

Tourist attraction addresses inequality in Salzburg

An unusual sight allows a glance behind the facade of the postcard idyll: In the project *Beyond the Postcard* at Hohensalzburg Fortress, tourists learn something about the less glamorous sides of their holiday destination. Hopefully inspiring them to make a voluntarily donate to local social projects.

Salzburg, September 10, 2024. Since the end of August, a new sight is available on the grounds of the fortress, Salzburg's most visited tourist destination: a 7.5 m² postcard with a watercolour motif of the city. Embedded in it are scenes that show the difficult reality of life for many Salzburg residents that are affected by poverty. The interactive work of art is intended to sensitize tourists to social inequality at their destination. It's an invitation to adopt new perspectives on vacationing and take a supportive stance. Anyone who wants can leave a small "gift" for people in need.

The new attraction is part of the non-profit project *Beyond the Postcard*, which aims to make the tourist landscape in Salzburg a little more informed and sympathetic. Behind it is the social travel collective *benetrip*, founded by Edith Frauscher and Maria Kapeller. Both work in communications professions and enjoy traveling themselves. "Our motivation grew from our personal perspective as travellers. We have both travelled extensively and have repeatedly come into contact with poverty and inequality. We think that in the future vacation could be less of a consumer-oriented one-way street and more about 'looking out for one another'," says initiator Maria Kapeller.

A more realistic picture for tourists

In the future, travellers in Salzburg will be able to take a look behind the postcard idyll in which one usually is emersed in on vacation. And that's literally the case – because built-in windows can be folded up in the giant postcard. Behind them you can see illustrated scenes and facts about inequality, poverty and its effects. "In this way, we want to open up new perspectives and stimulate a dialogue – about social inequality, vacation as a privilege and show solidarity for those unseen in Salzburg who struggle to survive day to day" says initiator Edith Frauscher. Hohensalzburg Fortress, with 1.3 million visitors per year, is the ideal place for this. Managing Director Maximilian Brunner: "Of course, with Hohensalzburg Fortress we are a highly visited tourist attraction. That is precisely why we want to use the opportunity to raise awareness among guests. In my opinion, as a guest you should not only enjoy the beautiful scenery of a city, but also be interested in the people who live there. I also see this project as a contribution to the currently much-discussed definition of quality tourism."

Donations for local social projects

If you feel moved and motivated by the reality behind the postcard, you can leave a small "gift" in the form of a monetary donation directly on site for Salzburg residents in need. During the two-year project period, the money will be donated to local social associations every six months. In the first phase, Caritas Salzburg will receive the donations and use them to support people affected by poverty in areas such as housing, health, education, culture and social contacts. Johannes Dines, Director of Caritas Salzburg: "This campaign shows what remains hidden for many and what we at Caritas are confronted with every day: Even in supposedly wealthy places like Salzburg, there are people who suffer from poverty and

SALZBURG *beyond* THE POSTCARD

exclusion. With this project, tourists can take a quick look behind the postcard idyll and do good at the same time. Because we can all do good - no matter where we are."

Other elements: Voluntary +1€ tickets & social city map

In the multi-year project process, two further elements were developed to promote more conscious travel with a component for tourists to show their solidarity. In the next few months, the "+1€ ticket" and the "+1€ hotel booking" will be launched as the second project element: guests will now have the option of voluntarily paying one euro more when booking their accommodation or buying an entrance ticket, which will be donated directly to a local social organization. Discussions with the first partner companies are currently underway, and implementation is scheduled for 2024/25. The third element is a tourist city map: in addition to the usual tourist tips and attractions, it also recommends social initiatives and companies, such as restaurants and socially sustainable businesses who already support these disadvantaged citizens, for example, through providing them direct employment. The city plan is being implemented in cooperation with the city magazine "Fräulein Flora" and is expected to be published in 2024.

