. “Projects have a history; there are always fixed points: our heritage, we want to recognise ourselves, we want to make history and didactic and universal experiences from the methodological, universal and thinking standpoint, but setting out from our heritage”. (Informant: Manager C, Rimini Museum).

Finally, the National Museum of Ravenna pursues scientific and cultural literacy with the aim of forging identity bonds in students and visitors to the museum. They explain that the knowledge of Ravenna’s heritage encourages the development of identity in the students.

The four museums analysed show great interest in the educational setting of the museum and highlight the importance of having put together a teaching team that can link up with schools, developing educational programmes that address heritage education that connects the patrimony preserved in the museum with the curricular contents in the classroom. “It is very important to me that museums have specific staff dedicated to educational activities. A solid foundation is needed where the various functions of the museum are integrated and their knowledge is increased on the basis of the relationship with schools”. (Informant: Manager B, Industrial Museum).

### 3.2. Category 2

Category 2 refers to “what to teach”, focusing on the conceptualisation of heritage, the predominant type of patrimony in each museum, its treatment in relation to other heritages, the integration of content and its contextualisation.

The data gathered show that the education managers interviewed from the four museums consider heritage to be those elements that are symbolic because they epitomise a society, so much so that three of them arise at the outset from people related to the educational field, as they considered it necessary for their students to know the history and main characteristics of the place where they live, as in the case of the Bologna Industrial Museum, the Rimini City Museum, and the National Museum of Ravenna. “This is the history of the museum, which is not to say that a museum did not exist and therefore teaching did not exist either, or it only existed in the mind and desire of some particularly enlightened teachers who linked it to the territory, to monuments, to experience”. (Informant: Manager C, Rimini Museum). However, we find a perspective of the monumental and aesthetic heritage mainly in the Bologna International Music Museum and Library, as composers, works, and instruments are highlighted for their grandeur and prestige. Moreover, an exceptionalist vision of heritage is also found in the Industrial Museum of Bologna, the Rimini City Museum, and the National Museum of Ravenna, as objects are displayed due to their antiquity, their exceptionality and their importance in time.

Regarding the predominant type of heritage, we observed in the exhibitions, the advertisements and the didactic material that centralisation in a single heritage predominates, with historical-artistic heritage being the most used, although we also find scientific-technological heritage in the case of Bologna’s Industrial Heritage Museum. In the interviews, the managers emphasised the type of heritage offered by each of the institutions studied. Historical heritage takes pride of place at the Rimini City Museum, artistic heritage at the Bologna Music Museum, the scientific-technological heritage in the Bologna Industrial Museum, and historical-artistic heritage at the National Museum of Ravenna.

The four museums are characterised by relating the main heritage on which they focus with other types of patrimony, working on different types of heritage in a systemic way, relating one to the other. The Bologna International Music Museum and Library works on musical-artistic heritage, linking it with artistic heritage related to painting, and with historical heritage, using music to portray the societies of the different eras and their ethnological heritage, seeing which emotions and customs derived from each of the objects that are observed or the works found in it. The Bologna Industrial Museum unites scientific-technological heritage with historical patrimony at all times, drawing up

itineraries in which the student body not only gets to know the instruments of each era and in turn the historical events of each one, but also delves into meanings, relating yesterday to today by connecting the customs and day-to-day life of the past with the identity of today's society and the students' own identity (ethnological heritage). The Rimini National Museum and the National Museum of Ravenna establish a close union between historical and artistic heritage, creating itineraries and experiential activities around the objects and monuments of the city and reproducing some creations to further the understanding of the techniques with which they were developed, observable in the teaching material and introductory brochures of the didactic proposals of both museums.

