

# WORKING ON CULTURAL HERITAGE: PLAN AN ACTION RESEARCH

**The following guide elaborated by Istituto Luigi Sturzo within Art-Connection project is intended to be a descriptive line for possible field works regarding cultural heritage.**

---

Working on the theme of cultural heritage can be very complex and requires field and epistemological experience, and at the same time it poses the challenge of relating to new research methods that require empathy, sharing of knowledge, knowing how to deal with moments of crisis and a large dose of creativity.



## **This guide is...**

- The description of a field research in the cultural heritage sector
- A basis to build on for further ideas
- A model to follow for cultural operators working in formal and non-formal educational settings



## **This guide is not...**

- The only way to approach this kind of research
- A point of arrival, but a starting point to work on cultural heritage



# WORKING IN THE FIELD WITH CULTURAL HERITAGE

*Cultural heritage is a group of resources inherited from the past which people identify, independently of ownership, as a reflection and expression of their constantly evolving values, beliefs, knowledge and traditions. It includes all aspects of the environment resulting from the interaction between people and places through time.*

---

Heritage is the cultural legacy which we receive from the past, which we live in the present and which we will pass on to future generations. With the 1972 Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, UNESCO established that certain places on Earth have "exceptional universal value" and belong to humanity's common heritage, such as the Serengeti Forest in East Africa, the Pyramids of Egypt, the Great Barrier Reef in Australia and the Baroque cathedrals of Latin America.

.

Nonetheless, cultural heritage is not limited to monuments and collections of objects. It is also comprised of living expressions inherited from our ancestors, such as oral traditions, performing arts, social manners, rituals, festive events, knowledge and practices related to nature and the universe, and knowledge and techniques linked to traditional crafts. Despite its fragility, intangible cultural heritage or living heritage is an important factor in maintaining cultural diversity.

# EXPLORING CULTURAL HERITAGE

## What is cultural heritage

- ✓ The essence of a person (individual level)
- ✓ Learned characteristics, beliefs, attitudes.
- ✓ Behavioral patterns, arts, beliefs, and institutions of group of people (group level)
- ✓ Customs (practices) passed through generations
- ✓ It determines your level of comfort in diverse situations

## Why focusing on cultural heritage

- ✓ Heritage timelines include past and present, with an eye to the future
- ✓ Heritage awareness creates better understanding of the past and the present and better citizens
- ✓ Heritage is understood through stories
- ✓ Heritage is everywhere







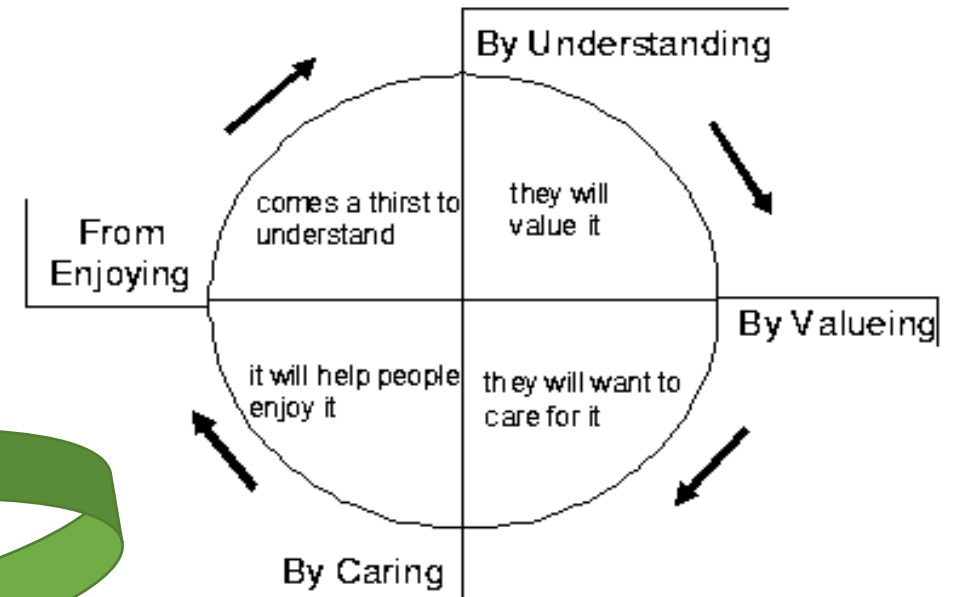
## The heritage cycle

The Heritage Cycle diagram gives us an idea of how we can make the past part of our future. In a clockwise direction the wedges and arrows read:

understanding (cultural heritage): people value it  
valuing it: people want to care for it  
caring for it it will help people enjoy it  
From enjoying it comes a thirst to understand and also...by

