



## Chapter 6

# Using Action Research for Improvement of Project Knowledge Management in the Public Museum

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### ABSTRACT

*This chapter aims at presenting the results of the research carried out as part of the action research project concerning knowledge management and knowledge sharing in a public institution. As a research subject, a public cultural institution in Poland was selected. The methods used during the implementation of the research include observations, interviews, questionnaire surveys, and document analysis. The chapter presents the course of the research process, a diagnosis of problems, and challenges of the institution under study as regards project knowledge management, analysis of results, and recommendations. The principal result of the study is the*

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*developed action plan that contains an overview description of the proposed change and suggestions for solutions for the diagnosed challenge. It also illustrated that action research is a research approach supporting project management processes in public organizations. The theoretical background for considerations undertaken in the work are the concepts of project knowledge management and sharing knowledge on the implemented projects.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

The problematic aspects of knowledge management have nowadays been the subject of widespread interest. It does not only apply to large companies, but also to small and medium-sized enterprises, which notice that appropriate actions serving the dissemination and using of knowledge can bring many benefits to the organisation (Birkinshaw, 2001). Recognising the positive impact of knowledge management in private organisations, also makes public sector organisations implement solutions in this area. The need to redefine and improve the methods of managing public organisations is associated with a different perception of their place and role in the society than the one existing so far. Changes taking place in the public sector cause that knowledge here is also treated as the organisation's strategic resource (Girard, 2018).

In addition to knowledge management, project management is becoming an extremely important trend in contemporary public organisations. Increasingly, they become a method to achieve the organisation's strategic goals. Appropriate management of project knowledge can thus significantly impact the success of organisations implementing an increasing number of projects (Wirick, 2009). The popularisation of projects in the public sector is attributable to the 1990s (Kerzner, 2017). This was associated with not only changes taking place at organisation level, but also of entire countries, caused by the implementation of new management methods, based on New Public Management (NPM) principles (Osborne, Radnor, & Nasi, 2012). NPM, assuming modernisation and marketisation of the public sector, was a response to a certain disappointment with public administration, in the case of which more and more the following was shown: incompetence in performing public tasks, methods of action not adapted to the changing environment, inefficiency, or excessive bureaucracy and mismanagement (Abbasi & Al-Mharmah, 2000). Project management seems to fulfil some of NPM's postulates - introducing greater flexibility, a task-oriented approach, and efficiency of public institutions' actions (Rosta, 2011).

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