In three of the museums, the integration of the contents is mainly simple. The Rimini City Museum, the National Museum of Ravenna and the Industrial Museum of Bologna make didactic proposals where conceptual and procedural contents are prioritised. The creation of mosaics at the National Museum of Ravenna, the specific research workshops on issues such as water at the Bologna Industrial Museum or the Rimini City Museum's multisensory workshops are examples of the predominance of procedural and conceptual contents. However, the International Music Museum and Library of Bologna presents a complex integration of contents, as it considers the acquisition of some basic concepts about music necessary to be able to experiment in activities of musical expression, become emotionally involved and acquire respectful attitudes towards different musical works. Therefore, we observed how the conceptual, procedural, and attitudinal contents are levelled, assuming the difficulty that derives from the museum's own heritage due to its specificity. "We work with very difficult material because the collections we have in the museum are already rather difficult collections even for the initiated". (Informant: Manager B, Industrial Museum).

The contextualisation of contents is diverse in the four museums, although in all of them there is a social character, as heritage is used to depict the social characteristics of the communities related to it. At the International Music Museum and Library of Bologna, the contents are worked on mainly to further the knowledge of the features of the society in each period. The Rimini City Museum and the Bologna Industrial Museum use heritage content with a social purpose, but at the same time prioritise the functionality of heritage, in the in-depth study of objects and their use. For example, this occurs with the machinery related to the Bologna Industrial Museum's hydraulic system or the recreation in 2D or 3D of works in the Rimini City Museum. The National Museum of Ravenna, in addition to contextualising its heritage in a social and functional manner, also does so from a temporal perspective, presenting the chronology of the heritage elements in different itineraries, an aspect that can be observed at specific times in the four museums.

### 3.3. Category 3

Moving onto category 3, "how to teach", according to the data compiled in the interviews, we perceive that the activities proposed for schools in three of the museums, the Bologna Industrial Museum, the National Museum of Ravenna, and the Bologna International Music Museum and Library are mainly experiential, although traditional activities such as guided tours continue.

The education managers of these three museums told us about activities or experiences that take place in the museums. At the National Museum of Ravenna, we find the elaboration and replication of mosaics to learn how they are made, the symbology of the animals, the techniques used, the colours that are applied according to the emotions that they want to provoke, etc., information that is also observed in the didactic proposal of the museum and in the advertising material made for schools. At the Bologna Industrial Museum, the visits take place based on different workshops that link up with the content being worked upon in class. In addition, specific research is carried out on topics proposed by teachers and museum staff and agreements are reached to combine the museum's activity with that of the classroom, with museum staff visiting the classroom and vice versa. Examples of specific experiments include "Water fairytales", where the family is also involved, research into the hydraulic system, or silk production, even investigating the process experimentally, ranging from breeding the silkworms to the achievement of a silk garment, etc. This museum sets out from the

notion that the teaching proposal for schools must begin with an experimental project, which is later consolidated and becomes part of the museum's offer. "These are experiences which, in general, are consolidated over time, starting experimentally and becoming part of the standard training offer provided by the museum. It is the methodology that we have always developed in close collaboration with teachers and subsequently analysing the results" (Informant: Manager B, Industrial Museum). At the International Music Museum and Library of Bologna, the majority of activities hinge around music as a medium for expression, holding laboratories on musical language, musical expression and similar subjects. "Sometimes I address the pupils directly. We take part in the musical laboratories with little games that serve to focus concentration, auditory attention, and they are little games, then later I say: at break time you can redo (them); once you understand, you can do it with your eyes closed". (Informant: Manager A, Music Museum). In addition, they always use a story as a common thread and interrupt the visit with activities such as putting into practice a dance, a song, etc. They highlight the "ringed visit" which consists of the impact of listening to three musicians before visiting the museum's collection and then working with the emotions that it has aroused. This museum focuses mainly on teacher training, with the creation of a formative experience carried out in nine sessions designed to convey to the teacher the importance of music as a means and not as an end in itself. The museum aims to promote a taste for music by connecting the school's activities with the museum and with families in such a way that the boys and girls feel at home in the museum, as a house where they can enjoy music. "What interests us is that children with their teachers, with their families, feel this place as their house of music and know that when they come through that door, there is a series of special things related to musical language". (Informant: Teaching team member 1, Music Museum). It is emphasised that in this museum, it is even more important that the type of activities should be adapted to the age of the participants.