EDUCATION PROJECTS AND RESEARCH

### HERITAGE CYCLE



# what?

#plan

# AN ACTION RESEARCH TEMPLATE

## Preliminary informations

#what

participatory  
action research

#where

#cultural institutes  
and archives

#who

#A small group of  
young people

#when

# 6-8 months

Phase 1 – plan and co-project

Phase 2 -Implementation

Phase 3 – Sharing results and Evaluation

Phase 4 -Learning gain

#let's plan

## Phase 1 - Plan and co-project

Planning of the research and preparation of research tools

Research data

Meetings with the target group

## Phase 2 –Implementation

Organize and implement the different steps, including focus groups with the target group

## Phase 3 Sharing results and evaluation

## Phase 4 -Learning gain and dissemination

# PHASE – 1

## PLAN AND CO-PROJECT

# Plan and co-project

# Define the research problem

# Launch the research

# Define goals and actions



# What can I do?

### HOW

# Create the group : team working and group

working experiences

# Define methodological tools

# Start a theoretical research

# Use mentoring

### Instruments

- ☐ Narration and self narration
- ☐ Test of self evaluation of competences and skills (*e.g. doc. 1*)
- ☐ Mentoring
- ☐ Methodological methods (lessons)

## Instruments used:

- ❑ Narration and self narration
- ❑ Test of self evaluation of competences and skills

## The first meeting: co-building a work plan

**Tips:** ask participants to share their idea of cultural heritage and create a map



The main aim of this first meeting is to share and co-build a work plan that should be useful, meaningful and self-representative for the group, but also a work in which the group will recognize a common vision.

For this reason, in this phase it is necessary to work on the group development, also creating a mutual knowledge among the group, following this main steps:

- ✓ Start-up (training)
- ✓ Constitution (training)
- ✓ Description of objectives and research plan (training)
- ✓ Co-definition of the research key question problems





# PHASE – 2

## IMPLEMENTATION

#drawing my research project



#ACT

### HOW

#Create the group : team working

#Peer education

#Mentoring

#Act-play-create works

### instruments

- ☐ Mentoring
- ☐ Coaching sessions (twice a week)
- ☐ Tutorship
- ☐ Archival research
- ☐ Software

## Instruments

- ❑ Research grid template (see doc.2)
- ❑ Team work: so fare/ mi piace (I can do/I like) (see doc.3)

## Planning the reasearch: second meeting

In this phase of the project, the actors involved in the process start to plan concretely their own action research work.

