

No.15

Werkraum  
Bregenzerwald

Austria

Vorarlberg

Andelsbuch

werkraum  
bregenzerwald

## Categories of cultural heritage

Professional craftspeople	Knowledge transfer	Presentation of crafts	Network for preservation of crafts	Local community building	Crafts within tourism
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## Description

Werkraum Bregenzerwald is a unique cultural and economic initiative in Austria, showcasing the craftsmanship of the Bregenzerwald region. Designed by renowned architect Peter Zumthor, the Werkraumhaus serves as a meeting place and exhibition space, blending seamlessly with the surrounding landscape through its glass façade and wooden roof. It supports local artisans by promoting their work, fostering innovation, and preserving traditional skills. The space hosts exhibitions, events, and a shop, celebrating the rich heritage of craftsmanship, local community spirit, innovative design practices, and sustainable development initiatives.

<https://www.werkraum.at/>

## Types of handicrafts

Woodworking Metalworking Stonemasonry Boatbuilding Furnace construction	Plumbing Electrical Work Painting Tinsmithing	Upholstery Tailoring Shoemaking Toboggan construction	Coopering Feltworking Goldsmithing Jewelry Design
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## Craft touchpoints - where to find?

Workshop of an artisan (directly from the craftsman) eShop selling local artisans' products Shop selling its own, locally produced products	Social media accounts Events (workshops, guided tours, exhibitions, lectures)
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## What can we learn?

<b>Heritage preservation / valorisation practice</b>	What do they expose with their practice?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Werkraum Bregenzerwald promotes traditional craftsmanship through community collaboration and educational initiatives.</li> </ul>
<b>Success factors</b>	Achievements and strengths that make this case inspiring for other attempts in the DR	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 25 years of experience</li> <li>• Bookstore – largest selection, unique offer of crafts, architecture, composition and design books</li> <li>• Preserve traditional craftsmanship – innovatively combining it with modern design and technology</li> <li>• Werkraum Lädeler - a show and learning mobile for apprenticeships in the skilled trades</li> </ul>
<b>Local community involvement</b>	Fundamental values that help to connect the target groups for the social prosperity of the area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• HOFgarten 800 – pop-up guest garden</li> <li>• Cafeteria Werkraum - personal encounters are important</li> <li>• Knowledge transfer to children – come into contact with the craft and understand it</li> </ul>
<b>Link to professional network</b>	Reflecting on its strategic position in the region; making the most of networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cooperation with member companies, training centres – various projects, programmes for every age group; Apprenticeship exchange</li> <li>• Werkraum Schule Bregenzerwald – combines apprenticeship and a trade school into a 5-year educational program</li> </ul>
<b>Communication</b>	The use of social networks to disseminate and promote their mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informative website</li> <li>• Facebook, Instagram, YouTube</li> <li>• In English language, too.</li> </ul>
<b>Sustainability factor</b>	Operations and maintenance that drive the practice forward; opportunities for financial sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Membership fees, donations, product sales, commissions, grants and sponsorships</li> <li>• Funded by the state of Vorarlberg, supported by 23 municipalities of the region with a community contribution</li> <li>• Major focus – activities of young talent</li> </ul>

## What makes it a best practice?

### SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY:

Werkraum Bregenzerwald exemplifies social sustainability by deeply involving local artisans and the community. It fosters traditional craftsmanship, ensuring skills are passed down through generations. The initiative supports local employment and education, with training programs and collaborations with schools. This engagement not only preserves cultural heritage but also strengthens the local economy and social fabric, making it a model of sustainable development.

## Contact information

Contact person: Werkraum Bregenzerwald GmbH

Address: Hof 800 6866 Andelsbuch, Österreich

Phone: +43 5512 26386

Mail: [info@werkraum.at](mailto:info@werkraum.at)

Website: <https://www.werkraum.at/>

Social network: [Facebook](#); [Instagram](#); [YouTube](#)