The Rimini City Museum, according to the education manager, mainly offers traditional activities such as itineraries through different sites and monuments of the city of Rimini, based above all on the knowledge of its historical heritage. However, reference is also made to some experiential activities that we see described in its didactic proposal, offering plans for one or more days with several types of activities or specific activities for a given time. Among them, we find "Draw me spring" for three-year-olds, in which they design a mural depicting the season; "The moon a metre away", where 3 to 8-year olds experiment with the cosmos; "Splash! In-form of water", where children from 3 to 11 years of age work on the different senses, etc. In addition, different workshops are held, like the "Mosaic workshop, Stone sculpture workshop, Illuminated manuscript workshop . . . ", as well as simulations, such as an archaeological dig.

In the four museums, the connection between museum, school, and city is highlighted. The education manager of the Rimini City Museum describes it this way, highlighting the triple relationship: "We always have a lot of influence on teaching, because it is not separate from the life of the museum and the life of the city", while her counterpart at the Bologna Industrial Museum emphasises the museum-school relationship: "The relation with the teacher is crucial. I always recommend that a museum cannot develop activities without the teacher. This becomes an important point, as the teacher is not only familiar with the class, but also knows the characteristics and other things, but it is something that museums may lose sight of from time to time. The teacher is able to simplify things for the children". (Informant: Manager B, Industrial Museum). At the National Museum of Ravenna, there is a strong connection to the school. Notably in the project "Making history . . . ", which takes place in both contexts, evincing a great synergy between school and museum. "In Ravenna, being more connected to the museum, there is a very close relationship with the teachers, a very intimate museum-school-city relationship". (Informant: Teaching team member, Ravenna Museum). In an inclusive approach, the four museums studied offer the possibility of creating a common didactic plan, designed jointly by the didactic team of the museum and the school.

According to the interviewees, the analysis of didactic proposals and the observations, all four universities use traditional active resources. The Bologna International Music Museum and Library

emphasises the importance of preparing its own material and does a great job of providing teachers with resources. For example: “We always give a lot of practical materials; every time we use a song, you have all the references, you know where to go to find it, or we will send it to you”. (Informant: Manager A, Music Museum). The main material produced by the museum is a guide found in its in-house magazine, *Dada*, where there are “... a series of descriptions taken from pieces in our museum, descriptions of possible workshops and a series of things carried out under our teaching plan. This is the most accomplished material we have made, but not systematically”. (Informant: Manager A, Music Museum). Materials such as songs, scores, instruments, the body itself and the museum’s collection are used. The Bologna Industrial Museum mainly uses materials from the child’s closest environment that facilitate understanding of the theme being developed, for example, materials such as silkworms, collection machinery, etc. In addition, it prepares teaching material in which research and the subject are encouraged. At the National Museum of Ravenna, teaching materials are used to explain the process of making mosaic, or posters for the laboratories, and the pupils create their own productions in the workshops with real material based on the museum collection. The Rimini City Museum uses its collection as the main resource to develop the activities, but it has also developed didactic material that induces research in students, although some traditional activities such as completing and copying also appear. These last two museums, together with the Museum of Music, have drawn up the didactic planning of the museum, which we have analysed, and published it either in magazines or in brochures.

The museums disseminate their didactic proposals through the web, information brochures, posters and social networks. The schools, mostly specific teachers, contact them to choose the didactic activity to carry out, coordinate, and to put them into practice, as one member of the didactic team from the Rimini Museum explains in this example: “Everything is on the website. Here is the history and then here is the activity (...) Here we have always collaborated with primary and secondary teachers”. (Informant: Teaching team member, Rimini Museum). In some cases, events are used to display the didactic information provided by the different heritage institutions at stands. In the case of the Ravenna and Rimini Museums, the diffusion of didactic proposals is strongly promoted by the city government. One member of the didactic team from the Ravenna Museum explains: “The government of the city of Ravenna, in coordination with the museum, organises different educational itineraries so that the boys and girls of Ravenna can get to know their heritage because their families don’t bring them to learn it. From September to January these activities are carried out and from January the didactic offer is opened to all schools in other places”. (Informant: Teaching team member, Ravenna Museum). Another member of the teaching team from the Rimini Museum commented on the link between Museum and city: “Because our museum, which is called the City Museum, has always been closely linked to the city, so, for example, we always propose routes between the city and the museum, so the link is always very strong, precisely to make it clear that the museum is not just something that appeared out of thin air and landed here by chance”. (Informant: Teaching team member, Rimini Museum).