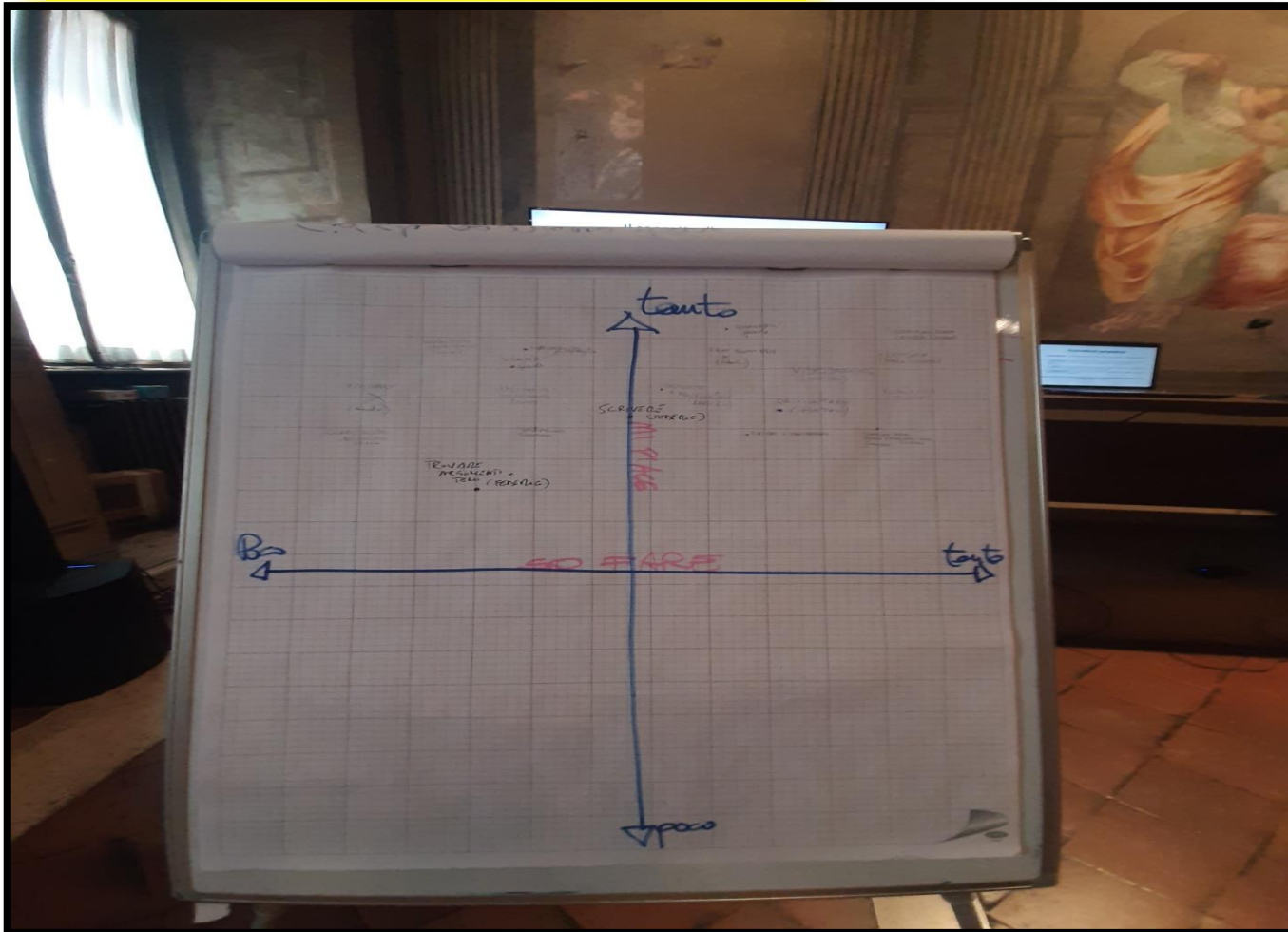
### Organize a meeting to:

