© 2026 licenced under CC-BY-SA 4.0
Namensnennung, Weitergabe unter gleichen Bedingungen
(credit must be given, adaptions must be shared under the same terms)

zentrum europäischer flechtkultur Lichtenfels

Office
Ringgasse 4
96215 Lichtenfels

Tel. +49 (0)9571 795-881
Fax +49 (0)9571 795-882
info@flechtkultur.eu
www.flechtkultur.eu

Chairperson
Andreas Hügerich
Marktplatz 1 & 5,
96215 Lichtenfels

Phone: +49 (0)9571 795-123
Fax: +49 (0)9571
795-192andreas.huegerich@lichtenfels.de

Managing Director
Manfred Rauh
rauh@flechtkultur.eu

Panel Discussion at the Archive of the Future: **“The Future and Appeal of Training in the Art of Basketry”**

As part of the ongoing **Erasmus+ project "GPS – New Pathways to Basketry in Germany, Poland, and Slovakia"**, with the Center for European Basketry Culture Lichtenfels e.V. (ZEF) collaborating with distinguished international partners, we are pleased to inform you about an upcoming initiative and warmly invite you to share your expertise on this important topic for the future.

We are planning a **moderated discussion on the international future of vocational training in basketry**, bringing together regional and global viewpoints from the worlds of craft, education, design, and culture.

Date:
Wednesday, January 28, 2026
5:30 PM–7:30 PM

Location

Archive of the Future, Lichtenfels

Main Focus

The goal of this event is to explore and discuss new ways to shape training in the art of basket weaving so it appeals to more young people and helps ensure the craft thrives for years to come—including across Europe.

Key questions we’ll be addressing include:

- What should training in basket weaving look like today to engage and inspire young people—and make the craft future-ready?
- What new partnerships between craft, design, culture, and education are needed to rethink how we teach basket weaving?

Created by Jennifer Rubach, January 19, 2026

Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

Participants

- Paulina Adamska and Łucja Cieślar
  - ***Serfenta**, Managing Directors of Poland's "Craft Experience Business Model"*
- Erika Rudikova and Tomás Mikolaj
  - *Representatives of the **Slovak Basketry Association** (ZkS) and the **Center for Folk Art Production** (U´lÚV) Slovakia*
- Manfred Rauh
  - *Managing Director **European Center for Basketry Culture Lichtenfels** e.V. (ZEF)*
- Matthias Söllner
  - *Master of District Crafts Chamber, Third Mayor of the **German Basket City Lichtenfels***
- Uwe Böker
  - *Technical Director of the **Vocational School for Basketry Design***
- Johannes Zeck
  - *Managing Director **FADZ** – Center for Research and Application of Digital Future Technologies*
- Prof. Emeritus Auwi Stübbe and Levin Fuchs
  - *Chairperson **/** Project Lead at the **Coburg Design Forum of Upper Franconia***
- Dorothée Rentsch
  - *Board Member at the **Federal Guild Association of Basketry***
- Maria Öckler
  - *Basketry Designer **in Training***

Brief Profiles of the Panelists



Manfred Rauh

Managing Director, Center for European Basketry Culture Lichtenfels (ZEF)

- European Network for Basketry

Discussion Focus:
How can European collaboration help ensure the long-term preservation and growth of traditional basket weaving knowledge?



Paulina Adamska & Łucja Cieślar

Managing Directors
Serfenta, Poland

Partner organization in the Erasmus+ GPS Project

- The managing directors of Serfenta – **Paulina Adamska**, cultural anthropologist and educator, and **Łucja Cieślar**, craft instructor and expert in social media and sales – have developed a self-sustaining business model that allows the organization to operate independently of external funding →**Craft Experience Business Model** for teaching and promoting traditional basket weaving.
- The organization has been involved in international basket weaving for 19 years, blending modern business methods with deep craft expertise.

Discussion Focus:
How can we create new training and business models that honor tradition while staying relevant and financially viable?

Your model appeals to a lot of young people: What makes basket weaving so attractive in your community?




Erika Rudiková & Tomáš Mikolaj

Slovak Association of Basket Weavers (ZkS) & Center for Folk Art Production (ÚĽUV), Slovakia

Partners in the Erasmus+ GPS Project

- **Tomáš Mikolaj** has spent the past ten years working at ÚĽUV – the Slovak Center for Folk Art Production – where he serves as chief editor for their publishing department. He brings valuable experience in **publicly funded training and support systems;** bridging the worlds of craftsmanship, cultural policy, and education.
- In 2018, he helped establish the Basket Weavers' Association and now serves on its board.
- **Erika Rudiková** has been passionate about basket weaving for over 14 years, practicing it as a dedicated hobby, and is also a member of the association.
- Most association members are over 65, while younger weavers tend to be more active and open to new ideas.
- Currently, ZkS has no professional basket makers among its members, as it's tough to make a living from basket weaving in Slovakia due to competition from cheap imported baskets, especially from Poland.