#### 3.4. Category 4

As for the fourth category, inclusion through heritage and its accessibility, the museums analysed present different situations. The four institutions studied are considered museums fully open to being accessible, adapting in all cases to any type of public. Two members of the didactic team from the International Music Museum and Library of Bologna explained that it is adapted to the visiting public, and they even seek relevant assistance in other associations and institutions to respond to specific audiences such as visually impaired or blind people: “Here we have had groups with learning difficulties, with autism spectrum disorder... and we have even asked for guidance from associations related to these issues”. (Informant: Teaching team member 2, Music Museum). However, we can observe that accessibility is not a priority objective at a formal level in the International Music Museum and Library of Bologna. There is no didactic guide for differently-abled people, nor is there any reference to inclusive activities that can be carried out by all kinds of visitors. Nevertheless, we were

able to see live that the pertinent adaptations are made according to the people who request the activity: “Although it is not in our catalogue, we ensure that each visit is suitably adapted to the public we have”. (Informant: Teaching team member 1, Music Museum). The highly positive attitude of the museum’s educational managers towards the diversity of audiences is notable. This attitude and involvement are projected in the drafting of a publication on how to respond to the diversity of the visiting public through different adapted or inclusive activities.

In the case of the Industrial Heritage Museum, accessibility is currently a priority issue in that they are considering making adaptations to resources and activities to ensure easier access for all: “Accessibility and inclusion are among the main interest of the Museum, which is working (in collaboration with Istituto Cavazza, Fondazione Gualandi and Associazione Accaparlante) to prepare some materials that will make the visit more useful, such as tactile maps, routes and subtitled videos for the audience, etc”. (Informant: Teaching team member, Industrial Museum). However, it is currently not accessible: “At the moment, the activities proposed by the museum are not designed for a disabled public. It may be that there is a child with a disability (deafness, blindness, etc.) in a class; in that case, at the time of booking, the museum operators help the teacher choose the path by guiding them towards proposals that may allow their participation”. (Informant: Teaching team member, Industrial Museum). However, they respond to exclusive activities for groups with some type of functional diversity and adapt the visit to these groups. “The main experiences with people with disabilities are related to specific requests from homogeneous groups (...). In these cases, tailored itineraries are drawn up, taking advantage of the experience of the active staff in these associations, to take into account the different needs of the users from time to time, but always on the basis of the museum’s collections. For example, a tactile path was created for a group of blind people in the section dedicated to Bologna”. (Informant: Teaching team member, Industrial Museum).

Without a doubt, the Ravenna Museum is the most concerned with developing heritage accessibility and inclusive museum practices. In it, we were able to observe and analyse materials adapted for people with autism spectrum disorders, including most of the posters, diptychs, and even a story about the museum in pictograms. High priority is given to accessibility, priority that is impregnated in the inclusion in a new project for social and educational integration of museums in collaboration with the university. They have a didactic guide in which they include activities for the diversity of audiences and, in addition, the general activities they propose are mostly inclusive. This means that all kinds of the public can engage in them. “On many occasions, we are working with visually impaired people, or with mobility issues, deafness, etc. (...) Some of the activities available in the museum particularly lend themselves to the inclusion of people with disabilities, especially the activity of making mosaics, as there is no need to adapt them”. (Informant: Teaching team member, Ravenna Museum).

