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# METHODS AND FORMS OF COMMUNICATION WITH VISITORS IN THE EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES OF THE HOLODOMOR MUSEUM

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The modern museum performs a large number of functions, among which it is worth emphasizing those that affect the formation of the worldview of youth, as well as the preservation and development of civil society as a whole. The National Museum of the Holodomor-Genocide highlights the history associated with social trauma, which makes the choice of methods and approaches used to carry out this mission become even more important. Therefore, the purpose of the article is to show the ways of interaction with visitors of different ages, which are used in the work of the educational department of the Holodomor Museum.

The study provides an overview of the main types of educational activities for schoolchildren offered by the Museum. The main objectives of these activities are familiarization with the problem of protecting human rights, analysis of sources on the history of the Holodomor (photos, posters, diaries, eyewitness accounts of genocide and archival documents), formation of critical thinking skills (in particular, the ability to recognize fakes in the media) and drawing attention to the importance of studying one's own family history. Also the article tells about the emphases that are significant while working with children and teenage audiences and talking about traumatic events.

Great attention is paid to interactive tools of working with visitors in the museum, in particular the use of video, animation, and other media tools when creating online tours and lessons. Online work with visitors has become especially relevant since 2020. For this purpose, we adapted some educational lessons and created tours in an online format, which consist of communication with the guide and watching a pre-prepared video tour. Such tours are created in two versions, in accordance with the age of students (6–12 years old and over 13 years old). The video tour for teenagers and adults uses historical documents, photographs, fragments of newsreels and video testimonies of Holodomor witnesses, as well as exhibits from the museum collection and stock materials. To develop lessons for younger students, the means of playing and storytelling were used, and the video tour for children 6–12 years old was illustrated with the help of sand animation, which allows showing the exposition and telling about the Holodomor to younger listeners without hurting them.

Key words: Holodomor Museum, Holodomor, communication, online tours, educational tours and lessons, museum audience, accessibility.

The National Museum of the Holodomor-Genocide is currently one of the key centers for disseminating the information about the crime committed against Ukrainians by the soviet authorities in 1932–1933. The Museum's activities contribute to the development of civil society in Ukraine, which is especially relevant now, in the context of the large-scale war initiated by Russia. This requires application of modern educational tools and the development of relevant historical narratives that will help in forming a memory of the past events and overcoming collective trauma. In fact, the Holodomor Museum's work influences the creation of a commemorative model of Ukrainian society through educational activities, tours and other educational products. Therefore, the aim of the article is to demonstrate the ways of interaction between a modern museum and its audience, using the experience of the National Museum of the Holodomor-Genocide in the educational field as an example.