- ✓ Work on a project idea
- ✓ Define the project work
- ✓ Approve the projects

### Keep in mind!!

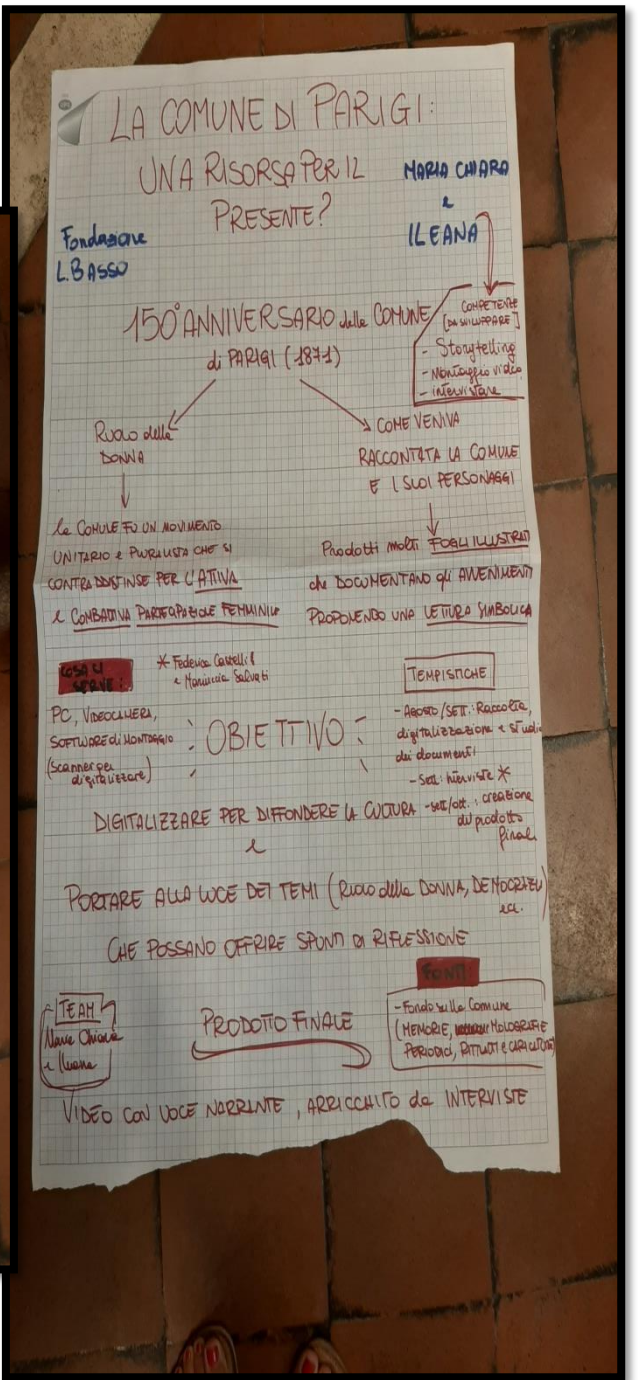
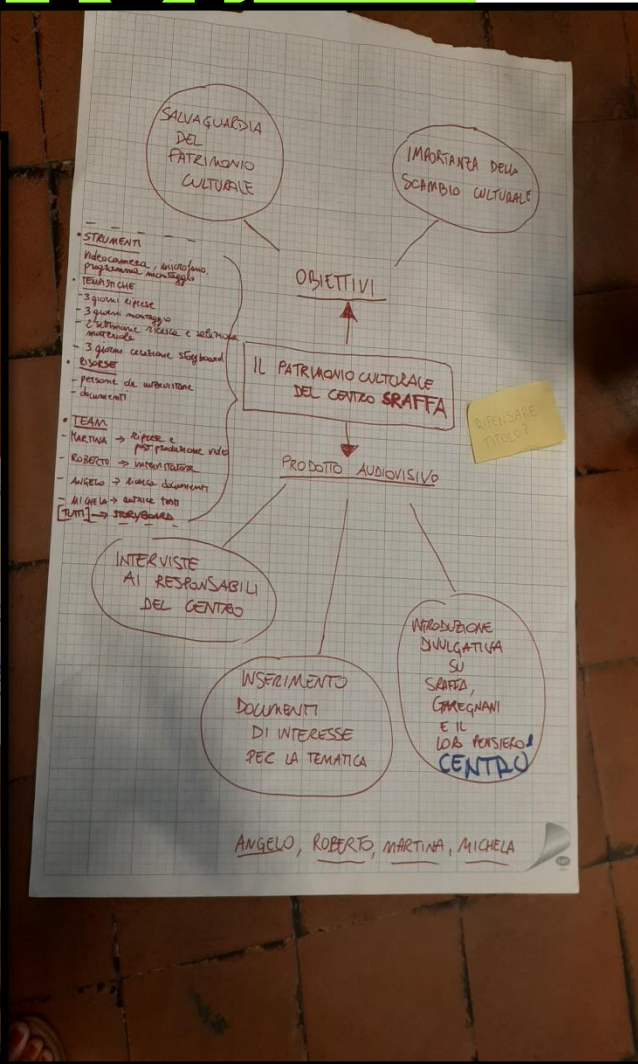
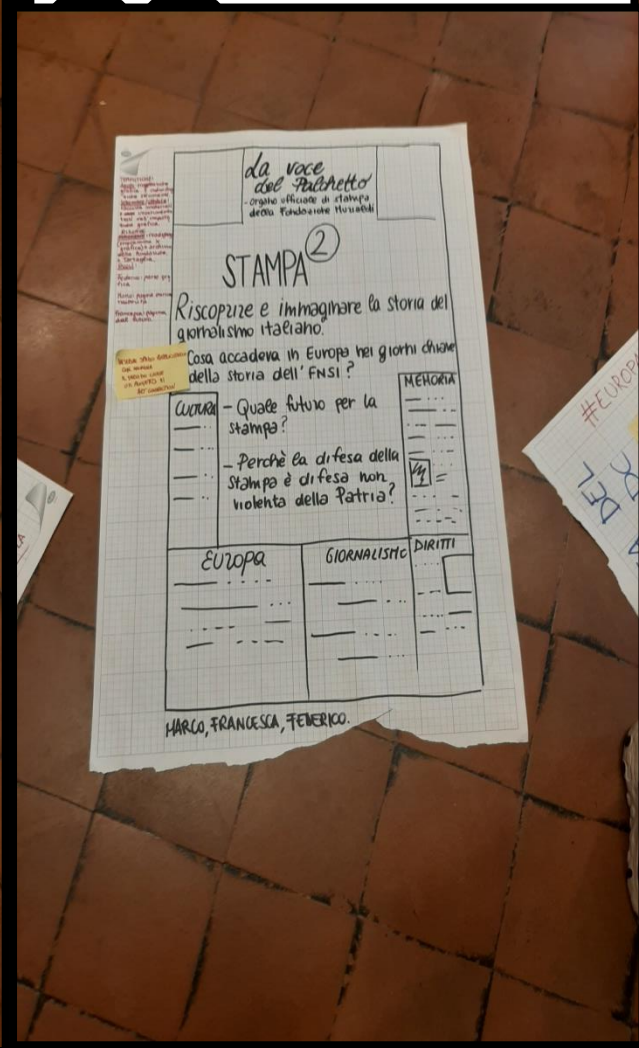
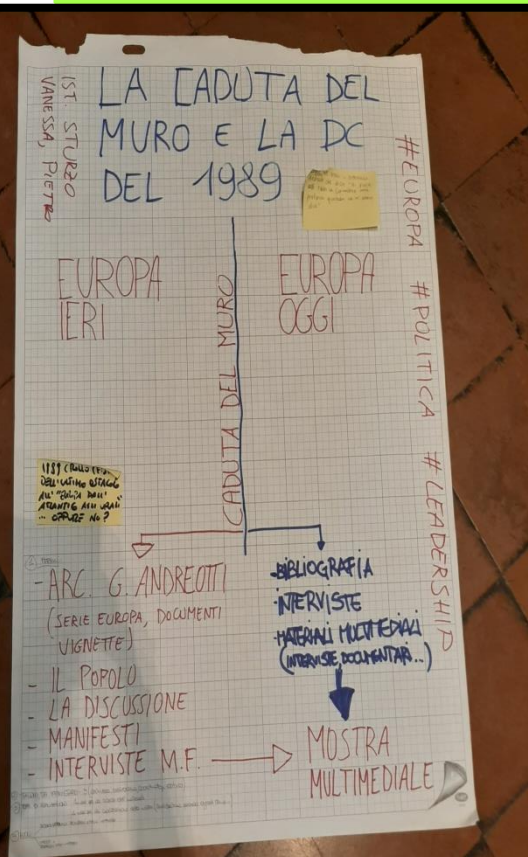
During this phase tutors of the project and cultural developers must follow and closely accompany the target group during the work.  
How?

