



Heritage interpretation

Creating experiences with visitors of cultural and natural heritage sites

Speaker:

Dr. Lars Wohlers (Germany)
KON-TIKI - Interpretive consultation, training and evaluation
Central European University, 5.30 PM, 24 March, 2014
Nádor utca 9., Budapest, H-1051
Monument Building, 2nd floor, room 202

Interpretation is a term used for different methods to create strong experiences for visitors of protected areas, museums, historical sites, botanical gardens, zoos and similar institutions. These mission-driven places need to convey their messages to a wide range of target groups. But how to do it?

This lecture gives an overview of the history and importance of informal education/interpretation and the current approaches of foremost authors, experts and organizations. Through his own works and various other references Dr. Wohlers reveals the essential differences between these practices. In addition he will also speak about the German-Hungarian program 'Develop and test informal environmental education modules in Hungary', initiated by KON-TIKI and the Association of Cultural Heritage Managers (ACHEM).

The lecture will be followed by an open discussion with Dr. Wohlers and with representatives of ACHEM.

About the project

The Association of Cultural Heritage Managers (ACHEM) and KON-TIKI office organize an educational program in natural and cultural heritage interpretation in Hungary. They intend to achieve two goals – firstly, to popularize the approach among professionals dealing with the natural and cultural heritage. Secondly, the program will involve academic partners in curricula development on heritage interpretation.

In the first year (2014) two trial courses will be organized as part of the project for each target group. Both will be held in English, by internationally recognized scholars and experts, members of Interpret Europe (Dr. Lars Wohlers - GE, Matthew Jones - GB).

About Dr. Lars Wohlers (CV is attached)

For more than 10 years Dr. Wohlers has been dealing with the planning and implementation of powerful visitor experiences at interpretive sites not only in practice but also in theory. His conceptual approach is based on the work of Steve Van Matre (author of the influential book 'Interpretive Design and The Dance of Experience') and of other Anglo-saxonian authors. Dr. Wohlers and the KON-TIKI team use a variety of methods to create unique interpretations at each site.



Dr. Lars Wohlers



1989-1994

- Studies of Cultural Applied Sciences, Leuphana University Lueneburg/Germany

1991

- Co-founder and since then board member of the Institute for Earth Education Deutschland e.V. (IEE) ([/www.earth-education.org](http://www.earth-education.org)).

1995 – 2006

- Leuphana University Lueneburg, Institute for Environmental Communication
- Scientific Assistant, 2000 doctoral thesis about informal education in German national parks
- Teachings and research concerning interpretation, visitor studies, environmental consultation and Earth Education. Various Research trips to USA, Canada and Britain.

Since 1996

- Member of the Visitor Studies Association (VSA), the National Association for Interpretation (NAI) and European Association for heritage Interpretation

Since 2003

- Founder and Director of KON-TIKI – Office for interpretive planning
- Interpretive planning, trainings and visitor studies for various institutions (museums, zoos, water parks, environmental organizations, protected areas etc.) in various European countries (Germany, England, Italy, Netherlands, Latvia).

References (examples):

- Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt (DBU)
- Alfred Wegener Institute for Polar and Marine Research
- Association of the Water Tower Lueneburg
- Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust/England
- Biosphere Reserve Bliesgau/Saarland
- Forces of Nature Visitor Centre /Sylt/Schleswig-Holstein
- Foundation for National Natural Heritage (NABU)
- German Association of Wildlife Parks (DWV)
- Greenpeace Germany
- Hainich National Park/Thuringia
- Latvian Museum of Natural History/Latvia
- Natural History Museum Natureum Niederelbe
- Steeghs Advise/Netherlands