

MOBILITY GRANTS 2025





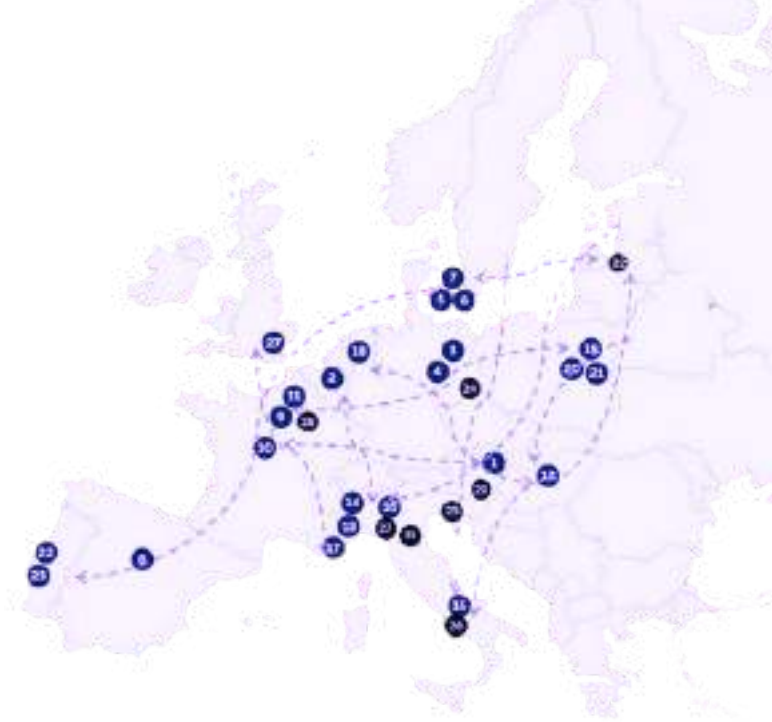
THE NETWORK OF EUROPEAN ROYAL RESIDENCES

<http://www.europeanroyalresidences.eu/>

The Network of European Royal Residences, founded in 2001, is a unique network gathering the most prestigious palace-museums in Europe. Today the network counts 36 establishments in charge of managing over 100 palaces located in 13 European countries. Bearing witness to European history and identity, European Royal Residences are complex and multi-faceted places of prestige: originally places of power and representation, they are now museums, open to the public, and offer an extremely varied cultural programme.

This range of activities connecting the past to the present raises some specific issues. The Network is primarily a tool at the service of more than 10.000 European palace-museum staff and experts, enabling them to meet and share their experience in the preservation, management and promotion of the rich cultural heritage in their care. Strengthening cooperation among institutions by enabling professionals to share best practices and exchange expertise lies at the core of the Network's mission. Each year, we organize Technical Meetings (TM) that gather experts during two days of technical discussions, and offer Mobility Grants to professionals willing to conduct a project in a partner institution.





THE MOBILITY GRANTS PROGRAMME

<https://www.europeanroyalresidences.eu/mobility-grants-programme/>

With the aim of developing exchanges between professionals, the Network of European Royal Residences developed a dedicated mobility programme for its members.

Since 2018, more than 100 grants have been awarded to professionals working in member institutions, fostering the sharing of best practices and strengthening collaboration among European royal residences.

This grant is an aid to mobility, aiming to support part of the costs of a “short” mobility (1 week – 10 days) in another member residence.

All professional profiles within palace-museums are eligible for these grants: curators, conservators, researchers, restorers, gardeners, educators, and personnel working in fundraising, development, public services, communication, as well as all professionals and employees of historic royal residences involved in the implementation of the institution’s missions.

Through knowledge-sharing activities, each placement made in the context of the programme benefits to the grantee, the host institution and the sending institution.

The Steering Committee of the Mobility Grants Programme is currently composed of the following members:

- [Karina Marotta](#), Adviser at the presidency cabinet / Patrimonio Nacional, Spain
- [Christina Schindler](#), Marketing-Product Manager / Palace of Schönbrunn, Austria
- [Sebastian Edwards](#), Deputy chief curator & Head of Collections / Historic Royal Palaces, United Kingdom
- [Sara Gonçalves Pereira](#), Museum Registrar / Parques de Sintra – Monte da Lua, Portugal
- [Paulina Szulist-Płuciniczak](#), Head of Education Department / Museum of King Jan III’s Palace at Wilanów, Poland

WINNERS 2025

NAME	ROLE	SENDING INSTITUTION	HOST INSTITUTION	SCORE
KARINE BARBIER	Information Officer	Palace of Versailles (France)	Historic Royal Palaces (UK)	120
LÁZÁR PÉTER LORINCZ	Museum Tour Guide	Royal Palace of Gödöllő (Hungary)	Musei Reali di Torino (Italy)	120
LAURA MEERVELD	Senior Marketeer	Paleis Het Loo (The Netherlands)	Palace of Schönbrunn (Austria)	120
MARIT BERENDS	Curator of Cultural History	Paleis Het Loo (The Netherlands)	The Royal Danish Collection (Denmark)	120
PAULINA SZULIST-PLUCINICZAK	Head of Education Department	Museum of King Jan III's Palace at Wilanów (Poland)	Patrimonio Nacional (Spain)	120
DOROTA PARZYSZEK	Head of the Promotion and Communication Department	Royal Castle in Warsaw (Poland)	Royal Palace of Caserta (Italy)	120
BOGUMIŁA WISNIEWSKA	Head of Art Interpretation Department	Wawel Royal Castle - State Art Collection (Poland)	Palace of Versailles (France)	120
MARIANA SCHEDEL	Curator	Parques de Sintra-Monte da Lua (Portugal)	Palace of Compiègne (France)	120
DEBORAH HOGAN	Schools Content Producer	Historic Royal Palaces (UK)	Paleis Het Loo (The Netherlands)	120
LETICIA GARCÍA DE CECA SÁNCHEZ DEL CORRAL	Museum Curator	Patrimonio Nacional (Spain)	The Royal Danish Collection (Denmark)	108.5
WIKTOR JURA	Coordinator of Nature Education	Museum of King Jan III's Palace at Wilanów (Poland)	Parques de Sintra-Monte da Lua (Portugal)	108
LUIS VALLEJO VELASCO	General Foreman at La Granja Gardens	Patrimonio Nacional (Spain)	Palace of Versailles (France)	106
SILKE KIESANT	Curator	Prussian Palaces and Gardens Foundation Berlin-Brandenburg (Germany)	Royal Palace of Naples (Italy)	105.25
ISABEL GONZÁLEZ-CONDE	Painting Conservator	Patrimonio Nacional (Spain)	Palace of Versailles (France)	102.75
INEZ TOKAJ	Financial Projects Control Specialist	Wawel Royal Castle - State Art Collection (Poland)	Patrimonio Nacional (Spain)	102
ELENA VAQUERO REDONDO	Coordinator of educational and accessibility programmes	Patrimonio Nacional (Spain)	Musei Reali di Torino (Italy)	101.5
KALINA CUKROWSKA	Art Curator	Royal Lazienki Museum (Poland)	Palace of Fontainebleau (France)	100.25
MAŁGORZATA ZIEMINSKA	Assistant in Educational Department	Museum of King Jan III's Palace at Wilanów (Poland)	Palace of Fontainebleau (France)	99.75
IVANA GLORIA FRANK	Museum Educator – Children's Museum	Palace of Schönbrunn (Austria)	Royal Palace of Gödöllő (Hungary)	99.5
BLANCA CABRERA ANDONAEGUI	Head of service - Education Department	Patrimonio Nacional (Spain)	Palace of Schönbrunn (Austria)	91.75

SUMMARY

SENDING INSTITUTIONS
Palace of Schönbrunn (Austria)
Prussian Palaces and Gardens Foundation Berlin-Brandenburg (Germany)
Palace of Versailles (France)
Royal Palace of Gödöllő (Hungary)
Paleis Het Loo (The Netherlands)
Museum of King Jan III's Palace at Wilanów (Poland)
Royal Castle in Warsaw (Poland)
Royal Łazienki Museum in Warsaw (Poland)
Wawel Royal Castle - State Art Collection (Poland)
Patrimonio Nacional (Spain)
Parques de Sintra - Monte da Lua (Portugal)
Historic Royal Palaces (UK)



