

Dialogue and cultural participation: Diversity at the Ruhr Museum

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ABSTRACT

My planned presentation consists of two parts: a short lecture and a subsequent discussion.

In the first part, I will introduce my work as the Diversity Officer at the Ruhr Museum. I will provide an insight into the museum's development, focusing on its opening up to a more diverse audience. The presentation will center around two guiding questions:

- 1 How has the Ruhr Museum become more accessible to people with an international migration background?
- 2 How do we promote dialogue with diverse communities?

A particular focus will be on the project „Art in Dialogue. Your Museum, Your Artwork – Diverse, Interactive, Playful“, which includes dialog-based and interactive tours of the exhibition “The Land of a Thousand Fires. Industrial Images from the Ludwig Schönefeld Collection” at the Ruhr Museum.

As part of the project, women with international migration backgrounds from different generations are trained as tour guides. They contribute their personal perspectives and experiences to the tours, thus promoting cultural participation and fostering exchange with various communities.

The goal of the project is to create an active, participatory exchange in the exhibition space and to reach new target groups by involving people with international migration backgrounds. The tours enable visitors to engage with the artworks in a playful and personal way, helping to build a stronger emotional connection with both the artworks and the museum.

In the second part of the presentation, there will be a moderated discussion with a project partner and two tour guides from the project. Together, we will deepen the themes of migration, gender, and generation in the museum context. We will reflect on how these dimensions play a role in the work of the tour guides and what impact they have on the perception and exchange within the museum. Additionally, I aim to create space for questions and discussions with the audience.

CV

Meltem Küçükyılmaz has been working as the Diversity Officer at the Ruhr Museum in Essen since 2023. Her focus is on audience and programming. She is responsible for collaboration with communities, outreach projects, expanding opportunities for participation through partnerships, and the diversification of the museum and its visitors.

In 2020/22, she coordinated the international project “We are from here. Turkish-German Life 1990. Photographs by Ergun Çağatay” at the Ruhr Museum. Following this, she conceptualized the accompanying program for the subsequent exhibition “Mustafa’s Dream. Photographs by Henning Christoph of Turkish Life in Germany 1977–1979” and worked as a co-curator for the exhibition “Glückauf – Action! The History of Cinema and Film History of the Ruhr Area”.