

How to build a story around cultural heritage (The ISTER - Approach)

Promoting Cultural Heritage

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How to build a story around cultural heritage

General Introduction to ISTER Project

ISTER is a complex project within the Danube Region, which enables and explores research, tourism and collaboration opportunities, by leveraging on synergic potentials of Cultural Heritage.

The Vision of ISTER is to rediscover, revive and make accessible the ancient network of Roman roads and settlements and to link those places all over the Danube Region. By this setting the premises for a future eco-cultural corridor along Danube Region, a slow motion road for hiking and cycling, which would connect us to roots, traditions, culture and people. For more information on partners and more detailed information on the project ISTER please see the project website: <https://www.interreg-danube.eu/approved-projects/ister> .

The ISTER project started with the collection and documentation of points of interest. How this was done as well as the idea of developing a digital tool for planning, documentation and sharing of activities within the project will be addressed in separate presentations on ISTER within CHNT27.

Exploitation and long-lasting effects in ISTER

This section will focus on the exploitation and long-lasting effects in ISTER and the question how to build a story around Cultural Heritage in general.

Cultural Routes act as a driver of economic development, social cohesion and transnational cooperation in line with the objectives of Interreg - Danube Transnational Programme. More information on this topic can be found e.g. on the website of the cultural routes of the EU (<https://www.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes>).

One major point to achieve the long-lasting effects within ISTER is by promoting the idea of a Roman eco-cultural Route in the Danube Region. Therefore, a common branding strategy was set up aiming at the following three objectives of the project:

- Fostering cultural co-operation,
- Strengthening social cohesion,
- Contributing to regional development and acting as a driver for economical development.

A Branding strategy in general tells the story of a destination, helps to distinguish it among other attractions and enhances its touristic potential. It helps “to make it visible”. Especially if one is dealing with hidden and covered Cultural Heritage as Roman Routes.

One part of the branding strategy was the development of the Via ISTER Logo (see Fig 1). The logo embeds some of the best-known symbols that relate to Danube, nature and roman cultural heritage, and was combined with a slogan (“Via ISTER; follow the Romans in the Danube Region”).



Fig. 1: Parts of ISTER logo according to the ISTER branding strategy

In addition, a milestone model was created, that should be placed in several places in the Danube Region and connecting the identified “single” dots and those parts of the roman routes, that are still visible or meanwhile covered with mud, streets or e.g. cornfields.

A third measure of branding was to start a competition on an ISTER Award in three categories: Protection, Promotion and Sustainable Use of Cultural Heritage. The applications had been evaluated by an international jury under the Lead of Bulgarian Economic Forum. The three Winners came from Serbia, Bulgaria and Romania. Applicants had been from the whole of Danube Region.

Cities within the Danube Region such as Belgrade, Niš, Alba Iulia, Vidin, Oradea, Slavonski Brod or Karlsruhe all pursued different stories around cultural heritage. Crucial is to work out, what is needed and what attracts the attention of the local public and tourists and how it fits into the general development strategy of a city or its region.

Some of them are simply employing illumination, some of them house one or several museums, hotels, restaurants, galleries. Thinking of the younger generation it needs slightly more modern activities to interest them in cultural heritage. Such as utilizing the building as huge canvas or screens, on which Videoshows are applied as in the example of Karlsruhe and its Light Festival of the castle. Another topic is to use mixed reality (MR; see Fig 2).



Fig. 2: Grades from real to virtual world [in HEMKER 2019]

The above mentioned forms of MR can be found in different adaptations all over the world. In addition, even exhibitions as the AR Biennale took place on this topic (see. Fig 3).



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➤ AR BIENNALE

<https://www.nrw-forum.de/en/exhibitions/ar-biennale>

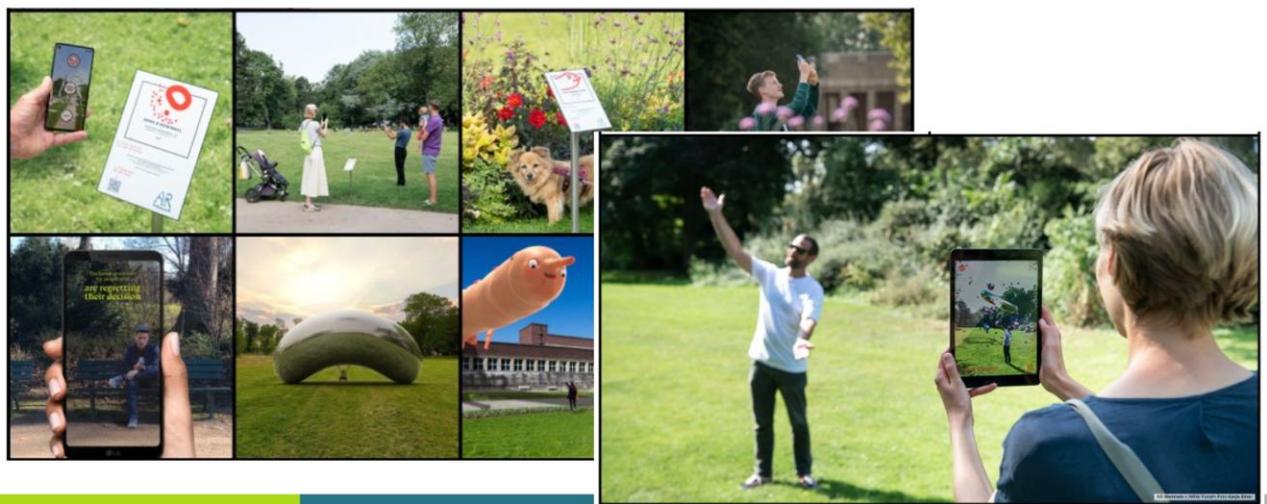


Fig. 3: Examples from AR Biennale [https://www.nrw-forum.de/en/exhibitions/ar-biennale; vis.30/01/2022]

One has to be aware of the fact that these activities need local and regional support. For this reason ISTER started to bring the right experts and multidisciplinary stakeholders together in horizontal and vertical governance.

Without the expertise of ISTER international partners and the transnational cooperation the results of ISTER would not have been possible in the same way. Learning from each other and combining the knowledge of each partner is the key for the success of the ISTER project. So ISTER helped to create a common understanding on what is needed and what might be possible in the future.

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Conflict of Interests Disclosure

There are no conflicts of interests.

References

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