



THINK INSIDE THE BOX CHALLENGES

Each of the challenges was proposed by a “challenge owner” who will also (co)facilitate the team sessions. Teams are free to redefine and recombine challenges throughout the event.

1. EXPLORING PLATFORM PROTOTYPES

OWNER: Monika Krakowska

This challenge includes three micro-challenges to design inclusive, meaningful VR experiences. Teams will create accessible onboarding flows for early user success, build compact three-layer narratives around selected objects, and prototype alternative “hidden story” paths that invite new interpretations. Expected outcomes include improved onboarding, refined storytelling, and innovative perspectives for future development.

2. PERFORMING HERITAGE

OWNER: Luka Princic

The challenge is to craft the dramaturgy of a performative event at the Ġgantija temple - translating its cultural and historical meaning into lived experience. This involves shaping narrative, emotion, and sensory design through choices of story, technology, and atmosphere. Possible outcomes include a cohesive mixed-reality experience where participants actively engage with heritage, connecting place, story, and feeling in an immersive, emotionally resonant way.

3. PARTICIPATION, PLASTICITY, PLAY

OWNERS: Margarita Pulé | Afroditi Andreou

This modular hackathon challenge invites participants to explore digital storytelling and playful design as ways to question dominant narratives and invite multiple interpretations of heritage. Each micro-challenge can stand alone or combine practical and theoretical elements. Themes range from speculative curation and digital fragility to intimacy, care, and reinterpretation of artefacts. Possible outcomes include experimental prototypes, reflective games, and immersive experiences that reshape how audiences engage with cultural heritage.

4. BUILDING FUTURE AGENCY: WHEN XR MEETS AI

OWNERS: Mert Akbal | Sónia Alves

The design of immersive experiences often involves a combination of existing and future skills. To connect and integrate processes of design and learning, the challenge links use case development and learning journey design. The challenge draws on approaches from HAMLET (including the Generative Arts and Design Lab, a future skills format developed by the HBKsaar’s Experimental Media Lab) and CYANOTYPES. It focuses on XR and (generative) AI as skill domains, possible outcomes include learning journeys designed to address the needs of learners involved in implementing the use cases.

5. EXPANDING THE XR TECH STACK

OWNERS: Henrik Elburn | Jan Tretschok

Ideally, studio infrastructures are designed to address existing needs - and offer flexibility for future uses. Framed by the tech stack of the Motion Hub, the challenge involves the creation of use cases that can serve as a roadmap for future studio design. Possible outcomes include scenarios that focus on new data sets, new technologies, or new user groups.

6. WITNESSING HISTORY DIGITAL WORLD

OWNER: Martin Gordon

Surviving Holocaust documentation consisted primarily of Nazi state authority accounts. Early Holocaust historiography failed to effectively integrate survivors’ voices until Saul Friedländer’s genre-changing approach, which also enabled the discovery of small acts of resistance and individual self-assertion that had not been ‘officially’ documented. Such a ‘microhistorical’ lens facilitates comprehension of the regional/local dimensions and multi-layered realities of the Shoah and can guide the design of immersive experiences. The challenge presents details of the role and fate of selected individuals in Bielsko-Biała, in the context of the Auschwitz concentration camp laundry located in the Polish town.

IMPULSE



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