

Who | Institutional Profile

Institution	<u>Museum Arbeitswelt</u> (MAW) / Museum of the Working World
Location	Steyr, Austria
Short Description	<p>The Museum Arbeitswelt (Museum of the Working World) was opened in 1987. The institution preserves, shows and maintains the cultural memory of working people – from the beginning of the Industrial Revolution to digitalisation and beyond. For over 30 years, the Museum Arbeitswelt has been the only museum in Austria with this perspective. Housed in two former factory buildings dating back to the 19th century, the museum is not only the first museum of labour but has also gained international recognition as an exhibition and event centre since its inception.</p> <p>The museum eagerly interacts with its visitors and invites them to participate, think, reflect, discover and discuss its programme. In this way, visitors learn about the topics related to the museum together with the educational team. The offer is methodically diverse and is always adapted to the group. The museum is unique for every age group, type of education and school. According to the museum's team, places of action are museum's exhibitions, the workshop room (Politikwerkstatt) – dedicated to the topic of the work on Democracy, the Tunnel of Remembrance – a local learning site about forced labour and the Steyr concentration camp, and the historical environment around the museum. As an industrial jewel located on the Steyr River, the museum offers a unique ambience that makes history tangible and creates space for working, reflecting, celebrating and exchanging all kinds of ideas.</p>
Ownership	The Museum Arbeitswelt is owned by the Association Museum Arbeitswelt.
Size	12 FTEs 26,000 visitors a year

Approach to Digital	<p>Input by Martin Hagmayr, Maria Vogeser-Kalt, and Philip Tempel</p> <p>Our principal mindset is being open. We are very much interested in how our society changes over the years, how people live, work and learn. The digital transformation in a museum starts with people. Whenever a museum uses technologically enhanced tools and data, there are always humans at 'the other end of it', trying to make sense and use using these offers – e.g., digital workplaces, digital tours, digital archives.</p> <p>Our digital strategy process in the Museum of the Working World is dynamic. We aim to adapt to the changes in our environment, we cooperate with partners, we are open to learn from others, and we set an ambition to develop exhibitions and other formats that are state-of-the-art.</p> <p>Digital is embedded in how we work and has several functions – e.g., we want to be 'reachable', even if people who are interested in our offer are not able to travel to the museum. Secondly, we want to design a complementary offer employing and inhabiting digital. New technologies can help our museum team to react faster and to engage with (potential) visitors.</p> <p>Our concerns are availability of funding to ensure and sustain necessary technical equipment and availability of time enough to enhance existing and acquire new skills. We want to decide</p>
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on investments that are meaningful and sustainable and keep on maintaining mindfully and expanding meaningfully our structure. The focus is both on the experience of museum visitors, and on our entire team.

What | Case

Project Title	Be A Part - Encourage Engagement in Digital Education
Timeframe	November 2022 – September 2023

Concept & Approach

Two main factors sparked our project:

- On one hand, the Corona pandemic.
Many museums shifted their programmes to digital almost in a wink, whereas we realised that transferring what worked onsite into the online was not so easy for us. We wanted to find a solution that would connect analogue and digital realms of the museum.
- On the other hand, our target audience wanted offers available online.
Schools are looking for something that could better prepare for and follow up after a museum visit. But what they need is definitely more than just a PDF with a copy template.
Fortunately, our tech partner had a smart idea of how to work around that.

The concept of the project was born during a strategic workshop of the team and our focused inquiry into some common questions:

- How can we better prepare students and pupils from schools before they visit the museum?
- How can we work together with schools to co-create our offers?
- How can we link the digital with the analogue world?

To approach these questions in practice, we used brainstorming, interviews, and good old analysing of feedback forms. We asked students from one of our partner schools to support and join us in designing a game. They became our partners in testing the concept behind it, the questions and the “length” of the e-learning platform which formed the core of the project. This was a bright start, and we further plan tests with a broader audience.

