Programme

of the NECE Lab on AI and the Future of Historical Learning

16-18 September 2026, Salzburg

At **Unipark Nonntal**
Erzabt-Klotz-Straße 1, 5020 Salzburg, Austria

Artificial intelligence is fundamentally transforming how history is researched, communicated, and remembered. Across Europe, national, regional and European narratives are being reinforced or reinterpreted through AI, with direct consequences for how citizens form historical understanding and democratic judgement. Beyond the technical questions, practical implications are increasingly coming into focus: how will schools, museums and memorial sites work with AI-supported tools in the future? What opportunities do chatbots, automatic translations, or AI-generated visualisations offer for the communication and negotiation of historical content – and where do new grey areas emerge between source, interpretation, and manipulation? Which versions of history are citizens consuming and which influence does that have on their civic and democratic participation?

At the NECE Lab on AI and historical education, we would be creating a protected learning laboratory in which participants will explore AI-supported representations of history and develop robust criteria for assessing sources, narratives, and media effects. Through shared practice, professionals from schools, museums, and memorial sites, as well as civic educators would jointly test concrete ways of working with AI, critically reflect on its limits and possibilities, and translate their experiences into formats suitable for everyday educational practice. At the same time, the Lab would function as a European learning space, enabling dialogue between different cultures of remembrance and supporting the search for responsible, transparent approaches to addressing disinformation and the challenges posed by new technologies in historical education.

NECE (Networking European Civic Education) is a multi-stakeholder network for civic educators to connect, learn, and grow. At NECE Labs, our primary objective is to promote and strengthen interdisciplinary and transnational collaboration in civic education. This NECE Lab is organised by THE CIVICS Innovation Hub, together with OeAD ERINNEN:AT and the Universität Salzburg - Fachbereich Geschichte. NECE is funded by the German Federal Agency for Civic Education (bpb)

Programme Outline

Overall Moderation by Patrick Siegele

Day 1 – 16 September

14:30	Registration & Welcome
15:15	Greetings & Official opening ***Anja Ostermann (THE CIVICS) x Dean Martin Knoll (University of Salzburg)***
15:30	Opening keynote - Does AI Introduce a New Paradigm for Holocaust Memory? ***Victoria Grace Richardson-Walden (University of Sussex)***
16:00	Needs in historical and civic education in the context of remembrance culture ***Denitza Vidolova (Sofia Platform Foundation)***
16:30	Discussion
17:00	Historical scavenger hunt through Salzburg in small groups as a shared getting-to-know activity; destination: restaurant for dinner
19:00	Group dinner at Pauli Stubm (Herrengasse 16, 5020 Salzburg, Austria)

End of day 1

Day 2 – 17 September

Arena 1 – Encountering AI

9:00	Keynote: How does AI 'think'? - reasoning and large language models - using concrete examples: what can AI actually do and what can it not do? 30-minute presentation, 15-minute discussion ***Claudia Müller-Birn (Free University Berlin)***		
9:45	Keynote: Metacognition, Historical Thinking and Artificial Intelligence 30-minute presentation, 15-minute discussion ***Christoph Kühberger (University of Salzburg)***		
10:30	**Breakout-Room 1** Schools & school-based partners ***Sabrina Schmitz-Zerres (RWTH Aachen University)***	**Breakout-Room 2** Museums & Memorial sites ***Florian Tuder (House of European History)***	**Breakout-Room 3** Community work ***Denitza Vidolova (Sofia Platform Foundation)***

12:30 bis 13:30 Lunch break

Arena 2 – The Historical Consciousness of AI

13:30	Keynote: Historical Consciousness and AI-Generated Imagery: Navigating Plausibility, Cultural Bias and Educational Opportunity ***Heinrich Ammerer (University of Salzburg)***		
14:15	Keynote: How does AI work? ***Mykola Makhortykh (University of Bern)***		
15:00	**Breakout-Room 1** National and regional contextualisation options ***Robert Obermair (University of Salzburg)***	**Breakout-Room 2 –** National and regional contextualisation options ***Judith Blum (Stiftung EVZ)***	**Breakout-Room 3 –** National and regional contextualisation options ***Drew Thomas (University of Salzburg)***

16:45	Plenary: Short presentations and discussion – what does this mean for the topics we address? Concepts from history and civic education for dealing with these challenges

End of day 2

Day 3 – 18 September

Arena 3 – AI as a Site of Ethical and Moral Conflict

9:00	Short technical inputs on practical possibilities, each with 15 minutes input and 5 minutes discussion: • Animated photographs ***Robert Breber - Cuts & Mouse*** • Chatbots to interact with former supporters of Nazi-Germany ***Robert Schäfer, Désirée Waibel & Nicolas Python*** • Digital remembrance culture - virtual conversations with survivors and the virtual tour of Belene ***Denitza Vidolova - Sofia Platform Foundation***
10:20	Letters from 2036: Imagining the Future of AI and Historical Learning ***Individual work***
11:00	World café with perspectives from education, ethics, historical theory, and media ***Robert Obermair x Judith Blum x Drew Thomas***
12:00	Synthesis of results, appreciation & closing remarks ***Patrick Siegele x Robert Obermair x Anja Ostermann***

End of event and departure