- ✓ On line meetings (twice a week)
- ✓ Keep in touch with mailing lists
- ✓ Ask and receive feedbacks





# HOW TO PROJECT IDEAS: A CREATIVE





# LEARNING AND CREATIVE TOOLS





# MENTORING

Every human organization can be understood as a learning community, that is, a community of people immersed in a continuous process of learning and adaptation to a changing context.

From this perspective, every learning relationship can be accelerated and facilitated through the enhancement of mentoring relationships designed to:

- ✓ facilitate internal processes
- ✓ facilitate interaction with the external ecosystem
- ✓ allow the socialisation of norms and values to new member

**TIPS!** For a mentoring guide see e.g. : [https://certifyproject.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/mentoring\\_EN.pdf](https://certifyproject.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/mentoring_EN.pdf) (doc. 4)

# THE ROLE OF THE MENTOR

- ✓ Focuses on the needs of the mentee
- ✓ Manages the process without dominating or manipulating
- ✓ Adopts an active listening style
- ✓ Establishes an environment that empowers the mentee to achieve their goals
- ✓ Gathers and transmits points of view

## The Role of the Mentor: Summarised



## Coaching is useful to:

- ✓ Accompany the group on the research path
- ✓ Support the group
- ✓ Support education, not impose
- ✓ Solve problems
- ✓ Be a point of reference

### HOW

- #Following the work
- #Observing
- #Be present for almost twice meeting at week

## Peer education is useful to:

- ✓ share (informations, know-how experinces, competences)
- ✓ Put in common
- ✓ Enjoy on learning
- ✓ Create (skills, competences, group buinding)

### HOW

- # By moving in 'like' networks, individuals help each other to gain knowledge and to learn in the process

#keyword

#keyword

## #FOCUS GROUP WITH the TARGET GROUP

The evaluation phase aims to collect and present the outcome of the research work in the field.