The influence of museum activities on the formation of national identity were examined by Alla Kyrydon, Oksana Bondarets, Polina Verbytska, and others<sup>1</sup>. The publications by Hanna Rudyk, Ruslana Mankovska, Nadiia Kapustina, and Tamara Kutsaieva are dedicated to the study of museum audiences and issues of communication with visitors<sup>2</sup>. Various aspects of museum pedagogy were highlighted by Ruslana Mankovska, Sofiia Riabchuk, Oleksii Karamanov, Vitalii Krutyi, Yevhen Chervonyi, Valentyna Nadolska, Svitlana Havryliuk, Olena Onohda, Alina Dzhuryla, Vitalii Kushnir, Yuliia Kliuchko, and others<sup>3</sup>. Renata Pater, Oleksandr Mikhno, Oleksii Karamanov,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Алла Киридон, "Музеї як інструмент державної політики пам'яті", *V Череванівські наукові читання (на пошану професора А. С. Череваня: збірник наукових статей*, вип. V (Полтава: ПНПУ імені В.Г. Короленка, 2020), 239–250, доступно 07.10.2024, http://dspace.pnpu.edu.ua/handle/123456789/18582; Оксана Бондарець, "Музеї: збереження спадщини, осмислення минулого, формування ідентичності", *Наукові записки НаУКМА. Історія і теорія культури* 4, (2021): 106–112; Поліна Вербицька, "Культурна пам'ять як чинник конструювання ідентичності в умовах трансформації українського суспільства", *Historical and cultural studies* 5 (1), (2018): 15–22; Поліна Вербицька, "Історичний музей як чинник примирення та суспільного діалогу", *Historical and Cultural Studies* 1 (1), (2014): 13–17.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Ганна Рудик, "Музейна людина": колективний портрет українців, які відвідують музеї", *Історична правда*, доступно 03.10.2024, https://www.istpravda.com.ua/articles/2013/07/15/130138; Руслана Маньковська, "Сучасні музейні комунікації та перспективи їх розвитку", *Краєзнавство* 3, (2013): 75–84; Надія Капустіна, "Деякі аспекти роботи з музейною аудиторією (з досвіду роботи Дніпропетровського історичного музею ім. Д.І. Яворницького)", *Сучасний музей: між скарбницею та підприємством. Матеріали Міжнародної конференції 8 жовтня 2006 р., м. Чернівці.* (Львів, 2008), 99–102; Тамара Куцаєва, "Музейний відвідувач: хто він? (Аналіз соціально-музейного опитування відвідувачів Меморіального комплексу "Національний музей історії Великої Вітчизняної війни 1941–1945 років" у 2009–2010 рр.)", *Військово-історичний меридіан, спецвипуск: З досвіду роботи Меморіального комплексу "Національний музей історії Великої Вітчизняної війни 1941–1945 років".* (Київ, 2013), 122–135.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> Руслана Маньковська, "Музейна педагогіка: інноваційна технологія інтелектуального розвитку", *Краєзнавство* 3, (2019): 238–251; Софія Рябчук, "Діти в музеї", *Лабораторія сучасного мистецтва: Методичка для занять з дітьми та підлітками*, упорядниця Валерія Бураджиєва, редакторка Поліна Ліміна. (Дрогобич: Коло, 2021), 25–32; Софія Рябчук, "Як скласти музейний маршрут для сімей із дітьми", *Музейний простір*, доступно 10.10.2024,

Oksana Surmach, Anna Shukalovych, Liudmyla Kuznetsova, Ihor Kushnarov, and others wrote about the online activities of museum institutions<sup>4</sup>.

The educational team of the Holodomor Museum has a number of various educational products intended for visitors of all ages, starting from preschoolers.

We pay great attention to improving the overview tour for adults, adapting it according to changes in the exhibition and current requests of Ukrainian society. As in most museums around the world the primary audience of our institution is schoolchildren<sup>5</sup>. Therefore, we are actively working on designing interesting educational

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<sup>4</sup> Олексій Караманов, Оксана Сурмач, Анна Шукалович, "Музейна педагогіка в умовах онлайннавчання", Український педагогічний журнал 3, (2021): 58–65; Олександр Міхно, "Освітні онлайнпродукти Педагогічного музею України", Матеріали доповідей Міжнародної наукової конференції "Музейна педагогіка в контексті викликів сучасної освіти" (м. Львів, ЛНУ імені Івана Франка, 21.09.22), упорядник і науковий редактор О. В. Караманов. (Львів: ЛНУ імені Івана Франка, 2023), 62–65; Людмила Кузнецова, Ігор Кушнарьов, "Віртуальні музеї України як засоби збереження історичної пам'яті в умовах війни", Питання культурології 43, (2024): 142–155.

<sup>5</sup> Ганна Рудик, "Музейна людина": колективний портрет українців, які відвідують музеї; Руслана Маньковська, "Сучасні музейні комунікації та перспективи їх розвитку", 75–84; Надія

activities, lessons, and workshops for them. We also offer overview tours for the youngest visitors aged 6–11 and teenagers (12–15 years old). Overall, over the recent years, the audience of the museum has noticeably become younger, especially after the onset of the full-scale russian aggression against Ukraine. Since August 2022, when the Holodomor museum was reopened to the public, parents have increasingly been bringing their children for them to better understand the price that Ukrainians paid for independence, the preconditions and the causes of the current russian genocide.