At the Rimini Museum, the heritage is partially accessible; there are some barriers, although they do try to adapt the activity to the visiting public. The priority of accessibility is high; they try to prepare materials and activities adapted to the differences and, likewise, in their didactic proposals there are inclusive activities, in which all types of the public can take part. For example, the manager explains: “Normally when a group comes with a disabled child, the teacher chooses one of the didactic proposals that adapt to everyone’s characteristics, for example, if a blind child comes, they choose a blindfolded itinerary in which the sense of touch is prioritised” (Informant: Teaching team member, Rimini Museum).

The four museums are deemed partially accessible, as all of them make an attempt to respond to the needs of people with different abilities, performing the adaptations that are appropriate at all times. In the majority of cases, they rely on associations and entities working with these people to provide them with guidance. In addition, the visits of these people tend to occur in a homogeneous way, although in the case of the last two museums, inclusive activities are carried out with all the pupils, attending to the needs of all.

### 3.5. Category 5

Regarding the fifth category, all the education managers interviewed from the four museums coincided in conceiving heritage as a potential element of the development of all people, highlighting a type of heritage in each one. At the Bologna International Music Museum and Library, the value of artistic heritage to stimulate people with different abilities is highlighted. The museum's work with people with cognitive disabilities and autism spectrum disorder stands out, highlighting the great contribution that direct experience with artistic heritage makes for them, provoking emotions that develop processes of improvement on a personal and social level: "Musical heritage is a good medium to provoke emotions in people with different disabilities; it's easy to work with emotion through music". (Informant: Teaching team member 2, Music Museum).

The Bologna Industrial Heritage Museum makes reference to the potential of technological heritage through experiential activities developed in practical workshops based on the characteristics of the public visiting the museum. These activities are mainly linked to special projects that the museum plans to respond to teachers' demands. "Each year the museum rolls out "special projects" for a limited number of participants, designed to meet the most specific needs of teachers". (Informant: Manager B, Industrial Museum). In this case, no type of public more closely related to the museum's heritage stands out.

The Rimini City Museum and the National Museum of Ravenna coincide in highlighting the importance of artistic heritage as an element that enhances the global development of all people and in turn provokes emotions. Both managers emphasise that among people with different abilities are people with autism spectrum disorder and cognitive disability, who get excited and interact more with the heritage: "Above all, we see that development is greater in people with autism spectrum disorders because it focuses them closely on their activity and we do wonderful things". (Informant: Teaching team member, Ravenna Museum).

In short, all museums consider that heritage becomes a fundamental resource to promote emotions in all people with different abilities, highlighting the artistic heritage in people with autism spectrum disorder and cognitive disability, although they also underline the effectiveness with visually impaired or blind people. The inclusive value of heritage is highlighted as an element that evokes emotions in all people, promoting the global development of all.

## 4. Discussion

In this work, we have analysed the educational proposals for schools from four Italian museums, selected for their relationship with schools and for the initiatives carried out for the development of good practices in heritage education, linking the museum's heritage with the classroom. To this end, we focused on the what, how, and why to teach and, on the other hand, on the accessibility of heritage and its potential for people with different abilities, analysing the information gathered through interviews, observation and document analysis.

The importance of heritage education in school is an unavoidable fact in this society where it is necessary to train people in critical citizenship who can withstand today's changes. However, recent studies such as those by [11,66] highlight the scarcity of content on heritage that is developed in schools today, carrying out an analysis of the contents of the textbooks that are currently used to develop the curriculum.

In the different museums, we find a vision of heritage that ranges from a monumental perspective, passing through aesthetics to that related to identity links, and it is still possible today to observe how the different ways of seeing or considering heritage remain [61]. These museums consider that their heritage elements include values, are potentially transmissible, contain identity potential, and entail a belonging-reference to a specific context [67]. Although there is a new concept of heritage based on a systemic, integrative and complex perspective [68], we observed that the four museums focus their activity on a type of heritage that is usually historical-artistic, as is the case in the majority of heritage centres of this type [20,69]. In some cases, we find that the historical or artistic heritage is

worked upon in a summative way with others, but we do not find a holistic vision of heritage [34]. The didactic proposals of the museums examined tend to work on their contents in a multidisciplinary way, focusing on the conceptual and procedural contents, which seems to be a breakthrough, as in other research we observed the prioritisation of conceptual contents [70]. The museums present the objects that make up their collections by referring to their relationship with the features of the societies to which they belong, leading to the importance of connecting the past with the present, this being one of the main objectives of history teaching in the education system [71].