Social inequality in Salzburg

At first glance, the tourist city of Salzburg does not seem to visitors as if it is necessary to "help" or "give something back". But social inequalities also exist in wealthy regions. In an expensive city like Salzburg in particular, it has become even more difficult in recent years to pay for housing, heating or daily grocery shopping. Poverty has serious effects, for example on social participation or physical and mental health. According to the Salzburg Poverty Conference, 61,000 people in the state of Salzburg are currently at risk of poverty or exclusion, which is eleven percent of the population. At the same time, the millions of travellers each year have hardly come into contact with inequality – but they too are part of a much-travelled world.

Project background

Tourism, like any other industry, has a responsibility with regard to the 17 global sustainability goals (SDGs). *Beyond the Postcard* aims to support SDG 10 – reducing inequality. Given the millions of travellers, tourism has enormous potential to actively contribute to this goal. Of course, a fundraising project like *Beyond the Postcard* does not per se make the tourism industry more socially acceptable. "It is not within our scope to change that. Nevertheless, we want to invite travellers to take on new perspectives and roles vacationing in a cosmopolitan, curious and socially responsible manner," says Edith Frauscher.

About the project

The founders of *Beyond the Postcard* see it as a building block for a socially responsible tourist infrastructure. "We want to inspire others to help shape sustainable travel in Salzburg and beyond. In the future, more and more travellers should have the opportunity to act according to their social values while on vacation," says Maria Kapeller. The project is intended to serve as an initial spark to inspire other people to work in their respective industries to further develop a solidarity-based tourism component.

Press contact

Social travel collective *benetrip*
www.beyondthepostcard.info
hello@beyondthepostcard.info

Maria Kapeller
+43/650 26 058 15

Edith Frauscher
+43/650 24 519 82

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The 3 measures at a glance:

1 • An interactive attraction on the grounds of Hohensalzburg Fortress (location: entrance to the puppet theatre). It is intended to raise awareness of social inequality and encourage reflection and exchange – including a donation option for local social projects.

2 • A voluntary donation option of €1 when booking tickets and hotel rooms to quickly and easily do something good on vacation. This measure will be implemented with partner companies in the coming months and will be continuously expanded.

3 • A tourist “City Map” that also recommends social initiatives and companies, such as social responsible restaurants and shops. The city map is planned in cooperation with the city magazine “Fräulein Flora” and is expected to be published in 2024.

Background: Innovation process and local cooperation

Beyond the Postcard was developed between 2021 and 2023. The two founders received innovation funding from the FFG (Austrian Research Promotion Agency). This financed a design thinking process in which the three measures were developed. A total of more than 80 Salzburg residents and 60 tourists participated:

- 20 expert discussions (poverty research, sociology, transformation research ...)
- Focus sessions in the field of tourism and social affairs
- Interdisciplinary workshops to develop ideas
- Experiments by psychology students at the University of Salzburg
- Face-to-face tourist surveys

With funding from the City of Salzburg in spring 2024, the ideas were finally realized. The motif of the XXL postcard sight was conceived and designed by local artists Andrea Lacher-Bryk (www.boese-bilder.at) and Sabrina Hassler (www.sabrillu.com). In addition, preference was given to working with local partners, for example in the areas of illustration, graphics, web design, photography or crafts.

Image Captions

Image 1: Postcard with an Information Board at Hohensalzburg Fortress

Hidden behind the colorful facade of the motif are illustrated scenes that shed light on inequalities and how they affect those impacted.

Image 2: Travel Collective *benetrip* & Fortress Manager

Maria Kapeller (right) and Edith Frauscher (left) initiated the project as the travel collective *benetrip* and found a project partner in Maximilian Brunner, the manager of Hohensalzburg Fortress, who is dedicated to the sustainable development of tourism.

Image 3: Mobile phone scanning a QR Code to donate

Doing good is easy: Guests who want to leave a small gift can scan the QR code next to the postcard and donate a small amount with just a few clicks.

Further image material available for download: <https://www.beyondthepostcard.info>

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