TOT/ 12



HOSTING INSTITUTIONS
Palace of Schönbrunn (Austria)
The Royal Danish Collection (Denmark)
Palace of Versailles (France)
Palace of Compiègne (France)
Palace of Fontainebleau (France)
Royal Palace of Gödöllő (Hungary)
Musei Reali di Torino (Italy)
Reggia di Caserta (Italy)
Royal Palace of Naples (Italy)
Paleis Het Loo (The Netherlands)
Patrimonio Nacional (Spain)
Parques de Sintra-Monte da Lua (Portugal)
Historic Royal Palaces (UK)

TOT/ 13



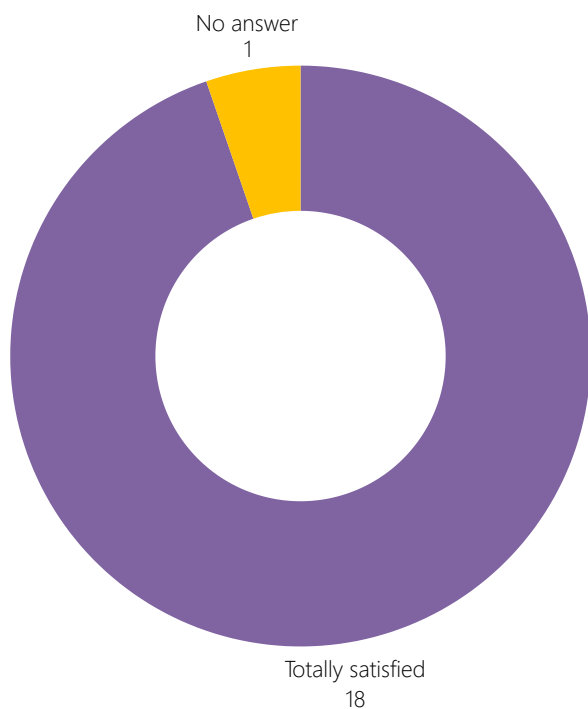
20 WINNERS

INVOLVING 18 INSTITUTIONS

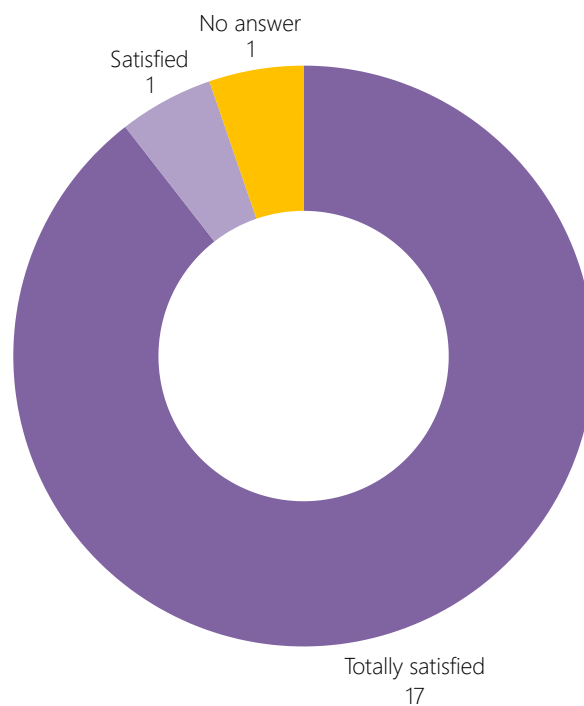
FROM 12 COUNTRIES

STATISTICS

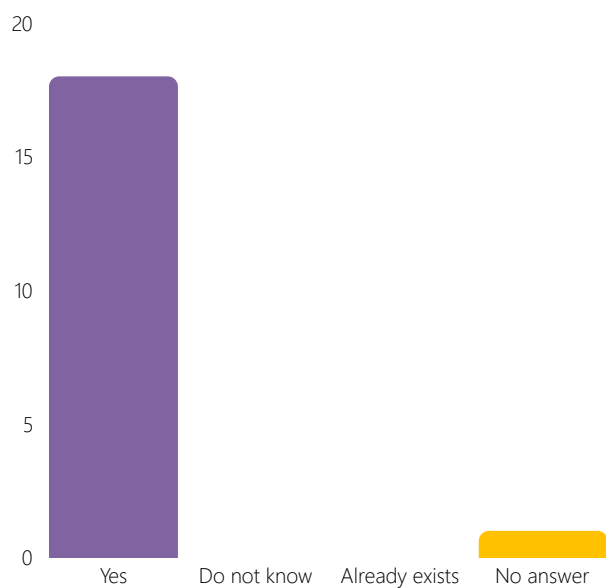
Concerning the relationship with the host institution (communication, organization of the exchange, supervision, etc), how satisfied were you?



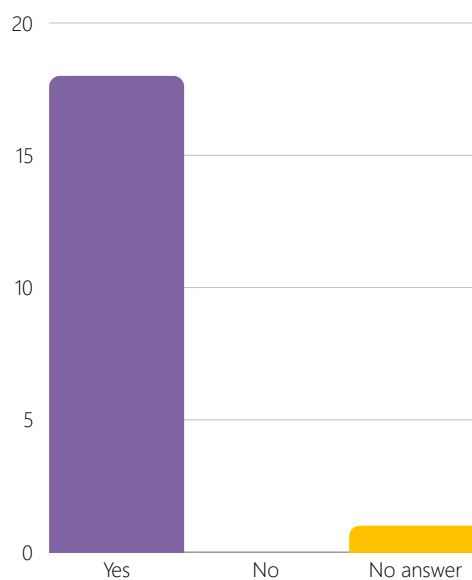
Did your experience meet your expectations?



Do you think that your exchange can be the starting point for a cooperation between the Host institution and your institution?



Will you recommend this program to your colleagues?



KARINE BARBIER

Information Officer

Sending institution: Palace of Versailles, France

Host institution: Historic Royal Palaces, United Kingdom

Date of mobility: 18 August – 22 August 2025



1. INTRODUCTION

The history of the palace of Versailles and the Historic Royal Palaces both iconic landmarks and national heritage are testaments of the evolution of royal residences in Europe.

Attracting millions of visitors willing to reflect on the opulence of the lavish interiors and grand architecture of these masterpieces, it doesn't come without its challenges. By bringing together people from different cultures, these palaces provide spaces in which visitors from diverse backgrounds can meet and interact, engaging with contemporary values such as diversity and inclusiveness. Accessibility rather mobile or cognitive thus play a crucial role in nowadays practices and politics.

For this reason the aim of my mobility project was the design services and practices of the Historic Royal Palaces in the recognition, consideration and support of accessibility with an emphasis on cognitive condition.

2. HOST AND SENDING INSTITUTION: DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES

The Palace of Versailles and the Historic Royal Palaces are both former royal residences with similar issues related to the testing of time as well as the intricacy of their architecture.

Both of them deal with visitors' diversity therefore requiring measures to adopt and promote inclusivity. Similarities between them both also occur in the work they do with their respective communities.

Nevertheless, differences are noticeable. Among them is the fact that the Historic Royal Palaces is a charity working on behalf of the Crown whereas the palace of Versailles is a national public institution under the umbrella of the French Ministry of Culture.

Moreover, the Historic Royal Palaces still live on the rhythm of English ancient rituals and traditions like the Tower of London ceremony of the keys or the Yeoman Warders guarding the Tower. Besides the palace of Versailles is a former royal residence whereas Kensington Palace is split in two parts, one of them still being one of the official royal residences.

The Historic Royal Residences also differ in the sense that they are in charge of six different palaces (The Tower of London, Kensington Palace, Hampton Court, Banqueting House, Kew Palace and Hillsborough Castle.)

3. PROGRAMME OF THE STAY

DAY 1:

My first mobility day took place at the Tower of London which is the most popular and visited Historic Royal Palaces site. After the welcoming and orientation phase with Caterina Berni (my contact and Senior Interpretation Manager) I was invited to chat and go around the Tower site with both Community Program and Website team members.

