

Ars Electronica Center

2016: The Year in Review

The Ars Electronica Center Is a Big Draw: More than 172,000 Visitors in 2016

Visitor survey also documents extraordinarily high level of visitor satisfaction

(Linz, January 3, 2017) “172,062 visitors viewed our exhibitions, took our workshops and tours, or attended our Deep Space LIVE events in 2016, which means we were able to top the previous record we set in 2015 of 171,808,” reported Gerfried Stocker and Diethard Schwarzmaier. The CEOs of Ars Electronica Linz GmbH were delighted by the attendance numbers as well as the public’s overwhelmingly positive feedback. “Both young and old—we received an enthusiastic response to our programs from visitors of all ages. Over 97% were very satisfied (79.2%) or satisfied (18.3%) with our offerings, and almost 75% of our guests spent more than two hours with us. Thus, we performed very well in terms of attendance, visitor satisfaction and length of stay. This is really a tremendous success and further proof of the great job being done by our committed, professional museum staff headed by Andreas Bauer and Christoph Kremer.”

Creative robots and radical atoms, explorers from ISS, and students in the anatomy theater of the future

Linz Art University, Kepler University Clinic, the Upper Austria University of Applied Sciences for Health Professions, the European Space Agency, KUKA, Siemens Healthcare and MIT Media Lab are just some of the prominent partners in art, science and industry that the Ars Electronica Center collaborated with in 2016. Together with them, the museum staff developed an inspiring, fascinating program didactically targeting a range of visitors including kindergarten kids, school pupils, apprentices, families and seniors.

In cooperation with Linz Art University and robot manufacturer KUKA, Ars Electronica developed “Creative Robotics,” a series of exhibitions dealing with new ways to deploy robots as well as the advantages and risks associated with this. An even more ambitious look into the future was provided by the “Radical Atoms” exhibition curated by the MIT Media Lab to showcase materials whose shapes and characteristics can be flexibly adapted to their users’ needs. Mike Fincke (US) of NASA, Oleg Germanovich Artemyev (RU) of Roskosmos and Kimiya Yui (JP) of JAXA

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were the three space explorers who paid a visit to the Ars Electronica Center. In Deep Space 8K, they gave accounts of their stay aboard the International Space Station and advised up-and-coming young “Astronauts” to establish contact with the European Space Agency. The ESA, already an Ars Electronica partner of long standing, intensified our collaboration in 2016, making the Museum of the Future Austria’s official European Space Education Resource Office. Its mission: getting young people interested in outer space as well as the scientific and technological fields associated with it. The Ars Electronica Center launched another project of great future importance in cooperation with the Upper Austria University of Applied Sciences for Health Professions in autumn 2016; since then, Dr. Franz Fellner, head of the Radiology Department at Kepler University Clinic, has held his Introduction to Anatomy course lectures in Deep Space 8K. This “anatomy theater of the future” now features Cinematic Rendering technology developed by Siemens Healthcare that enables students to get photorealistic, three-dimensional views of the human body.

Museum of the Future as educational institution

The museum’s in-house guides are specially trained to mediate the encounters of pupils attending all types of schools and in all grades with each and every exhibition that runs in the Ars Electronica Center. In 2016, school classes with a total of 34,951 pupils took part in specially developed educational workshops and guided tours. “Demand for our school program has steadily increased year after year,” noted Christoph Kremer, director of the Ars Electronica Center. “In addition to our exhibitions, we’re increasingly integrating live presentations by our partners and associates. In the future, we want to offer pupils even more opportunities to benefit from personal encounters with scientists and artists from Ars Electronica’s network.” Zukunftswerkstatt (future workshop) is a successful initiative organized by the State of Upper Austria and the local labor market service. It’s designed to offer future prospects to young people in training programs, and entails the youngsters spending an entire week at the Ars Electronica Center where they’re exposed to state-of-the-art technologies. Under the supervision of the museum’s staff experts, participants get to shoot and cut a video, record a song, create a photo or video blog—that is, conceive and implement a joint project. A total of 109 girls and boys took part in seven Zukunftswerkstatt weeks over the past year. And even youngsters in the 4-8 age group can go through the process of exploration, recognition and comprehension at the Ars Electronica Center. The Kids’ Research Lab that debuted in 2015 was readapted in 2016 and didactically linked to the “Spaceship Earth” exhibition. This educational playground is made available to kindergarten groups from Tuesday to February and is open to families on weekends. The Kids’

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Research Lab, an experiment conducted in cooperation with the local teachers' college and the City of Linz, has become a very popular attraction.

Satisfied visitors prolong their stay in the museum

"We spent the whole day at your facility and were absolutely delighted," is the comment Stefanie Quatember posted to Facebook on September 19, 2016. "Thank you very much for the wonderful tour this morning. I spent half the day in the museum and I'll definitely be coming back soon. Great!" wrote Juliana Socher on October 13, 2016. And Christian Schwarz expressed his enthusiasm in these terms on October 30, 2016: "Great museum, interesting exhibitions, 8K cinema was excellent, Thanks to your staff members, very informative and fun!" The Ars Electronica Center has received 970 ratings on Facebook and garnered 4½ out of a possible 5 stars. Equally gratifying were the results of the Ars Electronica Center's ongoing visitor survey: 97.5% were satisfied with the programs, of which a whopping 79.2% were very satisfied. And thus it's no surprise that those surveyed also spent a considerable amount of time with us: 74.4% spent over two hours and 31.1% three hours or more in the Ars Electronica Center. "Since January 2015, we've been regularly soliciting feedback from our visitors, and making every effort to implement the findings we gain thereby," stated museum directors Andreas Bauer and Christoph Kremer, who were especially pleased that 97.7% of all those surveyed stated that they would recommend the Museum of the Future to others.

Ars Electronica Center Linz: <http://www.aec.at/center/en/>
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