The changes in the audience composition can be evidenced by comparing the statistics of 2023 with those of 2019, the last year without major upheavals:

- In 2019 the tours were conducted mostly for foreigners (22%) and organized groups of schoolchildren and students (they accounted for 58% of the total number of visitors). Nowadays our main audience consists primarily of families that are often represented by several generations. Sometimes several families with children come together to view the exhibition or attend the tour. Teenagers or young people come on their own, and they also take tours. The number of such tours doubled in 2022–2023 (66% of the total number);
- Organized groups of schoolchildren and students still account for a large percentage of tours: in 2023 they accounted for 28% (compared to only 6% in 2022), although work with educational institutions has largely shifted to an online format;
- Today every third visitor to the museum books a guided tour or an educational class (in 2019 it was only every sixth visitor).

During tours for both children and adults we always focus on the struggle of Ukrainians against the communist regime for their freedom and rights, and we tell about the humanity that helped many survive during those cruel times. The stories of exhibits are presented through personal stories of specific individuals or families that help modern people feel the generational bond, realize the scale of the crime. We always draw parallels between the events of the Holodomor times and the current russian aggression against Ukraine, we emphasize the importance of civil society's existence, the guarantee of democratic rights and freedoms for the preservation of the independence and the territorial integrity of Ukraine.

The idea of exploring the history of one's family, which we encourage our visitors to do, underlies the family workshop "Tree of life". Its participants create their own family tree using the ancient technique of woodblock printing (i. e. creating patterns with stamps), and also learn the stories of some family heirlooms that are kept in the museum's collections. Our aim is to make children and adults reflect on the importance of preserving family memories, realize that the history of Ukraine is made up of the stories of individual families and that things which appear old and useless (and often, unfortunately, end up in the trash) actually have historical value and can become part of the museum's collection.

Капустіна, "Деякі аспекти роботи з музейною аудиторією (з досвіду роботи Дніпропетровського історичного музею ім. Д. І. Яворницького)", 99–102; Олена Оногда, "Музейна робота з травматичними досвідами: як це роблять у Німеччині".

Play and storytelling are good tools for learning<sup>6</sup>, in particular, a very effective way to introduce the youngest audience to a complex history. For preschoolers, young schoolchildren, and families with children, we offer a game-based tour called "Hiding Place". The tour is designed as an interactive story about a fictional family from the Kyiv region, the main character of which is a 12-year-old girl named Katrusia. Participants complete different tasks, learn about survival ways during the Holodomor times, and collect grain for Katrusia's hiding place to help her family survive the Holodomor. The story is illustrated with historical photographs and interwoven with the stories of the exhibits displayed in the Hall of Memory, making it not just an interesting game but also extensive coverage of the Holodomor history. Children learn about the causes of the Holodomor and become familiar with some historical terms ("communists", "kolhoz", "Torgsin", etc.). The tour was designed by our educational department for the youngest visitors, but it's interesting for adults as well. "Hiding Place" is also an inclusive tour completely adapted for visually impaired visitors, with tasks incorporating audio and tactile components, and visual materials accompanied by audio descriptions.

In addition to our tour activities, we prepared an educational brochure for children aged 9 to 13 titled "Museum stories". The title reflects the content - these are short graphic stories, based on the stories about exhibits and the memories of specific individuals, that cover the events of the Holodomor times. The brochure serves as a sort of introduction to the museum's theme and contains definitions of certain terms (such as the Holodomor and Genocide). Among the highlighted topics, there is, first and foremost, the struggle of Ukrainians for their rights and independence which continued even when there was seemingly no hope. For the independent exploration the quest guide around the Hall of Memory was developed, which is also designed for younger visitors. Children answer questions and solve riddles by interacting with the exhibits. The joint work of children and parents while following the route is very important, as it encourages more conscious exploration of the exhibition and deeper immersion of all family members in the topic. Such route sheets have long been used in the educational work of many museums in the world to increase the interactive component of the museum exposition. They encourage better communication between children and their parents during a visit to the museum, and also allow the museum narrative to cover a wider range of visitors<sup>7</sup>.

