



## BOOK REVIEW

### Book

Accounting for cultural heritage management: resilience, sustainability, and accountability

Magliacani M & Toscano V

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### Reviewer

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This book represents a seminal contribution to the interdisciplinary discourse surrounding the preservation and management of cultural heritage. It is meticulously crafted and navigates the complex intersection of accounting principles and cultural heritage stewardship, offering insights into strategies to foster resilience, sustainability, and accountability within cultural organizations. This book is a theoretical exploration and an excellent resource that empowers individuals, research scholars, cultural heritage managers, accounting practitioners, and policymakers with comprehensive and well-articulated insights and practical guidance in Cultural Heritage Management. The authors have meticulously ensured that the content remains current and pertinent to recent developments, making it an exceptional resource for the readers.

This scholarly work is organized into six comprehensive chapters, each dedicated to unravelling distinct facets of cultural heritage management through an accounting lens. By blending theoretical insights with empirical evidence and real-world case studies, they deliver a cogent narrative that elucidates the multifaceted challenges and opportunities inherent in safeguarding and promoting cultural heritage in contemporary society. The book's prelude extends heartfelt acknowledgments to the myriad contributors and stakeholders who have contributed to its inception, underscoring the collaborative ethos that underpins its creation. From reviewers to curators and administrative personnel within cultural institutions, the authors express gratitude to all those who have lent their expertise and support to this endeavour, reflecting the inclusive spirit of the cultural heritage community and making the audience feel a part of this collaborative effort.

The book's first part lays the groundwork for the ensuing discussions by articulating the overarching objectives and methodological framework that inform the research. Through a blend of qualitative and quantitative approaches, the authors explore cultural heritage management's managerial and accounting dimensions, framing their analysis within the broader context of resilience, sustainability, and accountability. The second part is a foundational exposition of the managerial features inherent in cultural organizations. From delineating the community of people and organizational structures to unpacking the value co-creation processes within cultural ecosystems, this section offers a nuanced understanding of the complexities of managing cultural assets. Real-world case studies, such as the Civic Museums of Pavia in Lombardy, Italy, provide concrete illustrations of accounting principles applied in cultural contexts.

Building upon this foundation, part three delves into the strategic dimensions of cultural heritage management. Through sections dedicated to strategic thinking, planning, budgeting, and accounting for control, the authors illuminate the pivotal role of accounting techniques in aligning organizational objectives with strategic imperatives. This section equips cultural managers with practical tools for effective decision-making and performance evaluation by elucidating concepts such as the balanced scorecard and cost accounting.

Part four represents a thematic pivot towards exploring the intersections between cultural heritage preservation and sustainable development agendas. Drawing upon European and Italian guidelines, as well as UNESCO's Culture 2030 indicators, the authors advocate for a holistic approach to cultural sustainability that integrates environmental, social, and economic considerations. Case studies examining the impact of cultural initiatives on European capital cities underscore the transformative potential of cultural heritage in fostering sustainable urban development, inspiring the audience with the possibilities of cultural heritage. In the next part, the authors grapple with the concept of resilience and its relevance to cultural heritage stewardship. Through an exploration of digital technologies, lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic and case studies from Italian universities' museums and corporate archives, they elucidate strategies for building resilience in the face of external shocks and disruptions. This part underscores the adaptive capacity of cultural organizations and the role of accounting practices in facilitating their resilience-building efforts.

The book's culminating part synthesizes the findings into a cohesive conceptual model. By articulating the interplay between resilience, sustainability, and accountability within the cultural heritage management paradigm, they offer a roadmap for future research and practice. This concluding section encapsulates the book's overarching thesis: that accounting principles can catalyze fostering resilience, sustainability, and accountability within cultural organizations.

The book is a seminal work bridging the gap between accounting theory and cultural heritage practice. Through its rigorous analysis, empirical insights, and interdisciplinary approach, the book offers a holistic understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing cultural heritage managers in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As cultural heritage continues to evolve in response to global trends and societal shifts, this timely volume is an invaluable resource for scholars, practitioners, and policymakers, charting a course toward a more resilient, sustainable, and accountable future for cultural heritage management.

### Authors



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