The interest of the day involved the Community Program practices, promoting equality and inclusivity with notably the "One pound ticket" program in addition to the development of new projects such as a new accessibility guide-map. The digital version of the access-guide was also discussed during the video chat with the web-content producer, in addition to the standard guidelines (ex: clear content, alternative text).

Another project being worked on is updating the Historic Royal Palaces website. Practices applicable to my sending institution are the use of clear and consistent language which is crucial for visitors suffering from neurodiversion or autism. Moreover, another important information that can shed some light on the matter of accessibility and potentially be applicable to my sending institution is the Historic Royal Palaces training to the Sunflower Hidden Disability program (hdsunflower.com).

The idea is to wear a specific sunflower tool like a lanyard, pin or wristband in order to voluntarily be identified as a person with a hidden disability, whether chronic illnesses, mental health disorders, neurological or cognitive impairment.

By raising awareness on their additional needs, the wearers are offered extra-support and assistance. Choosing a signifier thus becomes a powerful element in being seen, understood and taken in charge.

Other engaging and interesting principles that could be applicable to my sending institution are the relaxed events where the residences of the Tower of London and Kensington palace close to the public for two hours so as to welcome anyone suffering from sensory or processing difficulties (sessions are made of 1000 tickets for the Tower of London and 300 tickets for Kensington).

DAY 2:

My second mobility day was centered around meetings with the Project in addition to the Tower of London Operations Managers and School Teams. It highlighted the accessibility barriers the vulnerable visitors have to face (ex: cobbled and uneven ground) with an emphasis on the access policy already in place to the one pipelined in a 5 years program. The need to provide an equitable experience while maintaining the heritage liability was also discussed as well as the will to be more productive in removing barriers to engagement, illustrated through the Operations Department training program (a troubles development and neurodivergent syndromes training when hired, then refreshed once a year.) The meeting with Schools Content Manager and Palace Programs, School Content Producer and Tower School Content and Palaces team members emphasized the Historic Royal Palaces content goals regarding teachers' programs and engagements, inclusive content and special projects, school outreach in addition to special school audience and sessions.

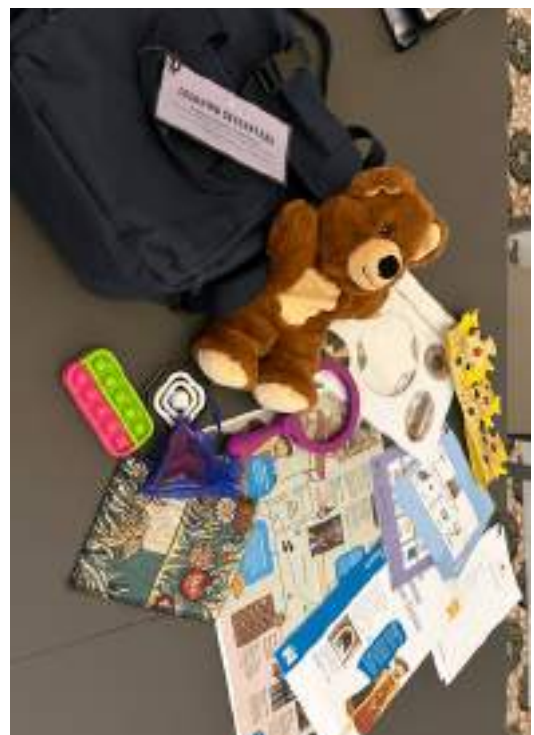
Strategies for school specific projects such as the Superbloom classroom, the Green classroom and the Wordless Stories project were discussed. The Wordless Stories project is a new, major tool made of eight stories illustrating British history scenes, dealing with topics such as loss, fear, death or imprisonment. By representing historical figures without any letters, numbers or text associated to the illustration it helps the schooler to create a deeper, more personal interpretation of history through the length of a relatable human being. Indeed, these eight stories shape the person using real events pointed in a way to help younger people remember national history. Furthermore, wordless stories enable children find their own words about what happened in British history.

DAY 3:

My third mobility day was characterized by meetings and tours on Kensington palace with KP Operations and Interpretation Managers. It explored staff training on disability awareness, covering access training, inclusive language and communication approach on how to help Kensington palace hosts become more confident in talking to impaired visitors, wheel-chair users, extra-needs children or vulnerable adults.

The access training aims at helping hosts deliver a positive message, underlining a "We want you to visit" message. In order to be more accessible seventy training subjects are available, both compulsory and optional with a variety linked to neurodiversity awareness.

Disability awareness training is definitely a practice applicable to my sending institution as it helps create better standards. Disability sensitivity exposure for staff members is a growing topic which the palace of Versailles is trying to develop with optional mobility-impairment training having been offered to volunteers.





Another interest of the day was the presentation of the Dress Code exhibit by its Interpretation Manager and the key consideration of pattern writing and designing while putting together an exhibit needing to be addressed during the design process to make it accessible for cognitive and other types of disabilities.

Additional interest of the day resided in the presentations of the learning center and sensory bag pilot program, their accessibility and ways to provide the bag (accessible to communities, SEND children and more generally later on to a broader audience.)

It also focused on the promotion of the awareness of cultural heritage through emotions and not knowledge, in particular with Queen Victoria's childhood royal section of Kensington palace where visitors can learn about the everyday life of young Victoria through recreated rooms, various objects, play and dressing-up activities with costumes, thus making the younger ones enter a whole new world and fulfilling for some a childhood dream.

DAY 4:

On day 4 and day 5 my mobility took place at Hampton Court palace. My fourth day focused on meetings and tours on site with members of the Operations Department, host team fieldworkers, host team representatives, Public Engagement director and head of Operations at Hampton Court.

It illustrated the proactive work on all aspects of accessibility at Hampton Court in addition to how meeting the needs of a specific group of people makes the visit more accessible and enjoyable for everyone. Thus, in this perspective the creation of a pilot video-project "Still the hours" has been formatted, enabling a small group of visitors to get after-dark access to Hampton Court with a guide accompanied by a few film.

Visitors on the visually impaired spectrum can open to a new audience in which the able audience let the experience of the immersive darker format unfold. This pilot, involving one shot life screen without editing offers a new way of storytelling, satisfying both a broad audience and a less sighted one.

DAY 5:

My fifth day involved a meeting and tour on site with Hampton Court Interpretation Manager in addition to a self-guided tour of the Tudor world. The day highlighted the proactive process of Hampton Court regarding sensory inclusion by embracing sensory inclusion through smell, touch, hearing and sight. Various tactile objects and samples are on display throughout the visit like golden threads tapestries; an Englishman Tudor's hat replica you can touch and wear. Fire in the chimney can be smelled and heard, little scenes played in some of the palace rooms can be seen and heard. Hampton Court thus fosters a sense of well-being and belonging, providing a comfortable, welcoming environment and experience. I also walked around the palace using the sensory bag and its different items through the length of sensory inclusion. This way of accessing culture ensures not only more accessibility but also more participation from the visitors, especially from the younger or more vulnerable ones. Sensory inclusion is a practice that in my opinion could be applicable to the palace of Versailles, although in more low-key areas such as the estate of Trianon rather than in the palace itself.



4. ORGANIZATION OF THE TRIP

In terms of organization I chose to focus first on accommodation as my mobility period was during the summer and coincided with Summer Bank Holiday.

As it included the sites of the Tower of London, Kensington Palace as well as Hampton Court, I decided to look at accommodation first and chose ones at a walkable distance of the Tower of London.

Depending on your own space and meals flexibility you'd rather choose a hotel or an Airbnb, nevertheless I would suggest areas close to the Tower of London such as London bridge, Borough or Saint Katherine's Dock.

For my part I highly recommend the hotel I stayed in, The Travelodge London City (travelodge.co.uk) on 20 Middlesex Street, which is located at a ten minutes walking distance from the Tower of London and very close to both Aldgate and Aldgate East stations, making it easy to go around in the city after work.

Moreover there are many restaurants in addition to several supermarkets around, in particular a Tesco supermarket a few minutes away. You can also eat at the hotel restaurant or order room service until 10pm.

In terms of transportation I would recommend taking the Eurostar (booking in advance enables you to secure a good fee) as well as buying an Oyster Card when arriving in London (you can get to the visitors center in San Pancras Station for more information on the subject.)