One of the leading areas of the museum's educational activities is drawing attention to the topic of human rights protection and its popularization, especially among young

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Софія Рябчук, "Діти в музеї", 25–32; Lauren Styx, "How can games in museums enhance visitor experience?" *MuseumNext*, access 07.10.2024 https://www.museumnext.com/article/how-cangames-in-museums-enhance-visitor-experience; А. Андреєва, "Застосування ігрових технологій в музейному просторі (на прикладі Волинського краєзнавчого музею)", *Практичні та теоретичні питання розвитку науки та освіти: Матеріали III Міжнародної науково-практичної конференції м. Львів, 30–31 липня 2021 року.* (Львів: Львівський науковий форум, 2021), 23–25.

<sup>7</sup> Софія Рябчук, "Як скласти музейний маршрут для сімей із дітьми".

people. To this end, an educational training "In Search of Law" was created for adolescents, where animation was used for children to better assimilate quite complex material that highlights the problem of guaranteeing human rights in totalitarian societies. The animated clip made using the stop motion technique was created by the staff workers of the educational department themselves. It presents a dystopian story about a world where human rights are not recognized. The interactive maps used in the clip allow viewers to see the difference between life in democratic Ukraine and in the totalitarian USSR.

It is also important to illustrate the history of the Holodomor with written, visual and oral historical sources for high school students. For example, "The Story of One Diary" is a lesson based on the text of the diary of teacher Alexandra Radchenko, who survived the Holodomor in the Kharkiv region, writing down in her personal diary what she saw so that her children would "in 20 years read and see [...] what a terrible famine was". At the lesson, students work with sources of personal origin (the text of the diary) and visual sources (photographs), learn about the main aspects of the policy of the communist regime (the processes of collectivization and dekulakization) and the situation of Ukrainians in 1930–1933 (in particular during the Holodomor-genocide of 1932–1933).

The lesson "Genocide – what is it?" introduces participants to the history of origin and the meaning of the term "genocide", the main content of the "Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide", as well as the biography of its initiator Raphael Lemkin and his view of the Holodomor as a classic example of genocide. At the lesson, students analyze the texts of resolutions and orders of 1932–1933, which guided the performers of the Holodomor, as well as view video sessions to witnesses of the Holodomor. Of course, after the beginning of full-scale aggression, attention is also focused on the parallels between the genocide of 1932–1933 and the events of the russian-Ukrainian war, comparing the genocidal actions on the part of the communists then and the russian occupiers now.

Apart from those already mentioned, the museum offers educational lessons that teach how to recognize fake news, analyze visual sources, especially those of a propagandistic nature, compare information from different types of visual sources and critically evaluate ideas and messages imposed by propaganda.

In 2020, long-term quarantines caused by the COVID-19 epidemic, and the inaccessibility of physical visits to cultural spaces have led to changes in the educational activities of museums around the world. The online format of work with the audience is becoming relevant, in particular online tours as an alternative to visiting museums<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> "Репресовані" щоденники. Голодомор 1932—1933 років в Україні", упорядник, автор вступної статті, загальний редактор Ярослав Файзулін. (Київ: Фенікс, 2018), 32.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Євгенія Буцикіна, "Музеї після локдауну: відкриваючи нові напрямки руху", *Korydor*, доступно 08.10.2024, https://korydor.in.ua/ua/opinions/museums-after-lock-down.html; Mary Meisenzahl, "You can check out out more than 1,000 of the world's finest art museums online for free through Google – take a look inside", *Business Insider*, access 08.10.2024, https://www.businessinsider.com/coronavirus-

Using the capabilities of the Internet allowed to attract an audience from different regions, countries, even continents. After the end of the lockdown and the return of visitors to cultural institutions, such active online activity was mostly curtailed. However, if we talk about museums, digitization of collections and their placement on websites, 3D-tours – all this continues to remain relevant. In fact, the leading museums of the world began the path to digitization long before the Covid pandemic, back in 2011 with the help of Google & Art Project<sup>10</sup>. This is one of the important components of the work to create an accessible space for visitors.

On the website of the National Museum of the Holodomor-Genocide<sup>11</sup>, in the "Digital History" section, there are eyewitness accounts of the Holodomor, interactive maps, volumes of the "National Book of Memory of the Victims of the Holodomor of 1932–1933" in electronic form, a link to the Track Holodomor History application, with which you can learn about the history of the Holodomor in Kyiv. Another section "Holodomor" contains a subsection "Archive", where you can find documents, photos and videos. This makes information about the history of the Holodomor available to many people who are in other regions of Ukraine or the world, however it still does not allow one to get acquainted properly with the exposition of the museum. This is the task that the educational team of the museum undertook to solve during the lockdown.

