

Ur-recycling: Sustainable use of resources and recycling in prehistoric times

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Today everyone knows that recycling is important and raw materials should be reused, but what was it like before? For much of human history, everything was made by hand. The production of goods such as vessels, tools or clothing was complex and time-consuming. Obtaining new things was often expensive or simply not possible, which is why recycling processes can already be seen in found objects from the Neolithic period. At the FFG talent internship 2022, students from various school types dealt with recycling methods, sustainable use of resources and circular economy in prehistory. The Prehistoric Pile Dwellings around the Alps were used as a research area for the project. Students from the HTL Spengergasse and the federal secondary school from Vienna (Stubenbastei) and Upper Austria (Traun) took part in the internship. The aim of the project was to prepare the content developed by the students in a digital media tool that can be used by the public. An interactive web-application was created in which various scenes of an illustration showing a prehistoric lake shore settlement was brought to life in short animations by the HTL students. The high school students researched the information about the objects and wrote texts that, as a description of the animated videos, introduce the users to the prehistoric artifact and explain the recycling process behind it. The students worked independently with scientific literature, 140-year-old inventory books and 6000 year old objects from the collection of the Natural History Museum Vienna. The activities and the supporting program within the internship were recorded by the students in funny blog posts (www.pfahlbauten.at/blog). The Talent Internships was funded by the Austrian Research Promotion Agency (FFG). With the project track, students can gain practical experience in research and work at a research institution for four weeks in the summer.

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