In terms of costs, London is an expensive city (although I found food prices similar to the ones in France.) Furthermore, keep in mind that with the Pound Sterling being stronger than the Euro it doesn't work to the advantage of EU citizens.



5. CONCLUSION: ADDED VALUES, NEW COMPETENCIES, WORKING METHODS, VISION, ETC

The outcome of my mobility is of great value, both from a professional and a personal aspect. I was extremely well-welcomed by all the Historic Royal Palaces team members and had very enriching high-quality meetings with inspiring, passionate and dedicated people. This stay shed light on a new conception of culture by illustrating how pushing the boundaries of accessibility to some makes the awareness of cultural heritage shine to us all. Thus, fostering the vision of historic sites as a space of social empowerment.



1. INTRODUCTION

I have visited the Royal Palace of Turin between the 28th of September and the 5th of October. My mobility exchange allowed me to have a peep into the daily life of the Musei Reali. The organization of my program was highly professional, that not only provided me with an excellent understanding of the host institution but left me with enough time to somewhat explore the city of Turin as well. My main host was Lorenza Santa, the head of the collection, but I have met with people from the educational departments, the PR and marketing departments and had the pleasure to exchange information with the museum attendees (guards) as well. On top of all of this, they arranged a day where we could visit the La Venaria Reale palace where the colleagues of the museum were just as professional and helpful as those in Turin. My mobility program was also different in the sense that I was not alone, because another grantee, Elena, had chosen Turin as her desired destination so I could learn something about the Patrimonio Nacional as well.

2. HOST AND SENDING INSTITUTION: DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES

The two institutions share many similarities but also differ in a lot of ways. Of course, as all ARRE Members, both are Royal Palaces serving as museums right now. Architecturally both palaces were built in a Baroque-style, just in different times as the Royal Palace of Turin was built in the 17th century, while the palace of Gödöllő was built a century later. The size of the buildings are also quite similar, Turin being 12.000 m² while Gödöllő being 17.000 m² and the size of the Royal Apartments permanent exhibition is more or less the same, with both palaces having around 30 rooms that are always open to the public. The two institutions also have the same number of employees (around 100-130).

A major difference is that the Palace of Turin was intended to be a royal residence from the start, while our palace was constructed as an aristocratic family residence, resulting in the fact that the former served as such, for significantly longer. Historically, the Palace in Turin also survived the horrors of World War I and World War II, so they have much more original material than we do, since the Palace of Gödöllő was ravaged by the Soviets during and after the war. Another difference is that the Palazzo Reale has more suites, more royal rooms (and possibly more rooms in total) than our Palace but the estate of Gödöllő has larger gardens (around 7 hectares in Turin and 26,1 in Gödöllő). A key difference is that as of right now, the Palace of Gödöllő houses 1 museum while the Musei Reali has 4 plus the Royal Library and the Chapel of the Holy Shroud. While both institutions are listed as one of their countries' top tourist attractions, the Musei Reali issued around 723.000 tickets in 2024, while Gödöllő's palace attracted around 330.000 people in total. In Turin they also have more museologists but have no fixed tour guides (even though other colleagues are sometimes tasked with guiding groups).



3. PROGRAMME OF THE STAY

DAY 1:

I took off from the Liszt Ferenc Airport in Budapest at 9:05 on Ryanair flight FR8325 and landed at Malpensa Airport Terminal 1, 34 minutes later, at 10:16. A day before, my Airbnb host told me that there was a shuttle bus from Malpensa to Turin, so it was significantly easier to get to the city this way. Autostradale's bus left the airport at 11:00 and arrived to Turin, Porta Susa station at 13:15. My Airbnb host's husband, Davide, picked me up by car and took me to my apartment, located at Vio Milano 18 on the 5th floor. The place was really good, with a beautiful view at the Royal Palace and the Cathedral.

The Palace was 3 minutes away on foot which was the main reason for choosing this apartment. I then went to eat something and walked around the city center for the rest of the day.

DAY 2:

I went to the Royal Palace to meet Dr. Lorenza Santa, head of the collections and our main host at 10:00 on the ground floor at the ticket office. There I met the other grantee, Elena Vaquero Redondo, who came from Patrimonio Nacional. Then Lorenza took us to the Café, offered us a drink and we had our introductions. Then we headed up to the office of Lorenza and the curators. She showed us around and then we sat down in one of the meeting halls. She then held a presentation about the history and structure of the Royal Palace of Turin and the Musei Reali. Later Dr. Giorgia Corso (from the educational services) came to greet us as well and around 12:30 we headed down to check out the Chapel of the Holy Shroud with Lorenza. Our fixed program for the day ended around 13:00. Then I went to the Turin Office of Tourism to buy the Torino + Piemonte Card (since I planned on visiting other museums as well). Later I headed back to the Palace and to

visit the Royal Apartments, the Galleria Sabauda, the Chapel and the Cathedral of St. John the Baptist. In the museum I met with Francesca, a guard (or museum attendee) and she gave me useful new information about the institution and how certain things (like guided tours) work in the Palace (it also turned out that her husband, Giovanni, was going to be our guide Wednesday and Friday, to the closed apartments). I left the Musei Reali around 19:00 and then went out to get dinner near Piazza Vittorio Veneto.

DAY 3:

Activities for the day started at 9:30 when we met Giorgio Corso from the Educational Services in the inner courtyard and we had our introductions again, in the café. Then she took us on a tour around the Galleria Sabauda and the Archaeological Museum to explain the accessibility programs and the children's programs of the institution. After the visit she took us to their office where we met her colleagues who provided further insight into these areas. We finished the day's visit by meeting with the head of the event organizers. After 13:00 I walked home and then in the afternoon had my second individual visit to the museum and this time, I could visit the gardens as well (because the day before, the gardens were closed down because of an event). Later I had dinner at Signorvino, in Piazza Vittorio Veneto.



DAY 4:

As it turned out, Wednesday is the closing day of the museum so I met Elena at 9:30 at Piazzetta Reale and we rang on the intercom to get inside. We met Lorenza and we went to the same meeting hall where she held a presentation again, this time about the collections, exhibitions, restorations, studies and research. After the meeting, we met Giovanni Ferrarelli. He took us downstairs to the closed parts. This way we visited the kitchens, then the ground floor with the Apartments of Queen Elena and King Vittorio Emanuele III. Giovanni then took us to the first floor to showcase how the unique doors of the building work. Then I spent the remainder of the day in the city.

DAY 5:

This day was for Venaria. I met Elena in front of the Cathedral around 9:00, from where we took bus 11 to La Venaria Reale. We arrived to the Palace at 10:30 and met with Paolo Armand, Paola Francabanderia (Educational Department) and Anna Giuliano (Educational Department). With them we took a tour inside the building, including the temporary exhibition spaces. The tour mainly focused on accessibility and educational services, alongside the history of the Palace. Our tour ended around 13:00, when me and Elena went to the café for lunch. After we had time until 16:30 to visit the apartments and the gardens by ourselves. We met at entrance around 16:30 where we said our goodbyes to Paolo, then we headed back to Turin.

DAY 6:

From 9:30 we partook in a special visit alongside the members of the Furniture History Society to the closed apartments, including the Apartment of the Foreign Princes, Apartment of Queen Maria Teresa and the Apartment of the Princes of Piedmont. The fantastic tour was held by Lorenza and Giovanni. After the tour we exchanged contacts with the member of the Society and said our goodbyes to Lorenza and Giovanni in the Swiss Hall around 13:00. Then upon leaving, me and Elena parted ways too. I then went home and around 14:30 I took a taxi to Stupinigi to visit Palazzina di Caccia di Stupinigi. I had to take the taxi, because the public transportation services of GTT were disrupted by the Free Palestine protests in the city. After the visit, I called a taxi to get me home. Later I visited the Twin Churches (San Carlo and Santa Cristina) and went to pay my respect at the Kossuth Villa (Via dei Mille 22) (the famous Hungarian revolutionary politician and national hero, Lajos Kossuth lived and died there after he fled the country, following the defeat of the freedom fight in 1849, a plaque and a statue commemorate his past presence in the house).

