

HISTORY. Energized. Youngenized!

(acronym H.E.Y!)

Creative Europe – small scale cooperation project

The project develops a new method of historical interpretation in museums, where visitors do not only receive information, but actively engage with historical figures through structured interaction. Instead of reading static texts, visitors can ask questions to specific historical personalities and receive answers based on a curated, historian-validated knowledge base.

The aim is not to introduce a technological novelty, but to create a controlled, research-based interpretative system, where the digital layer acts only as a mediator.

The H.E.Y!'s project main idea is built on a clear principle: interpretation precedes technology. Historical and narrative structures are defined first, and digital tools are developed only afterwards. The interaction is based on a question–answer structure, where the visitor initiates the dialogue, and the responses follow the logic, language and perspective of a historical figure. The system avoids modern explanatory narration and instead recreates historical viewpoints.

The knowledge base is developed as a multi-layered system. It includes political and historical context, everyday life, social relations, personal perspectives, decision-making situations and court life. The system is not intended to cover everything, but to provide a structured, expandable and relevant set of answers based on real visitor behaviour.

The project includes a simple and accessible museum installation, based on a touchscreen or tablet interface, where visitors can select a historical figure and interact through questions. In addition, the concept can be extended through immersive elements such as optional VR-based experiences and visual reconstruction of historical environments.

This allows the possibility that a visitor, through a simple interaction, can move between different historical contexts across partner institutions. For example, starting from Alba Iulia, the visitor could access another partner museum's historical environment, experiencing different perspectives within a shared European framework.

The immersive component is not essential, but it can strengthen the experiential dimension and help visitors better understand the historical context.

The pilot installation will be implemented in the Princely Palace Cultural Centre in Alba Iulia and tested with real visitors. The system will be refined based on user feedback.

The project involves three institutions. The coordinator is responsible for digital development and implementation. One partner focuses on historical research and content development, while the other contributes to interpretation, audience engagement and testing. All partners are involved in testing, feedback and dissemination.

The primary target group consists of museum visitors, especially younger audiences between 14 and 35 years old. Secondary target groups include educators and cultural professionals.

The expected results include a functional interactive system, a multilingual knowledge base, a tested methodology for museum interpretation and a transferable model that can be applied in other institutions. The project also includes educational activities and public presentations.

The total estimated budget is approximately 250,000 EUR, with up to 200,000 EUR covered by Creative Europe funding. The remaining part represents the partners' contribution. The final budget distribution will be defined based on roles and responsibilities.

H.E.Y! Proposed partner involvement

The project is designed as a cooperation between three institutions, with clearly defined but flexible roles.

The coordinating institution (Princely Palace Cultural Centre, Alba Iulia) is responsible for the development of the digital system, the overall coordination and the implementation of the pilot installation.

The partner responsible for historical content contributes to the development of the knowledge base. This includes selecting relevant historical figures, defining thematic structures and ensuring the accuracy and consistency of the content.

The partner focusing on interpretation and audience engagement contributes to testing and refining the system from a visitor perspective. This includes working with small visitor groups, providing feedback on usability and clarity, and helping adapt the content to different audiences.

All partners are involved in testing, discussion and refinement throughout the project. The system is expected to be tested not only in Alba Iulia, but also through feedback from partner institutions, ensuring that the methodology can be applied in different museum contexts.