

EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET

PROJECT	
Project name and acronym:	Rescue Memory - Activism, Arts and Public Remembrance – ReActMem
Participant:	Fundacja Urban Memory, UMF
PIC number:	890263570

EVENT DESCRIPTION			
Event number:		WP 19	
Event name:		Inclusive Commemoration - German cemetery in Wrocław	
Type:		Series of events (workshops, cultural event)	
In situ/online:		in-situ	
Location:		Poland, Wrocław	
Date(s):		18.05.2024, 22.06.2024, 09.11.2024	
Website(s) (if any):		https://reactmem.difficultheritage.eu/en/blog/event/krzycka/	
Participants			
Female:		79	
Male:		37	
Non-binary:		2	
From country 1 [Poland]:		118	
Total number of participants:		118	From total number of countries: 1
Description			
<i>Provide a short description of the event and its activities.</i>			
<p>The objective of the activities planned within this Work Package was two-dimensional: to advance fieldwork aimed at revitalising and documenting remnants of the former German Protestant Cemetery at Krzycka Street 45, Wrocław, Poland and to organise a series of participatory events at the cemetery (conservation workshops, commemorative concert with guided walk). We focused on restoring surviving elements, recovering buried gravestones and restoring some of them during the workshops, documenting the material heritage, developing a lapidarium concept, and engaging the public in learning about the city's complex past. All activities were organised by UMF and a key partner: local civic initiative "Spod ziemi patrzy Breslau" which focuses on recovering and commemorating pre-war German cemeteries in Wrocław.</p> <p>Historical context: After 1945, when the German city of Breslau became Polish Wrocław, Wrocław's National City Council ordered the liquidation of German cemeteries, leading to the destruction of 44 out of 70 sites by the late 1980s. The process involved removing tombstones and leveling the grounds, usually converting them into green</p>			

spaces without conducting exhumations, making them “invisible cemeteries.” Tombstones were repurposed for cemetery use or as construction materials locally and elsewhere in Poland. The cemetery on Krzycka Street (former Trentinstraße) was handed over to and managed by the Polish Catholic parish, and remained in use until 1958, unusually for Wrocław avoiding liquidation for some time. However, in the 1970s its southern section was destroyed, with pre-war tombstones pushed into a reserve area and buried.

1. Revitalising and documenting the cemetery

1.1. Preparatory Phase (April - September 2024)

> Consultations with Specialists. Several meetings were held with a certified master stonemason to: establish the scope and schedule of the workshops, select gravestones for revitalisation (cleaning, refreshing inscriptions, re-setting), coordinate supervision over the fieldwork connected with excavating the buried German gravestones.

> Arrangements with the Cemetery Administrator. Discussions were held with the parish priest of the Holy Trinity Church - current administrator of the cemetery. Agreements included: obtaining permission for both conservation and excavation works, receiving formal authorisation to act on behalf of the administrator when applying for necessary administrative approvals.

> Agreements with the Regional Heritage Conservation Office. As the cemetery is located in an area listed in the municipal register of monuments, it was necessary to consult with the Lower Silesian Regional Heritage Conservator. A positive opinion regarding the planned activities was obtained and we were able to move forward with the fieldwork.

> Environmental Inventory and Permit. A professional natural environment inventory was commissioned to assess the area overgrown since the 1970s and to determine which trees and shrubs required removal before excavation.

All required documentation was prepared and submitted to the City of Wrocław’s Environmental Department. A site visit was conducted with an Environmental Department representative, after which permission for tree and shrub removal was granted.

> Cooperation with the Fieldwork Company. The scope, costs, and technical details of the excavation work were confirmed with the company responsible for conducting field operations using heavy equipment.

1.2. **Fieldwork** (October 2024 - November 2025). During the field phase: the site was cleared of overgrowth, excavation work was carried out in the areas where German gravestones had been buried, more than 50 gravestones and numerous fragments of gravestones were unearthed; extracted objects underwent preliminary inventory and photographic documentation.