4th of October :

On the last day I did not have a fixed program. In the morning I went to visit the Royal Library, the Royal Church of San Lorenzo, then took a bus to the Villa della Regina. After the visit to the palace, I walked to Monte dei Cappuccini and checked out the Church of St. Maria. Then I went back to the city and briefly visited the Mole Antonelliana and the National Cinema Museum inside. I then had lunch and went souvenir shopping. On my way back to the apartment, I returned to the Musei Reali, where I was lucky enough to meet Francesca again, so that we could take a picture together. I then packed up my things, headed for Porta Susa and left Turin at 22:50 with a Flixbus.



5th of October :

I arrived to Malpensa T1 at 00:40. While I was waiting for the gate to open, I started writing my final report and doing my financial summary. Later I boarded the plane around 6:25 and we took off on time, at 6:55. Just like on Sunday, Ryanair landed significantly earlier again, at 8:11, 24 minutes early. My dad came to pick me up, ending my 1-week journey.

4. ORGANIZATION OF THE TRIP

For accommodation I searched on Booking.com and Airbnb and found the perfect apartment on the latter. The location I chose was extremely close to the Palace (4 minute walk) at Via Milano 18 and offered a great view to the Palace as well.

Airplane tickets were purchased from Ryanair.com as that was the cheaper and based on an earlier trip to Malta, the company seemed reliable. As it turned out, I was right since both ways, Ryanair touched down noticeably earlier than expected, so as of right now, I can only recommend them for future grantees. It is important to know however, that if you arrive to Malpensa Airport in Milan and not directly to Turin, then there are multiple, direct scheduled shuttle bus services (Autostradale, Flixbus etc) that you can take, instead of taking the train to Milan's Central Station and then taking another train to Turin. If you choose the shuttle bus, I would recommend Flixbus, because you can purchase a ticket online (or through the official Flixbus app) and the Flixbus is faster (I took Flixbus to Malpensa on my way back and took Autostradale to Turin on the first day).

Within the city of Turin I usually walked since most sites were close to my apartment (the main reason I chose that one) and most sites are located within the city center. Only using public transportation on two days (both times purchasing daily tickets as it is significantly cheaper than purchasing separate tickets). I had to call for a taxi twice because public transportation shut down due to strikes related to the Free Palestine protests (strikes are usual, so be prepared to have alternatives). For taxi I would recommend the Wetaxi app.

Turin is a beautiful, safe and mostly clean city. It can be expensive, but you can find great local food spots that are more wallet friendly. Also the Torino + Piemonte Card is a must if you want to visit other museums, especially because Turin has a LOT of museums that are worthwhile to check out. I could visit the Stupinigi Palace, Villa della Regina, La Venaria Reale and the National Museum of Cinema (all recommended, especially Venaria).



5. CONCLUSION: added values, new competencies, working methods, vision, etc

In my project I detailed that I am mainly interested in all topics regarding tour guides and accessibility.

- The accessibility programs and organization of the Musei Reali and also La Venaria Reale are amazing. It is obvious that they spent a lot of time, energy and resources to make progress in these fields and have great dedication in regard of the topic (one of the teachers of the museum, Giorgia, even learned to write text for people with mental disabilities). All locations are accessible for visitors with motoric disabilities and everything is clearly explained for visually impaired, deaf and intellectually disabled visitors as well. How they providing these special visitors with a different, but equally rewarding experience is incredible, even allowing them to touch original, high-value artifacts on special occasions. All practical solutions in these institutions are made with these people's needs in mind (wheelchair ramps everywhere, elevators, lowered desks, tactile reproductions, tactile maps, downloadable special material for all challenged, Braille writing on most plaques, etc.). Since we are currently at the starting point on this road, having to opportunity of learning from such an experienced member of the Association will prove to be valuable in the near-future.
- Their transparency and approach to the public is also something to be appreciated. The Musei Reali issues yearly, publicly available reports on all of their activities and all of their statistics. They also offer a lot to all groups of visitors and with working with the zeitgeist (mainly through contemporary artists), not being afraid of innovation, remaining dynamic and constantly adjusting to the needs of society are probably the main reasons why they haven't just recovered from the COVID Era's low visitor numbers, but exceeded them, attracting more and more visitors every year.
- Thanks to Dr Lorenza Santa and Giovanni Ferrarelli, we (with the other grantee, Elena) were provided with a deep explanation of all topics regarding the Royal Museums, even topics that I would not consider to be within my main area of expertise, thus helping not only us, but our other colleagues as well. Such topics would be the duties of the museum attendees (guards), the work of the curators and museum teachers. Thanks to Dr Giorgia Corso and her colleagues in the educational department, I was fortunate enough to take a look into their activities as well and take notes for my colleagues working in the same field. Both the Musei Reali and La Venaria Reale presented a wide range of materials (not just through conversations but in the form of reading material as well) that we can use for our future projects.
- Unfortunately as a tour guide, I couldn't participate in regular guided tours in Turin, because I arrived in a time in which they stopped all internally organized tours temporarily, due to institutional restructuring and renovations. However on the last day, Lorenza and Giovanni held a special tour for the Furniture History Society that provided useful in this regard and Lorenza also helped me by answering all of my questions regarding guided tours.

I can only recommend the Musei Reali for future applicants, as they will most certainly be provided with valuable knowledge and nothing but kindness and professionalism!



LAURA MEERVELD

Manager of Marketing

Sending institution: Paleis Het Loo, The Netherlands

Host institution: Schönbrunn Group, Austria

Date of mobility: 13 to 19 July 2025



1. INTRODUCTION

Without any doubt regarding the location, I sent my application for the ARRE Mobility Grant for a visit to the Schönbrunn Group. The goal was to learn from their experiences in working with different locations, each with their own target audience, visitor experience and complications within these differences. My visit delivered on all aspects of my goals. I was able to meet all the divisions of the Marketing team, visited Schloss Hof and had a chance to talk to the teams of communications, events, retail and the scientific department.

A huge thank you to Claudia and Christina for the wonderful welcome and programme!

2. PROGRAMME OF THE STAY

DAY 1:

- Marketing - Christina Schindler / Claudia Schmidberger-Slond
- Scientific department - Anna Mader-Kratky / Martin Mutschlechner
- Brand Management - Maria Ertl + Klaus Panholzer



DAY 2:

- Schloss Hof Estate - Kathrin Harter
- Marketing activities + visit of the estate - Verena Schreiner / Annelena Flick

DAY 3:

- Children's Museum - Isabella Barta / Uschi Böhm
- Guided Tour Maria Theresia
- Imperial Furniture Museum - Uschi Böhm

DAY 4:

- Park trip by golf cart - Günther Seher
- Corporate Communication - Katharina Karmel
- Graphic Design - Anja Schmutterer
- Online Marketing / Social Media - Sheila Bsteh / Michael Bertha

DAY 5:

- Meetings & Events - Gregor Ambros
- Foto & Film Projects - Petra Peric / Jakob Müller
- Retail & Licensing - Helmut Pichler
- Sales international - Galina Frolova

MARKETING SCHÖNBRUNN

In the first meeting with Claudia and Christina it was a really nice exchange in information, experiences and best practices. From refreshing updates, data insights to ticketing experiences and all that works (and doesn't work) with different target audiences. We had a look at the data of ticketing, the target audiences, international approach and discussed how to best inform visitors about their upcoming visit to the palace. Of course, with Schönbrunn being an absolute must-visit in Vienna the strategy also differs greatly from the one at Paleis Het Loo. But overall, the conclusion everywhere seems to be that visitors tend not to read very carefully, so simple works best.

CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

I visited the Children's museum during the ARRE Technical Meeting in June, but the tour with Isabella and Uschi was very insightful. • The dressing-up part has proven to be successful for children and adults. The costumes are made by a seamstress. High quality and thus, they last a long time. • For Children's parties, they have extra special outfits kept separately. • There are very practical extra spaces upstairs for Children's parties. • Schools can visit before the official opening hours. Not only young children, but also teenagers visit the Children's museum. Each with a different programme.