The methodologies used for the development of museum educational programmes are characterised by being at a turning point, moving from traditional methodologies with traditional activities such as guided tours and itineraries with passive traditional resources, such as the guide as the sole interlocutor and didactic flashcards, towards experiential activities where the children are the creators of their own learning, with the development of research through different workshops or laboratories, animated itineraries, demonstrations, dramatisations, etc. [7]. Resources used for the activities are mainly traditional and active, such as guides that induce investigation, or posters with motivating questions, workshops, hands-on manipulation, etc., although traditional materials such as showcases or panels are also still used [72]. To this end, the importance of a close relationship between the museum's teaching team and the school is highlighted, considering the development of collaborative teaching programmes fundamental. In our case, museums become a resource to work on conceptual, procedural and attitudinal content [73]. However, the difficulty of this is highlighted and it is acknowledged that full collaboration takes place only in some projects, with sporadic activities still characteristic of museums and demanded by schools.

The learning dimension is framed mainly in the social. The museums consider that heritage is a great opportunity to bring about interactions with the social context within a territorial framework. Thus, through heritage, ancient and current societies become known, developing the social sphere of the person through the creation of links with heritage and the personal, physical, psychological and social connection that occurs [74]. On the other hand, in some cases we observed that the cognitive development of the students is intended, considering the knowledge of heritage to be important, along with reflection, deduction of hypotheses, etc., that can enable people to grow at a cultural and scientific level and build their own concept. Museums should be places where visitors do much more than observe, manipulate and explore; the experience should also seek emotion, expression, etc. [75]. Finally, we observed that the emotional dimension is also important for an institution where the important thing is not only the heritage but for the emotions that it is capable of arousing in people, the ability to express themselves, the ability to empathise, to know oneself, etc.

Ultimately, the aim of the educational process of these museums tend towards scientific and cultural literacy, the creation of identity bonds and social transformation. Encouraging literacy in pupils, so that they get to know and study the evolution of heritage in depth to further their knowledge of past societies, as well as those of today, is one of the goals of the museums analysed, as they consider that knowledge can contribute to the construction and development of the people on a human, physical and social level. This means that each of them can defend their own principles and contribute as much as possible to citizenship. In addition, the heritage found in museums is used to reinforce the collective identity of the city and develop the individual identity of each individual, as identification processes are generated that set out from the heritage [76]. Thus, museums intend heritage to be a starting point for the transformation of society and the forming of a critical citizenry that can face the changes that are taking place in it.

It is, therefore, necessary to develop didactic proposals linking schools and museums, so that they can help train citizens to face the problems of the planet from the concept of "glocality" [77]. This way, it is important to draw up didactic proposals that advocate the development of people who begin to value heritage, as the value of heritage is found in people [78].

Accessibility of heritage is today a priority issue in heritage institutions [45,79–82]. As stated by [83] (p. 846), "Without a doubt, the range of people and groups with special needs is very broad,



but museums cannot shirk this responsibility if we truly want to build a more inclusive and democratic institution together". Thus, the accessibility of the four museums studied today becomes a priority axis, given the importance of this issue as already stated in [84] (p.60): "Appreciation of the collections should be made easier for the more diverse public through the clear presentation, systematic labelling that provides succinct information, publishing guides and brochures that provide visitors with the necessary explanations and the systematic organisation of guided and commented tours, adapted to the different categories of visitors and entrusted to suitable people (...)".

