



SUPPORT DOCUMENT OF THE STUDY HERITAGE HOUSES FOR EUROPE

3. Illustrative Practices on the socio-economic contribution of European family-owned heritage houses

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Support documents:

1. EU Funding guide to family-owners of heritage houses
2. Illustrative Practices on innovative business model cases of European family-owned heritage houses
3. **Illustrative Practices on the socio-economic contribution of European family-owned heritage houses**
4. Technical Sheet on existing business models of European family-owned heritage houses

14 / Schloss Rotenturm, successful renovation through cooperation and European funding



Schloss Rotenturm by night, © Philipp Holz, source: <https://schlossrotenturm.at/residenz/sanierung-schlossgebaeude/>

COUNTRY: Austria

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Schloss Rotenturm dates back to the 16th century. The current castle was built in the 1860s and housed a valuable art collection (of count Julius and Emilie Erdődy, previous owners of the castle) but this collection was auctioned in 1929. Moreover, in 1924, a fire destroyed most of the interior decoration, including the Erdődy family archives and the secret archives of the Hungarian freedom hero Prince Franz II Rákóczi (1676-1735). For a short time, the castle was owned by the Czech violinist Jan Kubelík. In 1971, the building came into the possession of the Land Burgenland.

In 2008, Schloss Rotenturm returned to private ownership. The Viennese insurance and real estate specialist Prof. Heinz Schinner acquired it and diligently renovated the castle and its 11 hectare park from 2009 to 2016. He uses Schloss Rotenturm as a family residence. The estate also serves as an event venue.

CHALLENGES OF RENOVATION

The basic requirement to successfully renovate an historic estate, is the creation of a concept including a project management plan with weekly, monthly and annual objectives. Making bold decisions, negotiating prices and being cautious about who to work with, is an important part of a successful outcome. The owner decided to fence the entire area and first build a new castle gate. Only then, the renovation of the façade and the supply of electricity, water and gas, could start. The renovation did not only involve 3 building companies but also several contractors. In total, the owner employed 300 people in the 7 years of renovating the estate.

VALORISING THE POSSIBILITIES OF EUROPEAN FUNDING FOR FAMILY-OWNED HERITAGE HOUSES

The renovation of the castle was carried out in cooperation with the Austrian Federal Monuments Office. The project was also funded by ERDF (European Regional Development Fund). A key success factor in this application to ERDF was the involvement of a professional consultant, resulting in the approval of all projects included the application. In 2016, the renovation was completed with a total cost of 2 million euros, of which €450.000 from ERDF.

WARMLY OPENED UP TO THE PUBLIC

Since the renovation of the castle and park, it has been opened up more and more every year. Today, for the first time in its history, visitors are welcomed to Schloss Rotenturm. There are 4 guest apartments available. The ballrooms in the castle are open for private and business events. Guided tours and castle concerts are organised at a regular basis. As a certified event planner, the daughter of the owner, is responsible for the management and marketing of the estate as an event venue. The estate is also a recent member of "Schlösserstraße" (castle road). This partnership will help to market the estate to a wider public.

CULTURAL VALUE CREATION

The owner is involved in many cultural projects in the wider region. As a passionate collector of art and decorative attributes, he shares his knowledge and collections with several cultural and heritage organisations and museums in the region. The shot glass museum was completed vis-à-vis the castle in the former community hall and exhibits a part of his glassware collection. The ambition is also to build a museum in the castle park, again with an EU grant, to present temporary exhibitions. Since 2017, the young talents of the Central Music School Oberwart are supported by organising their concerts in the castle. Because of the renovation of Schloss Rotenturm and the exemplary services to the community, Prof. Heinz Schinner was granted (2017) with the title 'honorary citizen of the European Community Rotenturm'.

SOURCES

- <https://schlossrotenturm.at/>
- Email interview with Prof. Heinz Schinner on 07/06/2019