

A close-up portrait of a middle-aged man with a light beard and mustache, looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression. He is wearing a light-colored collared shirt.

CULTURAL PARTICIPATION

New ways to art -

Museumguidances always inclusive

An optimistic project to influence the development of cultural inclusion

 **capito**
Mecklenburg-Vorpommern

 **STAATLICHES
MUSEUM
SCHWERIN**

To create new approaches to enjoying culture for people with and without disabilities - this is the declared goal of an ambitious and optimistic project, which was started in spring 2017 in Schwerin, the state capital of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania. The key actors are people with disabilities from the *Lebenshilfewerk Hagenow*.

During the Schwerin Culture Night on October 28, 2017, the participants of this project offered their visitors a guided tour focusing their personal access to works of art.

In the months before this Culture Night, they developed individual guided tours with information about the paintings and artists, current topics of interest, their own short videos, even presentations with homemade musical instruments.

This pilot project is something special. The cooperation partners had the opportunity to influence a prospective inclusive standard of cultural participation, to actively shape it and subsequently evaluate the process. With capito, our office for accessibility, we as a life support organization would like to encourage cultural institutions and social agencies to help all people shape a cultural landscape that is accessible to everyone.

FOR THE FIRST TIME, ALL PARTIES INVOLVED COOPERATE IN THIS PARTICULAR WAY AND IN A JOINT EFFORT TO ACHIEVE ONE GOAL: BOLSTERING CULTURAL PARTICIPATION FOR ALL.



130

visitors were accompanied through the gallery of the „Old Masters“ during the Schwerin Culture Night by the participants of our project.

„We wanted to start a project together within the framework of cultural participation, which is about independence, which is about sovereignty, where a person with a disability gets a voice and can share their perception in relation to cultural and social life“.

Birgit Baumgart, museum educator at the Staatliches Museum Schwerin



This project is useful for two reasons: On the one hand, the different skills and perspectives of the participating guides were combined in order to try something new and daring. On the other hand, the creative learning process gave the newly trained culture guides the opportunity to question traditional social structures. One month before the Culture Night / Kulturnacht, the project had already been awarded the DIALOGUE Prize. The clear message from the speaker Dr. Michaela Selling, Director of the *Office of Culture, Monument Conservation and Museums* in Rostock, to our museum guides was, „This project must not remain a one-off event, but should establish itself in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania as an integral part of the museum and cultural landscape“.

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„From our point of view it is absolutely necessary that everyone can participate in culture. We understand culture as an area of life to which every human being can find an individual and enriching access. Therefore it is our concern in this project to recognize the needs of the participants and to help them on this basis with different methods and in easy-to-understand language to bring art closer to themselves and other people“.

*Nils Wöbke, Director
capito Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania*



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With projects like this one we can influence the development of an inclusive standard for the future. It is also our fixed goal to create career perspectives for people with disabilities, proving that they, like everybody else, can be accepted as participants in cultural activities.



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