Once heritage is accessible, we can see its effectiveness in people with different abilities. We must defend diversity and accessibility as a fundamental aspect in the development of educational programmes that use the diversity of heritage assets to serve the diversity of people [45]. This research highlights that the use of inclusive activities that serve people with different abilities promotes the symbolic appropriation that occurs in heritagisation and in the process of linking with an object through the generation of new meanings, new ties, or connections [46], leading to the global development of all people through the emotional bond to heritage. However, coinciding with [82], the response obtained by the museums confirms that, despite the fact that two of the museums engage in a conscious and thoughtful planning process in favour of the groups that attend them, the other two either delegate to the guidance of external agents when it comes to projects for a group with functional diversity or carry out isolated activities that do not have much to do with the inclusive concept that we advocate. To speak of inclusive activities that relate to the museum-school link is to speak of activities that are planned for all people, an issue to which all museums make reference. However, we consider that these inclusive activities must have prior planning based on inclusive principles, which must be far from a conception focused on the people's deficit, tending more towards the valuation of their differences [43].

Likewise, the four museums coincide in perceiving heritage as an agent that favours emotions, socialising and creating personal identity and development, which means that its true value is found in people [78]. Notwithstanding the evidence of reasons that should lead to greater importance being given to the knowledge of history and heritage, its teaching seems to be underestimated by European programmes, although, little by little, some initiatives are being carried out. Faced with the lack of motivation on the part of students towards history and heritage, the most favourable ways should be sought to motivate, involve and activate everyone [85]. From this perspective, it is necessary to adopt a first general criterion: undertaking educational proposals that can attract students and aim to make them acquire awareness, responsibility, autonomy of thought, and planning skills. The propagation and use of methodologies that pursue active learning is appropriate, not only seeking the accumulation of content by the students but also their mastery of the necessary skills and competencies that allow them to become critical citizens.

The unfolding of history, in fact, gives rise to heritage, that is, the heterogeneous and multiform set of legacies and resources in which the characters, assets, values and environmental, historical-artistic, scientific and ideals are brought together, are established and shared by human communities in their different territorial areas [86]. To respect and value it, it is necessary to learn about it through the most appropriate ways, those which, by activating its adoption and protection, introduce forms of responsibility and active citizenship. In this sense, cultural heritage appears as a necessary landing place and an integrating basis of relevant educational and inclusive value, capable of projecting the specific contributions of local cultural heritage and making use of the most up-to-date communication tools.

In this way, it becomes an opportunity for the acquisition and production of knowledge whereby the learning of competencies and the construction of knowledge are stimulated. This requires cross-disciplinary comparison and involves the systematic use of all communication tools.

Social and educational inclusion through heritage is an unavoidable issue at this time [39]. Advocating the diversity of heritages to respond to the diversity of people is becoming more and more necessary, using the emotional tie for the global development of all people with different capacities. The inclusive role of heritage is there because it allows us to connect different times, different people, and different communities that have taken part in the construction of the identity of a people, and that

allows us to work on inclusive proposals that enhance individual identity, highlight the value of diversity and value collective identity through the use of cultural heritage as an inclusive tool to create the necessary bridges between one's own and that of others, the common and the different [49] (p. 96).

## 5. Conclusions

The study we carried out highlights the value of heritage for the development of a heritage education that serves to achieve inclusive education. Using any type of heritage to learn about and value societies and build our own identity by uniting the past, the present and the future, and realising the value of diversity, makes heritage a key element for the implementation of inclusive principles, which seek no more than to respond to all people, pursuing equal opportunities, equity and the non-exclusion of the most vulnerable populations such as people with different capacities.

Taking into account the aims of the research, we have reached different general conclusions that encourage us to think about future lines of research that can contribute to a considerable improvement in the social and educational inclusion of people with different capacities.