LEARNINGS

- Schönbrunn does not have a marketing campaign, since visitors see it as a must-see visit. The priority is creating clarity for individual visitors and their wayfinding.
- They are included in brochures, guidebooks etc for visibility.
- The Sisi pass works really well. It combines a ticket to Schönbrunn, the Sisi Museum and especially for the increase in visitors to the furniture museum.
- The order in which tickets are displayed have an effect on which is bought more often. The more expensive 'classic pass' sells better now that it is displayed first in the ticketshop.
- Sisi taxi's - Combination of taxi and bicycle - 'on my way tot Sisi'.
- They have frequent collaboration with the Zoo, for example in airport advertising.
- Within their ticketshop not everything is always possible - for example Vienna pass
- Local Austrians do not visit the palace, they mostly come for events.
- They use credit card data to gather information about the country of origin. First four digits refer to a country. All online tickets are paid by creditcard.

SCHLOSS HOF

The trip to Schloss Hof on Tuesday was wonderful. I had a great golf cart tour around the premises and had a really nice conversation with Annelena about the activities, marketing and difficulties of the location.

- The newly added Water Trail is based on the story of Prince Eugene and his attempts to bring water to the palace. A great combination to tell families about history and kids playing with water.
- They organize many events - succesfull easter and wintermarkets, 60-70 stalls. Combined with scavenger hunts in de the gardens.
- Some events are designed as 'prestige events'. Used to generate awareness for Schloss Hof without the goal of the revenue of the events being higher than the costs.
- The reward for a hunt well done is a coin of Schloss Hof from the coin machine.
- The play area with the wooden balls is an extra way to generate revenue. The wooden balls are sold for € 2,00.
- Another way for extra revenue is the addition of shows and craft activities. Visitors pay an additional € 3,50 per person, per activity.
- The photobooth had a Schloss Hof background, which can be altered to other events. The screen on the outside is also used for communication of events.



SCHÖNBRUNN GROUP

During my visit and the many meetings I was happy to see that there are many similarities, in both difficulties as well as solutions. Some learnings:

- In changing a brand strategy: keep things simple with regard for the history of the location(s).
- The 'seal' has great potential in linking all the four locations.
- Graphic Design is not only an important part of Marketing, but a time consuming one. Working with tools like 'smartsheet' look very interesting.
- Golden rule for communications: all questions have to be sent in advance.
- Communications is for 'free publicity', all paid exposure is Marketing.
- Golden rule for photo and film requests: all requests are made online, regardless of the duration. And all requests are provided with a contract with the agreed arrangements.
- Online growth worked very well using short 6 second video's. Local audience mostly interact with garden reels and events.
- International companies, based in Austria, use Schönbrunn palace as an eventlocation. They want to show their international contacts the culture of Austria.
- In the shop 80% of the products are produced by Schönbrunn Group.
- International Sales organises a VIP evening tour, more exclusive.
- In imaging, faces are blurred. This keeps the atmosphere but without the challenge of privacy agreement.

DESCRIPTION OF THE PHOTOS

- Outdoor advertising on the premises of Schönbrunn palace - high quality outdoor frames arranged with outdoor supplier, but Marketing can choose and adjust their own posters
- Water park at Schloss Hof - added activity for the hot summer season.
- Vienna is an outdoor, lounge city. All accross the city there are locations with these comfortable, durable lounge chairs.
- A large variety in eventlocations. Great to hear all the different options and how you cope keeping it workable and still create enough revenue.
- Thank you Klaus Panholzer and the entire team at Schönbrunn Group for your hospitality and wonderful programme!



MARIT BERENDS

Curator Cultural History

Sending institution: Paleis Het Loo, Netherlands

Host institution: The Royal Danish Collection, Denmark

Date of mobility: 01 September – 07 September 2025



1. INTRODUCTION

This report documents my ARRE mobility grant visit to the Royal Danish Collection in Copenhagen, focusing on Christiansborg Palace and its stable collection. As a curator working on renewing our stable collection presentation at Paleis Het Loo, this exchange was particularly relevant for our redevelopment project. I would like to thank Olene Bergman and all her colleagues for the excellent week in Copenhagen. The Danish Royal Collection is one of the few places in Europe where an operational stable complex operates alongside historical collections. My visit focused on four objectives: understanding stable and hippomobile collections; sharing research methodologies; exchanging presentation and digital innovation methods; and exploring broader 'knowledge sharing' approaches. María Leticia García de Ceca Sánchez del Corral from Patrimonio Nacional visited Christiansborg for the carriage collection in the same week, which enriched the exchange through comparative perspectives.

2. HOST AND SENDING INSTITUTION: DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES

Both institutions operate as royal palace museums with similar visitor numbers, collections and curatorial responsibilities. We share the challenge of presenting living court history while maintaining scholarly rigor. As curators Olene and I both focus on storytelling in stable collections and engaging diverse audiences with royal heritage.

Since 2025, Christiansborg is part of the Royal Danish Collection (including Rosenborg, Amalienborg, and other palaces) under royal ownership. This makes the Danish Royal Collection more comparable to the Dutch Royal Collections in The Hague than to Paleis Het Loo's independent museum structure.

The most significant differences: Christiansborg maintains an active stable with 12 horses and 6 staff members. Half the carriage collection remains operational (managed by stable staff), while half is under curatorial care. The Danish sites such as Rosenborg attract 80% international tourists versus Het Loo's predominantly domestic audience, requiring different interpretation strategies. Visitor engagement varies: Amalienborg actively seeks growth with new presentation and interaction methods, while Rosenborg maintains limited access to preserve intimacy. Paleis Het Loo, as a single venue, can maintain a consistent approach across all spaces.

3. PROGRAMME OF THE STAY

DAY 1:

The first day started with an introduction to the research team at Rosenborg Castle. This session provided insights into their research focus, current themes, including royal moments, tapestries, Andersen's court relations, and upcoming projects on gift-giving traditions and funeral culture. The Christiansborg stable visit afterwards proved insightful. Meeting equerry Nils and coachman Ole revealed daily operations of a living royal stable with twelve horses. Their tour of liveries and harnesses showed continuity of court traditions, while witnessing carriage preparation demonstrated how historical practices remain embedded in contemporary ceremonies.





This visit highlighted the challenge of managing operational heritage collections from a museum point of view. Olene Bergman's Carolina Mathilde exhibition demonstrated innovative narrative reclamation, focusing on Denmark's first woman to ride astride. The exhibition serves as a testing ground for scenographic innovations - ceiling projections and simulated carriage movement - only using collection pieces. The permanent exhibition offered me insights on new topics (carrousel riding) and ways of display (playing, stuffed horses, horse timeline).

DAY 2:

The second day began with the extraordinary experience of a carriage ride through Copenhagen by the Royal Mews. Afterwards, the session with wheelmaker Ivan Bak, collector Anders Horsbøl Nielsen and State Inventory Inspector Klaus Dahl addressed collection care and craftsmanship preservation. Most carriages of Christiansborg are part of the state inventory. Ten years ago, Klaus and Olene conducted a stables inventory. As a group we discussed the position of the collection in the bigger art history picture and we highlighted continuous maintenance needs and irreplaceable traditional knowledge, such as Ivan's wheel craftsmanship. Klaus tries to preserve the social and cultural context of the stable collection, not only the carriages itself. The carriage has two lives: one serving horses and another serving the public. The collaboration with craftsmen such as Ivan and Anders was one of the insights I take back to Paleis Het Loo. Traditional skills disappear faster than objects themselves, underscoring urgent needs for knowledge documentation and transfer programs. Storage afternoon visits at Christiansborg and Amalienborg revealed different conservation approaches. The State Inventory uses TMS for systematic documentation without public access goals.



New perspectives in storage: carriages, harnesses and carroussel riding men

DAY 3:

Leticia and I presented our institutions and projects to the research staff, creating dialogue about different approaches to royal heritage presentation. My presentation covered Paleis Het Loo's history, recent extension, programming strategies, the stable redevelopment plans, and new research on stable staff and horses. We discussed the role of research and education in museum contexts, revealing different national approaches to cultural funding and institutional governance. The comparison between Spanish, Danish, and Dutch governmental frameworks for heritage institutions provided broader context for institutional decision-making and resource allocation. The Rosenborg castle tour with Peter Kristensen and Trine Bruun Petersen illustrated both the palace's remarkable collections and the interpretation challenges posed by limited space. The minimal textual interpretation strategy, designed to maintain visitor flow through small rooms, contrasts with more interpretive research approaches. We discussed their research agenda and how their insights can reach a broader audience.