At the end of this moment the effects of the actions taken were also evaluated.

*It can be useful organize:*

# **DO** a focus group to valuate the projects, to listen to the group opinions and to conclude the field action



### The focus group is a tool to:

- Valutare punti di forza e di debolezza del progetto
- Valutare la percezione degli apprendimenti e degli autoapprendimenti
- Valutare le competenze acquisite
- Rinforzare la relazione con i cultural connectors
- Condividere le esperienze e confrontarsi sul lavoro svolto



# **IMPLEMENTATION**

## **Act**

Collect materials and data, do interviews, shoot videos, take pictures and photographs, sketchbooks

## **Play**

Think what you are going to do, plan the work, discuss with the group, prepare contents, DO!

## **CREATE**

Use creativity and put in action your ideas!

# PHASE 3 – SHARING RESULTS AND EVALUATION

#Sharing results and  
evaluation



#CONCLUDING RESEARCH

TIPS: **organize a focus group**  
to evaluate the projects and to  
listen to the group opinions

## HOW

#focus group to evaluate strengths and  
weaknesses

#peer education

# mentoring

#finish project works

#plan a public event to show the works and  
discuss results

## Instruments

- ☐ Focus group - canvas (see doc.5)
- ☐ Final test of self evaluation of  
competences and skills (see doc.6)
- ☐ Projects

# PHASE - 4

## LEARNING GAIN

#Learning



# RESULTS

### HOW

- #Evaluate the research process and the project works
- #Create some best practices
- #Evaluate replicability of the process
- #Organize an event to present and disseminate the work

### INSTRUMENTS

- ❑elaboration of data and materials
- ❑deep interviews to privilege witnesses – canvas (see doc. 7)





a digital storytelling

Story  
Telling

Experience

Memory

Other ideas to  
work with  
cultural heritage



Role playing  
game

shutterstock.com - 2060115032



comics



Photographic exhibition





# BIBLIOGRAPHY

Agnoli M.S, *Il disegno della ricerca sociale*, Carocci, Roma, 2004.

Bauman Z., (tr. it), *Dentro la globalizzazione*, Laterza, Bari 2001.

Bortoletto N., *La ricerca-azione: un excursus storico-bibliografico*, 54-67, in Minardi E., Cifiello S. (a cura di), *Ricercazione. Teoria e metodo del lavoro sociologico*, Franco Angeli, Milano, 2005.

Gianturco G., *L'intervista qualitativa, dal discorso al testo scritto*, Guerini ed, Milano, 2009.

Gilardi, S., Bruno A, *Action-Research negli studi organizzativi: lo stato dell'arte*, *Risorsa Uomo: Rivista di psicologia del lavoro e dell'organizzazione* 12. (2-3 2006): 129–150.

Yin R.K., *Lo Studio di caso*, Armando Editore, Roma, 2011.

Lincoln Y. S. and. Guba E. G, *Naturalistic Inquiry*, Beverly Hills, Ca. Sage, 1985.

Masciotra, D.; Roth, W-M.; Morel, D., *Enaction: toward a Zen mind in learning and teaching*. Rotterdam: SensePublishers, 2007.

Mezirow J., *Apprendimento e trasformazione. Il significato dell'esperienza e il valore della riflessione nell'apprendimento degli adulti*, Raffaello Cortina, Milano, 2003



Pickard A.J. *Ricerca azione: Continuità e trasformazione dei metodi dagli anni '70 a oggi*. Inchiesta: Trimestrale di ricerca e pratica sociale 36. (151 2006).

Quaglino G. P., *Leadership e cambiamento*. Scritti di formazione 4 1976 - 2006, Franco Angeli, Milano, 2007.

Silverman D., *Come fare ricerca qualitativa*, Carocci, Roma, 2004.

Solivetti M., *La sociologia come ricerca, Modelli sociologici e percorsi di ricerca*, Carocci ed., Roma, 2001.

Tedeschi E., *Sociologia e scrittura. Metafore, paradossi, malintesi: dal campo al rapporto di ricerca*, Laterza, Roma-Bari, 2005.





### **Disclaimer**

This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the co-authors and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.