

Industrial Heritage Futures



The phenomenon of industrial heritage erupted in the 'West' during the 1970s and 1980s in line with a dramatic period of de-industrialisation. The enthusiasms of the industrial heritage sector and the professionalism which this has morphed into, is a powerful force but it still relies on a basic generational and cultural connection which itself is changing and will change further. While still an important pillar of the heritage / tourism sector in many countries, the geographies of industrial heritage are shifting and the meanings of the industrial world are changing too. This raises issues beyond mere interpretation and management of sites but opens up questions regarding how societies value and valorise the materials of production and consumption and the processes of work and leisure. What meanings does the concept of industrial heritage carry to new audiences, new generations, different cultures and the policy makers and funders of the future? What will be designated as industrial heritage in fifty years time?