DAY 4:

The conservation session with Pernille Kokfelt and Anna Sparr addressed material preservation in challenging environments. Their expertise in leather and textile conservation, display requirements, mold prevention, and grease management provided applicable knowledge for our stable collections. The discussion highlighted difficulties maintaining conservation standards in active stable environments with limited climate control. Amalienborg library visit in the afternoon demonstrated a successful transformation from private royal resource to public institution. Mikael Bøgh Rasmussen and Julie Mørk-Hansen illustrated how different parts of the Royal Collection pursue varying public levels of engagement. Amalienborg's museum approach proved particularly valuable for storytelling concepts. I was fond of the timeline choice and the way they presented the photo wall and children's audio guide with much focus on horses.



DAY 5:

The week of exchanging ideas and insights ended with a workshop session with six participants, including interpretation team colleagues, focused on bringing stable collections into movement through various methods, such as display, lights, innovative forms and themes. The structured approach to identifying selections for new exhibitions, combined with systematic evaluation of collection strengths and gaps, provided replicable methodology for exhibition development.

DAY 6:

Olene showed in a private tour the in 2013 renovated hunting palace The Hermitage, an hour from Copenhagen. The carriage ride and visit of a palace for hunting (the formal aim of Paleis Het Loo too) provided additional context for royal collection presentation.

4. ORGANIZATION OF THE TRIP

Accommodation: Wake Up Copenhagen Borgergade, recommended and booked by Christiansborg, with good access to all locations. Transportation: Standard European flights, efficient public transport in Copenhagen, though I cycled a lot. Expenses: The ARRE grant covered flights and hotel. The high Danish costs meant public transport and food were my personal expenses. The Royal Danish Collection generously hosted dinner on day 4.

5. CONCLUSION: ADDED VALUES, NEW COMPETENCES, WORKING METHODS, NEW VISION

Professional Development Achieved

- Enhanced understanding of the relationship and challenges between operational heritage and museum practice
- Gained insights through observing a functioning royal stable
- Expanded network within European royal residences; personal relationships established for knowledge sharing and collaboration
- Exposure to different national approaches to royal heritage
- Connection with new generation of professionals (Olene, Letitia and myself) working on stable themes

New competences gained:

- Various interpretation approaches for carriages, saddles, liveries, horses and harnesses. Also new themes on my radar for the stables redevelopment.
- Practical implications of managing leather and textile collections
- Integration of traditional craftsmanship knowledge into contemporary museum practice

Working methods to implement:

- Exhibition methodology where testing approaches proves effective
- Increased focus on saddles and harnesses as highlight objects
- Storytelling methods for bringing collections into movement
- Integration of operational expertise into curatorial decision-making
- Selection methodology for objects in new presentations



PAULINA SZULIST-PŁUCINICZAK

Head of the Education Department

Sending institution: Museum of Jan III's Palace at Wilanów, Poland

Host institution: Palacio Real de Madrid, Patrimonio Nacional, Spain

Date of mobility: 15 November – November 2025



1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of my visit to Madrid was to participate in a professional mobility program aimed at learning new practices, observing the functioning of a partner institution, and developing new skills relevant to my work. The stay allowed me to immerse myself in the working environment of the host organization, meet its staff, and compare approaches and methodologies used in both institutions.

2. HOST AND SENDING INSTITUTION: DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES

Both the host and the sending institution are historic royal palaces, sharing a similar cultural mission and heritage character. The Royal Palace in Madrid (Palacio Real) continues to serve official and representational purposes for the state, whereas the Wilanów Palace primarily functions as a museum and cultural center open to the public. Both palaces also refer to the same time – XVII, XVIII and XIX century.

Both institutions offer educational programs aimed at diverse audiences. However, there is a notable difference in their visitor orientation: the Wilanów Palace focuses more on group visitors, particularly school and educational groups, while the Palacio Real mainly attracts individual visitors and tourists – 600 per day. This distinction influences how each institution structures its educational offer, visitor flow, and communication strategies. Also the construction of the education team is different, we have both permanent workers and educators, at Palacio Real there are mainly permanent employees who are responsible for creating and realization of the activities. Despite these differences, both institutions remain committed to cultural preservation, visitor engagement, and promoting historical knowledge.

3. PROGRAMME OF THE STAY

DAY 1:

On the first day, I met with the educational team and my supervisor, Blanca Cabrera, of the Royal Palace and learned about their organizational structure and the full range of their educational programmes. Afterwards, I visited the historic Royal Kitchen and became familiar with its thematic programme dedicated to culinary heritage; dedicated for individuals. I ended the day with a guided visit to the palace, which helped me better understand the institution's approach to storytelling and visitor engagement. People met: Members of the educational departments, guides, and staff responsible for thematic programmes such as the Royal Kitchen. Interest of the day:

The opportunity to explore the educational offer in depth was very valuable, especially seeing how the institution structures different programmes for various audiences. Their interpretation methods during guided visits may inspire similar approaches in my sending institution.



DAY 2:

Activities: I took part in a workshop dedicated to school children with special needs, particularly those with the autism spectrum. The session focused on art therapy and offered insight into accessible and inclusive educational practices. The workshop was divided in two parts – 20 minutes with the collection at the gallery and then the manual workshop outside. Later, I visited the Galería de las Colecciones Reales, where I observed how artworks and historical objects are presented to individual visitors.

People met: Educators specializing in accessibility and inclusion, as well as museum staff from the royal collections.

Interest of the day: The inclusive workshop was very inspiring. The methods used—multisensual approach, step-by-step activity structure, and art-based communication—are practices that could be adapted in the Wilanów Palace's work with special-needs groups.



DAY 3:

Activities: I travelled to the Palace of El Escorial and met with the local education team – and Blanca as well. I participated in a museum lesson dedicated to school groups and had the opportunity to observe how historical content is introduced to children in an engaging and age-appropriate way. Additionally, I visited the palace and the convent, gaining insight into the site's interpretation strategy.

People met: Educators and interpreters responsible for school programmes at El Escorial.

Interest of the day: The museum lesson provided a useful comparison between educational practices in different royal sites. Their dynamic approach to working with school groups may inspire new ideas for structured learning visits in my home institution – especially the general idea of the workshop which is focused on the history of architecture structures. This approach might be implemented in my institution as well.

DAY 4:

Activities: I visited the Royal Palace in Aranjuez, where I observed the visitor offer dedicated to individual guests. This included guided tours, thematic routes, and independent visiting options.

DAY 5:

Activities: On the final day, I met again with the educational team to summarise the entire visit and exchange reflections. I also had the opportunity to record a short video statement about the programme. The last part of the day included a visit to the Monasterio de las Descalzas Reales, where I observed another approach to presenting royal heritage and unique religious art.

People met: Educational team members, media staff, and guides from the Descalzas Reales Museum.

Interest of the day: This meeting allowed me to reflect on the exchange of practices and define possible future cooperation. Visiting another royal site added a broader perspective on how different institutions develop and adapt their educational offers.



4. ORGANIZATION OF THE TRIP

The logistical arrangements were relatively easy. I booked my accommodation through commonly used platforms such as Booking.com, where I found affordable options close to public transport and the palace itself. The trip to Madrid was made by plane, with local transportation handled via metro and buses, which were efficient and easy to navigate.

Expenses were moderate: accommodation and meals were reasonably priced, and public transportation offered good value. These practical aspects may help future participants organize their stay smoothly and cost-effectively.

The Patrimonio Nacional was extremely helpful because when I went to the places outside Madrid they provided me a transportation with a car.

5. CONCLUSION: ADDED VALUES, NEW COMPETENCES, WORKING METHODS, NEW VISION

The mobility experience in Madrid provided me with valuable new professional experiences and insights. Throughout the visit, I had the opportunity not only to learn from the host institution but also to share my own knowledge and experience, which made the exchange enriching. I feel that we have a strong and reliable partner for potential future international collaborations.

