



Exploring Malta as an Imagineering Hub

Unleashing Creativity in a Culturally Rich Environment

A Journey of Imagination and Discovery

By Atefeh Ghamaripour | 2023



Introduction

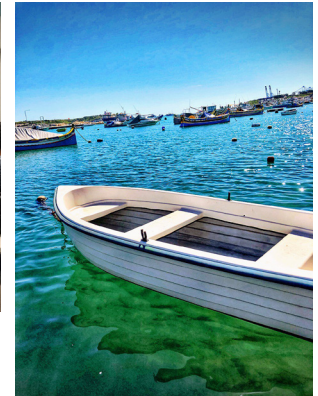
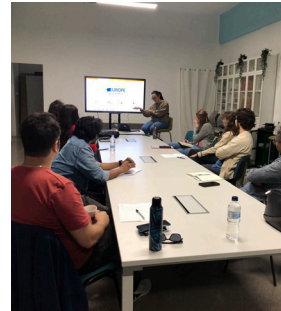
In March 2023, the Imagineering Academy, based in the Netherlands, embarked on an inspiring field trip to the picturesque island of Malta. Our aim was to infuse our knowledge and expertise with different cultures and backgrounds, showcasing the power of a narrative and imaginative approach in complex circumstances. Over a two-week period, we had the opportunity to visit various organizations, universities, and cultural landmarks while also engaging in a practical design assignment. In this article, we will recount our journey, highlighting the places we visited and the lessons we learned along the way.



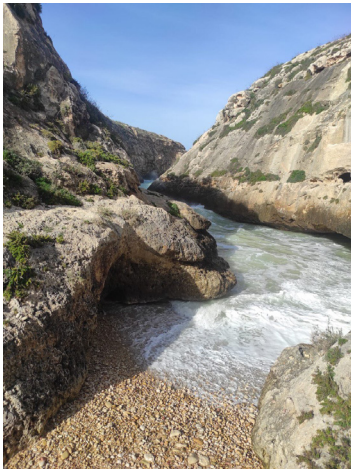
The Field Trip Assignment

“Malta as an Imagineering HUB”

Our main goal during the field trip was to explore Malta as an Imagineering Hub. We were challenged to design a narrative lens or imaginative artifact that would inspire stakeholders to co-create in the best possible conditions and engagements. Additionally, we had the option to focus on something specific, such as collaborating with the Edward de Bono Institute or envisioning an innovation square. This assignment aimed to explore the multifaceted potential of Malta while bridging it with the Imagineering strategic design approach.



Meetings and Visits in Malta



Malta Enterprise

We began our journey by visiting Malta Enterprise, the country's economic development agency. They play a crucial role in attracting foreign direct investment and facilitating the growth of existing operations. We learned about their efforts in promoting business opportunities and fostering international collaborations through the Enterprise Europe Network.

Faculty of Economics, Management, and Accounting - University of Malta

Next, we visited the largest faculty at the University of Malta, offering various areas of study such as economics, management, accountancy, and more. The faculty provides comprehensive courses that lead to different academic awards, taught by experienced practitioners and established academics.

Junior Achievement Young Entrepreneurs Malta Foundation

As a member of the global Junior Achievement network, JAYE Malta Foundation aims to improve young people's understanding of business, economics, employability, and entrepreneurship. We were inspired by the foundation's commitment to enterprise education and their efforts in spurring economic development.

The Renewable Energy Sources Laboratory

Recognizing the importance of sustainable energy, we explored The Renewable Energy Sources Laboratory. This visit allowed us to understand Malta's initiatives in renewable energy and how it intersects with Imagineering. We witnessed the laboratory's research and development efforts toward a greener future.

HSBC Branch

To gain insights into the banking and finance sector in Malta, we visited an HSBC branch. This experience provided us with a deeper understanding of the financial landscape and how financial institutions adapt to the evolving needs of businesses and individuals.

The National Association of Arts and Culture – The Maltese Experience, Mdina

In the historic city of Mdina, we visited The National Association of Arts and Culture. This organization showcased Malta's rich cultural heritage, allowing us to appreciate the role of art and narrative in preserving the country's traditions.

Faculty of Economics, Management, and Accounting - University of Malta (again)

We returned to the University of Malta's faculty to further engage with faculty members and deepen our understanding of the economic aspects of the island.

The Edward de Bono Institute for the Design and Development of Thinking at the University of Malta

A highlight of our trip was visiting The Edward de Bono Institute. Established in collaboration with Professor Edward de Bono, this institute focuses on creativity, innovation management, foresight, and entrepreneurship. We explored their programs and events, emphasizing the transfer of skills and knowledge related to these areas.

Esplora Interactive Science Centre

To explore the intersection of science, technology, and imagination, we visited the Esplora Interactive Science Centre. This hands-on experience allowed us to engage with scientific concepts, inspiring our creativity and highlighting the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration.

Canter Business Centre

As our field trip neared its end, we visited the Canter Business Centre, a hub for innovation and entrepreneurship. This dynamic space showcased Malta's thriving startup ecosystem and provided us with a glimpse into the collaborative spirit of like-minded individuals and organizations.



Reflections on the Journey

Throughout our time in Malta, we were captivated by the unique blend of history, culture, and business opportunities that the island offers. The visits to various organizations and institutions allowed us to witness firsthand the power of imagination in overcoming complex challenges and fostering innovation. The Edward de Bono Institute stood out as a particularly memorable experience, where we explored the tangible aspects of collaboration between BUAs and the institute. The institute's emphasis on strategic planning and its role in nurturing imagination resonated deeply with our Imagineering approach.



Our Accommodation and Group Dynamics

During our stay in Malta, we resided at the Golden Tulip Vivaldi Hotel Malta. This centrally located hotel provided a comfortable base for our explorations across the island. As for the atmosphere within our group, it was characterized by dynamic collaboration and mutual support. The students guided the group as facilitators, while professors Marco and Stifani provided valuable guidance and expertise. We faced challenges along the way, but our collective determination and willingness to learn from our mistakes allowed us to overcome them.



Key Learnings

The field trip offered invaluable lessons that will shape our future as Imagineers. Experiencing the entire course in a realistic and practical setting solidified our understanding of the Imagineering process. We learned that as facilitators, we must tackle daily challenges and embrace the opportunity to learn from our mistakes. Witnessing the diverse cultural and professional landscape of Malta opened our eyes to the boundless possibilities of collaboration and innovation. The importance of imagination, creativity, and interdisciplinary thinking became evident as we explored the island's unique organizations and educational institutions.

The field trip to Malta with the Imagineering Academy was a transformative experience for all involved. The visits to organizations, universities, and cultural landmarks provided us with a deeper understanding of Malta's potential as an Imagineering Hub. From Malta Enterprise's economic development efforts to the creative environment at The Edward de Bono Institute, each place we visited contributed to our broader understanding of imagination's power in driving innovation. As we bid farewell to Malta, we carry with us the memories, inspirations, and the belief that imagination knows no bounds. We are grateful for the opportunity to have explored Malta's rich tapestry of culture, education, and entrepreneurship and are excited to apply the lessons learned in our future endeavors as Imagineers.

Conclusion