In 2020–2022, 5 activities were adapted for conducting online: a sightseeing tour for teenagers and adults, 2 lessons for high school students, educational training for teenagers, and a tour for children 6–13 years old.

With the beginning of quarantines, organized groups in museums almost disappeared and the number of foreigners decreased significantly. This tendency continued in 2022, after the onset of full-scale russian aggression against Ukraine. We can talk about the resumption of visits to the Museum by school and student groups only starting in spring 2023. But today, work with educational institutions is mostly carried out in an online format. In fact, thanks to this, the total number of tours in 2023 increased by 35% (compared to 2019).

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> М. Б. Лелик, "Розвиток цифрової культури та діджиталізація музеїв: досвід упровадження та використання цифрових технологій музеями світу (оглядова довідка за матеріалами преси, інтернету та неопублікованими документами за 2017–2019 рр.)", Інформаційний центр з питань культури та мистецтва Національної бібліотеки України імені Ярослава Мудрого 3/4, (2019): 2–3, доступно 09.10.2024, https://nlu.org.ua/storage/files/Infocentr/Tematich\_ogliadi/2019/muzei.pdf
<sup>11</sup> Національний музей Голодомору-геноциду, доступно 10.10.2024, https://holodomormuseum.org.ua

Since the first video tour was created primarily for schoolchildren, we considered it necessary not only to acquaint them with the museum exposition, but also to talk about the prerequisites, causes and actual events of the Holodomor. For filming and editing the material, we invited a professional videographer, because the quality of the video directly affects the perception of the information provided. Video testimonies of Holodomor witnesses, documents, photographs and posters of that period were used as illustrative material when creating the tour. Of course, we tried not to focus on those aspects of the history of the Holodomor that could cause trauma to teenagers. After watching the video (24 minutes), visitors communicate for 15–20 minutes with a guide, who may be asked questions that arose while watching or for wider disclosure of certain aspects of the history of the Holodomor. The total duration of the online tour is 45 minutes, it is designed for ages 13 and older. According to the feedback of our visitors, among whom were not only school groups, but also families, the tour turned out to be meaningful and interesting. Also, the already mentioned interactive lessons "The History of One Diary", "Genocide - what is it?" and the educational training "In Search of Law" were adapted for online.

After the start of online tours, a demand for a tour for younger students arose. It was decided not to use documents and photographs of that period to illustrate the story of the Holodomor, but animated videos that would help visualize information without causing trauma to children. We have chosen a sand animation that allows to create the effect of antiquity, resembling yellowed photos in color and, at the same time, is able to convey the mood and feelings of the heroes of our stories. In cooperation with the Kyiv Theater of Sand Animation "Golden Lion", which was already known for other projects which aimed specifically at the youngest audience, artists Svitlana Danylchenko and Olha Kryzhanovska created short animated sketches and stories that accompany the narrator's words. The story is told on behalf of a 10-year-old girl who shares her impressions of a visit to the Holodomor Museum. It was important for us that the text was read by a child, in which Sofia Lyubchenko, a participant of the Incunabula Ñhildren's Theater of the Kyiv Palace of Children and Youth, helped us.

Thus, in 2022, among our educational products, a video tour for children 6–12 years old appeared, which allows you to virtually visit the Holodomor Museum, look around its exposition, hear the stories of individual exhibits, and see fragments of video clips about the genocide. Also, children communicate with the guide and discuss the video. One of the important components of the online tour for the youngest is the task for individual work, namely, to communicate with parents and grandparents, ask about their childhood and create a family tree, the pattern of which is electronically prereceived by listeners. Thus, attention is drawn to the importance of studying history, which can begin with the study of the history of one's own family.

The online format has significantly expanded the audience of the museum, in particular geographically (all regions of Ukraine are represented, as well as the museum was virtually visited by groups from the USA, France, Austria, Poland, Sweden,

Lithuania, Germany, Finland, Britain, Jordan). But, first of all, it is extremely important that thanks to the online format we have the opportunity to conduct tours for children from the front-line and temporarily occupied territories.