Discussion Points:
What impact do institutional structures, funding, and cultural stewardship have on the future of hands-on vocational training?

How do government and institutional frameworks shape vocational training in traditional crafts?



Matthias Söllner

Master Craftsman for the District, City Councilor, County Councilor, Third Mayor of the German Basket City Lichtenfels

- Bridging craft, local government, and regional development
- Advocating for basket weaving as a cultural and economic asset for the region

Discussion Points:
What conditions need to be in place at the local and political level to keep training in basket weaving appealing?

What does a community really need so that young people choose to stay or come back?

Created by Jennifer Rubach, 01/19/2026



Uwe Böker

Technical Director at the Vocational School for Basket Weaving Design

- First-hand experience with the current training landscape and its challenges
- In-depth knowledge of curricula and qualification standards

Discussion Perspective:
Where do we currently stand in training—what's working well, what isn't?
What short-term changes are needed to make education more appealing?



Johannes Zeck

FADZ – Research and Application Center for Digital Future Technologies

- Executive Director, FADZ Consortium
- Specialist in digitalization, innovation, and emerging technologies
- Offers an outside perspective on a time-honored craft

Discussion Perspective:
What part can digital tools, new technologies, and future-ready skills play in hands-on vocational training?

How much innovation can a traditional craft embrace?



Prof. Emeritus Auwi Stübbe

Chairperson, Coburg Design Forum Oberfranken – Bridging Craft, Design, and Education

Levin Fuchs

Interior Designer, Project Manager at the Coburg Design Forum

- Bringing together design, aesthetics, and craftsmanship
- Hands-on experience with interdisciplinary projects and modern training approaches

Discussion Perspective:
How can design and creative thinking inspire new directions in training, product development, and the appeal of the weaving craft?

What impact will design have on the future of the weaving craft?

Created by Jennifer Rubach on 01/19/2026



Dorothée Rentsch

Basketry Designer and Representative of the National Guild Association for Basketry

- National insights on training, professional roles, and the structure of the basketry trade
- Extensive experience in advocacy and the regulatory landscape of the craft

Discussion Perspective:
What structural changes are needed in this profession to ensure its future viability?



Maria Öckler

Apprentice Basketry Designer

"Curious, creative, and always on the lookout for fresh ideas. Plants and craftsmanship have been a part of my life for a long time. These days, I get to follow my passion while training as a basketry designer in Lichtenfels. In design class, I discovered the possibilities of the makerspace through collaborative projects—and I was hooked from the start. 3D printing especially fascinates me: it's perfect for model making and exciting for new basketry projects. For me, the makerspace is a workshop, a playground, and a creative studio all in one. Insta:

@_oeckler_flechtkunst_ "

Discussion Perspective:
You're right in the middle of your training and experiencing everyday life up close:

What inspires you about basket weaving—and where do you notice the limits of today's training?

Final question (for everyone)

If you had one wish, what would it be?
What do you think is the most important next step to secure the future of basket weaving education?

Brief Overview of Our Erasmus+ Project:

“GPS – Exploring New Paths in European Basketry”

The Erasmus+ project “GPS” is a European partnership dedicated to securing the future of basketry crafts. Working hand in hand with international partners from education, craft, design, and the cultural sector, the project aims to shape new paths for training, sharing knowledge, and inspiring the next generation in traditional basketry. We’re also passionate about making basketry and woven works a vibrant part of everyday life. That’s why we’re looking for creative, accessible ways for people to experience and learn basketry—and hope to connect with as many weaving traditions across Europe (and maybe beyond!) as possible.

At the heart of the project is one big question: How should craft training look today so it stays appealing, relevant, and flexible for young people—especially as society, technology, and culture continue to evolve? The project brings together **local expertise in craft with global perspectives**, encouraging rich exchanges between schools, cultural institutions, researchers, and working professionals.

Through hands-on workshops, open discussions, and collaborative development, we’re testing out **fresh approaches to training, learning, and partnership**. At the same time, the project helps strengthen **Europe-wide networks in basketry** and shines a light on the craft’s cultural, ecological, and creative importance.

The “GPS” project is supported by the **EU Erasmus+ program** and coordinated by the **Center for European Basketry Culture Lichtenfels (ZEF)**.