

## EVENT DESCRIPTION SHEET

PROJECT	
Project name and acronym:	Rescue Memory - Activism, Arts and Public Remembrance – ReActMem
Participant:	FESTIVALT (F-ALT)
PIC number:	895375767

EVENT DESCRIPTION	
Event number:	WP 58
Event name:	SPEAKING OF US SYMPOSIUM
Type:	seminar
In situ/online:	in-situ
Location:	Dresden, Germany
Date(s):	23.10.2025
Website(s) (if any):	<a href="https://juedische-woche-dresden.de/programm-symposium/">https://juedische-woche-dresden.de/programm-symposium/</a> <a href="https://reactmem.difficultheritage.eu/blog/event/speaking-of-us/">https://reactmem.difficultheritage.eu/blog/event/speaking-of-us/</a> <a href="https://reactmem.difficultheritage.eu/en/blog/event/speaking-of-us-2/">https://reactmem.difficultheritage.eu/en/blog/event/speaking-of-us-2/</a>
Participants	
Female:	42
Male:	39
Non-binary:	2
From country 1 [Poland]:	3
From country 2 [Serbia]:	1
From country 3 [Netherlands]:	1
From country 4 [Czech Republic]:	2
From country 5 [Germany]:	76
Total number of participants:	83
From total number of countries:	5
Description	
<i>Provide a short description of the event and its activities.</i>	

*Speaking of Us* was conceived as a timely and necessary intervention in the current European cultural landscape, in which Jewish artists, curators, and themes are increasingly marginalised, contested, or excluded from public discourse and institutional programming. Against this backdrop, the symposium offered a rare, protected, and professionally rigorous space for reflection on Jewish self-representation, authorship, and curatorial responsibility.

For cultural curators and heritage professionals working with Jewish art and history, the event addressed a growing professional challenge: how to curate Jewish voices ethically, visibly, and confidently at a moment when fear of controversy, political pressure, or instrumentalisation often leads to avoidance or silencing. The symposium foregrounded questions of agency, narrative ownership, and the tension between institutional frameworks and lived experience, providing participants with conceptual tools, peer exchange, and concrete examples of practice.

By bringing together practitioners from multiple countries and professional backgrounds, *Speaking of Us* strengthened transnational dialogue and solidarity among those working in increasingly constrained environments. The bilingual format (German and English) ensured accessibility while reflecting the cross-border nature of contemporary Jewish cultural production and memory work.

Importantly, the symposium marked the **first collaboration between the two partner festivals** (from Dresden and Krakow), establishing trust, shared working methods, and a common curatorial language. This initial cooperation laid a firm foundation for deeper and more sustained collaboration in the future, including co-curated programmes, shared platforms for artists and thinkers, and joint responses to the structural challenges facing Jewish cultural work in Europe today. Both partners see this event not as a one-off initiative, but as the starting point of a long-term strategic partnership aimed at strengthening visibility, resilience, and professional exchange in the field.

The symposium was addressed to a broad yet clearly defined group of professionals and practitioners engaged in Jewish cultural work and difficult heritage across Europe. Its primary target groups included cultural curators and heritage professionals working in museums, festivals, and independent cultural platforms, as well as representatives of NGOs and civic society organisations involved in memory work, anti-discrimination initiatives, and community-based cultural production. The event also intentionally welcomed unaffiliated activists, community leaders, educators, and students, recognising the important role of non-institutional actors and emerging professionals in shaping contemporary Jewish cultural discourse.

The event was designed as an in-person, multi-session symposium combining different formats to encourage both knowledge exchange and dialogue. The programme unfolded over a series of moderated sessions, including keynote inputs, panel discussions, and facilitated conversations with the audience. This structure allowed for in-depth exploration of the thematic focus while leaving space for collective reflection and peer exchange. Informal moments were integrated into the schedule to support networking and the building of professional relationships among participants. The bilingual format, conducted in German and English, ensured accessibility for an international audience while remaining embedded in the local cultural context of Dresden and Jüdische Woche.

The symposium brought together speakers and contributors from Poland, the Czech Republic, Serbia, the Netherlands, and Germany, representing a wide range of professional perspectives. Participants included cultural curators, artists, researchers, educators, and practitioners working at the intersection of contemporary Jewish art, heritage, and civic engagement. This diversity of geographic and professional backgrounds enriched the discussions and enabled comparative reflection on the conditions, constraints, and opportunities for Jewish cultural work in different national and institutional contexts.

The *Speaking of Us* symposium directly contributes to WP9 deliverables by delivering an in-person, transnational exchange focused on difficult heritage and contemporary Jewish self-representation. The event was professionally recorded and may be used for a future follow-up in a form of podcast-based activities and online conversations.

HISTORY OF CHANGES		
VERSION	PUBLICATION DATE	CHANGE
1.0	01.04.2022	Initial version (new MFF).

2.0	01.07.2025	Changed the event name (from Podcast – part 2 to The Global and the Local: Defining the Spaces of Memory Cultures), changed the number of countries (from 10–12 to 4–6), changed the location (from online to Drezno in situ), changed the number of participants (from >300 to 76–100), changed the duration (from 1 to series), changed the description & language (from an online podcast launch in English to an in-person symposium in Dresden on Jewish self-representation during Jüdische Woche, in German and English), changed the participants' estimated countries of origin (from Poland, Germany, Sweden, Czech Republic, Hungary, Spain, Estonia, Finland, Denmark, France to Poland, Germany, Austria, France), and changed the lead of WP (from JMU to Festivalt).
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