At the end, I would like to recall two more tours that are presented on the museum's website in the "Accessibility" section. This is an audio tour and video tour in sign language. The educational team of the museum makes efforts to ensure equal opportunities for all visitors. Also, all videos used during online classes are accompanied by subtitles, and video tours are dubbed into Ukrainian and English.

Conclusions. The educational activities of the Holodomor Museum are aimed at an audience of different ages, but the focus is on working with children and youth. The purpose of educational work is the formation of critical thinking, civil consciousness, drawing attention to the importance of knowledge of history. The history of the Holodomor is traumatic, and therefore requires special methods and forms of communication with visitors, especially with children and teenagers. For high school students, the educational department of the museum has developed a number of educational products that teach to analyze sources (photos, posters, diaries, oral testimonies, documents). When creating educational programs for junior school students, the emphasis is on telling about manifestations of humanity and ways to save Ukrainians on the basis of specific stories of exhibits, as well as on the importance of studying one's own family history. Since 2020 educational classes were adapted to the online format and two types of online tours were developed: for students from 13 years old and for 6-12 years old, which allows to reach a much wider audience and explore the museum, being outside Kyiv and even Ukraine. The Holodomor Museum works with the collective memory of Ukrainians about the crime of genocide, one of its tasks – based on reliable historical facts – is to help society overcome this trauma, overcome the totalitarian heritage in our minds and contribute to the formation of a new Ukrainian identity and civil society in Ukraine on the basis of democratic values.

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# МЕТОДИ І ФОРМИ КОМУНІКАЦІЇ З ВІДВІДУВАЧАМИ В ОСВІТНІЙ ДІЯЛЬНОСТІ МУЗЕЮ ГОЛОДОМОРУ

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Сучасний музей виконує велику кількість функцій, серед яких варто виділити ті, що впливають на формування світогляду молоді, а також збереженню та розвитку громадянського суспільства в цілому. Національний музей Голодомору-геноциду висвітлює історію, пов'язану з суспільною травмою, у зв'язку з чим вибір методів та підходів, які використовуються для здійснення цієї місії, набувають ще важливішого значення. Тому мета статті — показати способи взаємодії з відвідувачами різного віку, які використовуються в роботі екскурсійно-освітнього відділу Музею Голодомору.

У дослідженні подано огляд основних видів освітніх занять для школярів, які пропонує Музей. Основні цілі цих занять — ознайомлення з проблемою захисту прав людини, аналіз джерел з історії Голодомору (фото, плакати, щоденники, свідчення очевидців геноциду та архівні документи), формування навичок критичного мислення (зокрема вміння розпізнавати фейків у ЗМІ) та привернення уваги до важливості дослідження власної родинної історії. Також у статті мова йде про акценти, які використовуються під час роботи з дитячою та підлітковою аудиторією при розповіді про травматичні події.

Значна увага приділяється інтерактивним інструментам роботи з відвідувачами у музеї, зокрема використання відео, мультиплікації, інших медіа-засобів при створенні онлайн-екскурсій та занять. Онлайн-робота з відвідувачами стала особливо актуальною починаючи з 2020 р. З цією метою ми адаптували деякі освітні заняття та окремо розробили екскурсії в онлайн-форматі, які складаються зі спілкування з гідом та перегляду заздалегідь підготовленої відеоекскурсії. Такі екскурсії розроблені у двох варіантах, відповідно до вікових категорій слухачів (6–12 років і старше 13 років). Для старших при створенні залучені історичні документи, фотографії, фрагменти кінохроніки та відеосвідчень очевидців Голодомору, а також експонати з музейної

колекції. Для розробки занять для молодших школярів використовувались засоби гри та сторітеллінгу, а відеоекскурсія для дітей 6–12 років проілюстрована за допомогою пісочної анімації, що дозволяє показати експозицію і розповісти про Голодомор молодшим слухачам, не травмуючи їх.

*Ключові слова:* Музей Голодомору, Голодомор, комунікація, онлайн-екскурсії, екскурсії та освітні заняття, аудиторія музею, доступність.