The game idea and design are based on retro games adventures. The gamer ‘walks’ through the museum and the exhibition and has to collect ‘cards’. The cards contain information, links to videos, pictures etc. and also requests to do something that can be brought and add to the museum, for example questions. When certain cards are collected, a gamer reaches the next room and thus can move briskly through the whole exhibition. This way the students gain knowledge of the museum and the subject of the exhibition while engaged in a ludic experience, or to put it in other words - while playing. We support teachers and provide tips and ideas on how to use this platform in class.

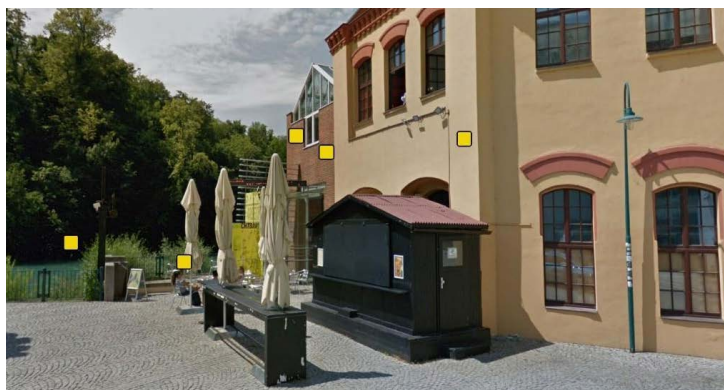
The first steps for users look as follows:

- Landing page.



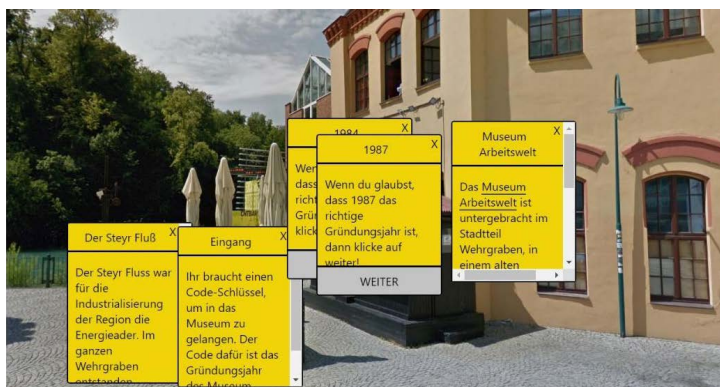
Screenshot, Mathias Spanring

- Start of the educational game in front of the museum.



Screenshot, Mathias Spanring

- Finding keys to 'open' the museum by finding right answers to the opening questions.



Screenshot, Mathias Spanring

Benefits & Impact

- Gaining new skills and knowledge about educational games.
- Enabling development of new educational games with the knowledge gained through onsite workshops.
- Engaging students and working with them consistently on the project, giving them the opportunity to create something in class that can be further used by and in the museum by others.
- Gaining new online visitors that can become onsite visitors in the future..
- expanding and strengthening the audience of teachers and students through the carefully targeted design of the educational game.
- Becoming part of a community of museums that develop and use online educational games.

Overall the project has already received some positive feedback.

Ute Wiesmayr, Director HAK Steyr:

'The educational partnership with the Museum Arbeitswelt is a valuable enrichment of our teaching offer for the HAK. The participation of our students from the branch 'IT and Digital Business' in the EU project DOORS helps them to gain practical experience and implement ideas. Together with their teacher Mathias Spanring and the museum team, the young people are working on a pilot project for the design of a museum-related computer game. As director of the school, I am very pleased that the educational partnership only exists on paper, but is actively realised, bringing benefits and opportunities to both partners.'

Dr. Christoph Jungwirth, board member of the 'Association Museum Arbeitswelt' and CEO of the BBRZ group:

'Digital offerings in a museum are crucial to ensure a strong recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Thanks to support from DOORS the Museum of the Working World is furthermore able to build a sustainable future partnership with schools. The new project network ensures that the museum team gets the chance to learn from best practices all over Europe.'