The approach of the didactic proposals of the museums reveals a value of heritage as an element that increases the social dimension of learning and promotes interaction with the social context and knowledge of the students. However, the more emotional dimension of learning is also highlighted, as an inescapable means to elicit emotions that bear with them the achievement of abilities such as curiosity, creativity, imagination, etc., as well as the integral development of the person. This emotional component of the heritage makes everyone feel included and able to access the element, as there is a link with it that converts differences into equal opportunities. The emotional bond with the different heritage elements can make us feel unique so that we discover the value of our differences and, in turn, are able to see the positive in the differences of the other. Heritage is indubitably a good transmitter or carrier of emotions that ensures, if used in the right way, the development of inclusive principles for a more socially just and equitable society. However, we consider that heritage not only works the social and emotional dimension but also the cognitive, emphasising the activation of the students' basic psychological processes to acquire skills related to the formulation and analysis of arguments.

The aim of educational processes in museums is different according to the heritage institution in question. We see how in the majority of cases the identity links with the existing collection in the different heritage institutions are prioritised, with these links leading to the achievement of other objectives, such as scientific and cultural literacy. In this way, we conclude that one of the most important purposes in the educational processes carried out in the school-museum practices focuses on the creation of identity links.

This aim is combined with the concept of heritage and the contents that are developed in the school-museum didactic proposals. These proposals of the museums studied have an approach focused on the symbolic value of heritage, valuing the type of heritage most present in them, mostly the historical-artistic, while continuing to pursue a more systemic vision of heritage that leads to a holistic perspective of heritage. Heritage becomes a means to work on the knowledge of the characteristics of the moment, contextualising each object in a social and functional manner.

As for the activities of the didactic proposals, the role of teachers and students and the didactic resources used, we conclude that the heritage institutions examined are more inclined towards experiential activities using workshops, cooperative work or corners, although passive traditional activities and resources are also still used, such as the guided tour focused on the guide's commentary, although in some cases, these guided tours are animated with different interactions with the public and interspersed activities that cause a change in the conception of said strategy. In the more experiential activities carried out by the museums, the active role of teacher and student and the coordination of said teaching staff with the museum are highlighted, and in the more traditional activities such as the guided tour without interaction, the more passive role of the students and teachers is emphasised. We also conclude that teacher training in heritage issues is a priority to connect the museum's activities

with the school and make visiting the museum an activity included in the didactic planning of the same, giving it a curricular meaning in the more academic sphere.

Undoubtedly, in the museum field, it is also necessary to ensure human rights and move towards the inclusion of all people, ensuring the rights of all citizens. Accessibility has to be ensured through the development of universal design, applicable to all people without the need for specific supports. This leads us to conclude that the museums analysed are following the right path, a route in which all the proposed activities are aimed at all people. However, we are worried that in this inclusive discourse, perspective may be lost and the relevant adaptations to ensure universal learning design for all people may not be carried out. Therefore, a start towards the inclusion of all people with different abilities in heritage institutions is the development of specific adapted activities, such as those described by the education managers interviewed in the research, which allow certain specific audiences to have a heritage experience that allows them to develop their identity and their emotional bond, while fostering the acquisition of different skills, with the heritage thus acquiring a therapeutic value.

From this perspective, we can conclude that the didactic proposals more focused on experiential and manipulative activities allow a better inclusion of all people with different capacities, in addition to provoking emotions that involve an evolution in the development of these people. This is related to the value of heritage as an element that enhances emotions, highlighting the contribution made by direct experience with it on a personal and social level for all people, specifically highlighting artistic heritage as the most appropriate type for this purpose.

Among the proposals for improvement and future lines of research, we are considering extending the study by contrasting the data of the informants who come from the museums with the perspectives of the students themselves and the schools (the teachers), thus carrying out a triangulation based on different views of the various educational proposals offered by museums.

In short, museum and school relations generate inclusive didactic proposals for heritage education as long as a conceptualisation of heritage is pursued from a holistic perspective, prioritising the development of all dimensions, whether social, cognitive, or emotional. Dynamic activities are carried out, such as experiential workshops in which student and teacher both play an active role, with close coordination between the school and the museum. Active resources such as mosaics are used and an accessible heritage is ensured that can generate emotions in people with different capacities that carry with them the acquisition of skills, giving a therapeutic value to heritage to achieve better global development of the person and their social and educational inclusion.

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