

Book review: Climate for Culture, reviewed by Julian Bickersteth

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Editors Johanna Leissner, Urban Kaiser, Ralf Kilian. Fraunhofer 2014, 95 pages, ISBN 978-3-00-048328-8

The Climate for Collections Munich conference in November 2012 at the Doerner Institute was a pivotal moment in the recent debate around appropriate environmental conditions for collections. The post prints of the conference papers (Climate for Collections Standards and Uncertainties Doerner Institut 2013 edited by Jonathan Ashley-Smith, Andreas Burmester and Melanie Eibl) is probably the best single summary that exists around what is known and what is not known about suitable environmental conditions for cultural heritage collections in an age when the demand for a better understanding of the interactions between cultural heritage collections and the climate is pressing.

That conference was part of a larger EU Project Climate for Culture: Damage Risk assessment, economic impact and mitigation strategies for sustainable preservation of cultural heritage in times of climate change. This was the first large scale European funded research project in the field of preservation of cultural heritage. Whilst the project was building-focused, inevitably the findings impact on the environment in buildings, with resulting consequences for the conservation of collections, which is where the Climate for Collections conference fitted in. The project's overall findings of five years of research on the impact of climate change on historic buildings were presented at a conference in Munich in July 2014.

This short book Climate for Culture summarizes the conference papers and thus the project's findings. The chapters cover Climate modelling, Building simulation to predict indoor climate conditions, Impact assessment and Stakeholder experiences.

There has been criticism in the past that much of the impact of changed environmental conditions on objects has been more experimentally than experientially focused. This book explores some of the experiential work that has been undertaken in this complex area. One useful component of the project has been the development of software known as Digichart that converts analogue thermo hygrograph data into digital form so historical data can be evaluated against contemporary data logger information.