Felix Fröschl, guide at the Museum of the Working World:

'The project 'Be A Part' is an important step for the museum's online presence. It is a means of tackling entrance barriers and making our younger visitors curious about the museum and our exhibition. The decision to create a template that combines both gaming and knowledge generation is a smart choice that has the potential to reach students even outside of school situations. Also, I want to mention the many contacts and the various ideas that the museum has made throughout the project. Having regular exchange with museum professionals from all over Europe inspired our team and will have a lasting positive effect on our future work.'

A student from HAK Steyr:

'Helping with this project has been a valuable learning experience and we had a lot of fun working on it. We got an interesting look behind the scenes of a museum and are thankful that we got the opportunity to work together.'

As students, we are grateful for the chance to work together with the Museum Arbeitswelt on this project. It was an enriching experience, and we learned a lot from this collaboration.'

Limits & Drawbacks

The main limit was time. We received the approval for the project two months later than the other institutions. These two months have significantly affected the realisation of the project, as the actual launch of the working process coincided with the most intensive period in both the museum and our partner schools. Therefore time for reflection and exchange internally and externally has compressed.

Future Prospects

The game design is created in a way that it can be easily modified as necessary by the employees of the museum, for example when something in the exhibition is changed or when a new exhibition is opened at large.

We conceived and designed the project with sensitivity towards the needs and capacities of smaller museums. The game as a tool can be implemented and adapted to different locations at low cost.

Key Take-Aways

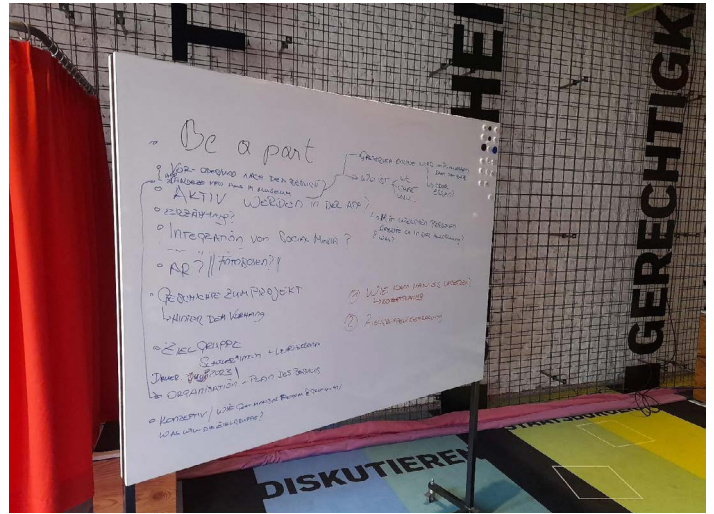
- Working together with students on a project over a longer period is great, productive and exciting.
- However, working together with students on a project over a longer period needs time and resources.
- An open mindset is crucial to let the process flow and flourish.
- Some things can't be planned or foreseen, but still have a great outcome.
- Working together as a team on one project is inspiring and bonding, BUT needs a lot of coordination.
- It is still worth identifying several core team-members as it helps to consolidate different approaches to one challenge.

Involved Parties

The project was discussed with our board members (see quote of Dr. Jungwirth below). A school, the [HAK Steyr](#), and a company, [Reload Media](#), were also valuable partners, supporting us with their experience gained in other similar projects.



Meeting with students from 'HAK Steyr' who work on 'Be A Part' with the museum team, Museum Arbeitswelt, photo by Philip Templ



Finishing the concept of 'Be A Part', Museum Arbeitswelt, photo by Philip Templ



Meeting between Tech Partner and Museum Team, Museum Arbeitswelt, photo by Martin Hagmayr



Students taking pictures for the learning platform in the museum, Museum Arbeitswelt, photo by Philip Templ



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