1.3. **Project of the Lapidarium.** Meetings with an architect Roman Rutkowski were held to develop the concept for the lapidarium. The aim is to create: a coherent display of the recovered German gravestones, a space for commemoration, learning, and public engagement, an accessible interpretive site integrating landscape architecture, historical narrative and local memory.

2. Series of participatory events at the cemetery

2.1. **Conservation Workshop I** – 18 May, 2024. The first workshop focused on teaching foundational conservation skills. Activities included: **restoring inscriptions** on granite gravestones using mineral paints, gilding inscriptions with gold leaf, restoring inscriptions on sandstone using mineral paints, on-site demonstrations and hands-on learning. Trainers: *Dariusz Dembiński* — Master Stonemason, *Andrzej Wróblewski* — Heritage Conservator.

2.2. **Conservation Workshop II** – 22 June, 2024. The second workshop expanded on the conservation techniques with a focus on modern technologies: laser-cleaning demonstrations by the IRLaser team, use of safe non-invasive laser methods for stone conservation, inscription restoration on seven stele, conservation of the gravestone of Anna Schnitte (installed the previous year). Trainers: *Dariusz Dembiński* — Master Stonemason, *IRLaser specialists*.

2.3. **Public Cultural Event** – 9 November, 2024. A major public event took place at the cemetery, attracting over 80 attendees. The programme included: a historical guided walk presenting biographies of individuals living in pre-war Breslau and buried at the cemetery, educational commentary on the site’s significance, a concert featuring Pergolesi’s *Stabat Mater*, performed by artists from Ukraine and Belarus: *Katarzyna Czekanowska* (soprano), *Natalia Akinina-Kalada* (mezzosoprano), *Natalia Czekanowska* (piano). The event was co-organised with the Holy Trinity Parish Wrocław-Krzyki, and the Krzyki-Partynice District Council.

Participants of workshops, guided walks and concert included residents of Wrocław, especially from the Krzyki-Partynice district, volunteers and individuals involved in community heritage projects, students and early-career professionals interested in conservation and public history, volunteers working with memory, culture, and historical education, visitors from outside Wrocław and Lower Silesia, individuals seeking hands-on experience with stone conservation and site preservation. Artists from Ukraine and Belarus (not counted in the statistics) were

included in cultural programming making a symbolic connection with societies undergoing current geo-political challenges and war, pointing to the importance of democratic and EU values.

Impact: The activities undertaken at the Former German Protestant Cemetery on Krzycka Street led to the recovery, documentation, and preservation of a significant portion of Wrocław's difficult heritage. The activities successfully combined professional conservation work, community collaboration, and public engagement, resulting in the excavation of more than 50 gravestones, the restoration of selected tombstones, and the development of a future lapidarium concept. Through coordinated efforts involving specialists, municipal services, volunteers, and local communities these actions have contributed to strengthening local engagement, promoting awareness of difficult heritage, and fostering sustainable protection of historical sites. The public cultural event and concert further amplified interest in the site, strengthening local memory and fostering a sense of shared responsibility for neglected heritage. Overall, this WP not only started revitalising a pre-war German cemetery but also helped rebuild community connections to overlooked histories, creating long-term foundations for sustainable heritage protection in Wrocław.

Media coverage: [Wrocław Nasze Miasto](#), [Wroclaw.typ.pl](#), [wroclaw.pl](#), [Gazeta Wrocławska](#), [Gazeta Wyborcza](#)
Communication: [FB promotional post - Workshop I](#), [FB summary post - Workshop I](#), [FB summary post - Workshop II](#), [FB promotional post - Concert](#), [FB summary post - Concert](#), [FB post - fieldwork and lapidarium](#).

HISTORY OF CHANGES		
VERSION	PUBLICATION DATE	CHANGE
1.0	01.04.2024	Initial version (new MFF).