During the stay, I became familiar with the host institution's educational tools, strategies, objectives, expectations, and evaluation indicators. Many of these elements differ significantly from those used in my sending institution. This comparison was extremely valuable, as it allowed me to reassess our own goals and approaches from a fresh perspective. Engaging in such cross-institutional reflection highlights the importance of stepping outside one's own framework to better understand strengths, limitations, and possible directions for development.

To sum up, the visit strengthened my professional competencies, broadened my perspective, and confirmed the importance of international cooperation as a catalyst for growth and innovation.



DOROTA PARZYSZEK

Acting Head of the Promotion and Communication Department

Sending institution: Royal Castle in Warsaw, Poland

Host institution: Royal Palace in Caserta, Italy

Date of mobility: 04 August – 08 August 2025



1. INTRODUCTION

The visit to the Royal Palace in Caserta was an exceptional opportunity for me to deepen my understanding of the functioning of a large museum institution. The program of the visit was designed to cover both aspects related to the presentation of collections and the organization of museum spaces, as well as practical aspects such as visitor services, logistics, and promotional activities. During the exchange, I was able to observe the daily work of the staff, compare practices applied in Caserta with the solutions implemented at the Royal Castle in Warsaw, and gather inspiration for introducing new approaches in my institution.

2. HOST AND SENDING INSTITUTION: DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES

The Royal Palace in Caserta and the Royal Castle in Warsaw share many similarities: both institutions serve as museums, organize temporary exhibitions and educational events, and carry out promotional and marketing activities aimed at diverse audiences. The main differences relate primarily to the scale of the sites. Caserta features a vast garden complex and a historic theatre. From the perspective of communication and promotion, Caserta faces challenges related to limited funding for promotional activities.

3. PROGRAMME OF THE STAY

DAY 1:

On the first day, I took part in a guided tour of the palace, which allowed me to learn about its history and architecture. Particularly interesting was the visit to the contemporary art exhibition by the Italian artist Michelangelo Pistoletto. Observing the arrangement of the artworks and the way modern art is presented in a historical setting was highly inspiring, especially in the context of introducing temporary art exhibitions at the Royal Castle in Warsaw. The combination of tradition and modernity in Caserta demonstrates how to engage new audiences and enhance the attractiveness of a museum through creative temporary exhibitions.





DAY 2:

The second day was dedicated to visiting the extensive palace gardens. I was guided through different parts of the park. I noticed the well-planned layout of the paths and excellent signage, which facilitates visitors' navigation around the site. A possible application at the Royal Castle in Warsaw would be the introduction of interactive elements in the gardens to enrich the visitor experience.

DAY 3:

On the third day, I had the opportunity to meet with staff at the ticket offices and the audio guide rental points. Our discussions focused on visitor service procedures and methods of communication with tourists.

DAY 4:

On the fourth day of the visit, I toured the historic palace theatre, a true jewel of 18th-century architecture. Despite its modest size, the theatre impresses with its perfect proportions, excellent acoustics, and elegant decorations. Observing this space was inspiring, as it demonstrated how a venue can combine aesthetics with visitor experience, providing valuable insights for planning cultural and theatrical events at the Royal Castle in Warsaw.



DAY 5:

On the last day, I familiarized myself with the museum shop's assortment and held discussions with the promotional department staff about the use of artificial intelligence in the museum. These conversations were highly inspiring and highlighted both the practical opportunities and potential risks of introducing AI into promotional activities in cultural institutions.

Throughout the visit, I worked in the same space alongside the promotional and communication department staff at the Palace in Caserta. Each day we discussed the organization of work in the corresponding departments in our institutions, their structure, and the tools we use.

4. ORGANIZATION OF THE TRIP

Accommodation was comfortable and located close to the palace. The logistics of the visit were excellently organized – the schedule was strictly followed, which allowed me to focus fully on the professional aspects of the visit.

5. CONCLUSION: ADDED VALUES, NEW COMPETENCES, WORKING METHODS, NEW VISION

At the Royal Palace of Caserta, the communications department employs a comparable number of people to the Royal Castle in Warsaw; however, the Caserta team includes a staff member responsible for public relations, whereas in Warsaw this function is handled by a separate department. Additionally, Caserta has an in-house photographer, while the Royal Castle in Warsaw outsources photographic sessions.

In terms of budget, Caserta operates without dedicated promotional funding, which makes it particularly inspiring to observe how effectively they manage to promote projects despite this limitation. There are also differences in employees' daily work culture: in Caserta, there is a tradition of holding daily team meetings and having lunch together, which strongly unifies the team and facilitates collaborative planning. This is a model worth following. The stay at the Royal Palace in Caserta allowed me to:

- see how a large cultural institution can be promoted with very limited financial resources;
- observe a well-designed wayfinding system;
- establish contacts that could serve as a starting point for future cooperation between the Royal Palace in Caserta and the Royal Castle in Warsaw.



BOGUMIŁA WIŚNIEWSKA

Head of Art Interpretation Department

Sending institution: Wawel Royal Castle – State Art Collection, Poland

Host institution: Palace of Versailles, France

Date of mobility: 11 to 17 May 2025



1. INTRODUCTION

The study trip to the Palace of Versailles was an exceptional opportunity to explore the intersection of contemporary art and historic royal residences. As Head of the Art Interpretation Department at the Wawel Royal Castle in Cracow, my primary interest was to understand how contemporary art can be thoughtfully and meaningfully integrated into spaces traditionally dedicated to ancient art and historical interiors. The Palace of Versailles, with its long-established program of contemporary art exhibitions, served as an inspiring case study. Since 2008, the palace has invited contemporary artists to create or present works that interact with the historical and symbolic context of this iconic site. This approach aligns closely with recent initiatives at Wawel Castle, where since 2021, contemporary art interventions have been introduced in both the royal gardens and the historic chambers. The purpose of my visit was to gain firsthand insights into the curatorial strategies, organizational structures, and conceptual frameworks that guide the implementation of such exhibitions at Versailles. I focused in particular on the exhibition of Guillaume Bresson, whose work dialogues with historical themes in the Africa Rooms of the palace. My goal was to extract best practices and methodologies that could inform and enrich the growing contemporary art programme at Wawel.

2. HOST AND SENDING INSTITUTION: DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES

The Palace of Versailles and the Wawel Royal Castle share a common identity as former royal residences, deeply rooted in national history and cultural heritage. Both serve as museums that preserve and interpret ancient art, historical interiors, and monumental architecture. However, despite these similarities, there are differences in scale, institutional structure, and the historical development of contemporary art programs. Versailles has developed a long-standing and internationally recognized programme of contemporary art exhibitions. Since 2008, it has regularly invited leading contemporary artists to engage in site-specific projects that reflect and challenge the palace's historical narratives. These exhibitions are often large-scale, ambitious in scope, and supported by a robust institutional framework, including curatorial expertise, scientific research, educational programmes, and publications. Wawel Royal Castle, while firmly established as a major cultural institution in Poland, has more recently introduced contemporary art into its programme. Since 2021, artistic interventions have taken place in both the Royal Garden and the historic interiors of the Castle. These initiatives reflect a thoughtful and growing commitment to dialogue between past and present, and they are met with increasing interest from the public and the professional community alike. Both institutions are united by a vision of using contemporary art as a tool to reinterpret history, engage new audiences, and activate heritage spaces in innovative ways. The exchange of experiences between Versailles and Wawel opens up meaningful possibilities for collaboration, mutual inspiration, and the development of forward-looking curatorial practices.



3. PROGRAMME OF THE STAY

DAY 1:

The first day of my study trip focused on familiarizing myself with the team at the Palace of Versailles, including my supervisor Emilie Neau and the head of the team, Silvia Roman. I was introduced to the cultural development department (Développement Culturel) and provided an overview of the museum's organizational structure, its locations, and the division of responsibilities and competencies within the institution. We also discussed my goals for the fellowship, outlined my specific interests, and established a work schedule for the week, along with mutual expectations for the visit. I was issued a museum access card, allowing me entry to both the museum and the administrative areas. Additionally, I had the opportunity to meet with various teams responsible for different aspects of the museum's operations, including the publishing department, audience research team (focused on surveys), and the team managing tours and ticket reservations. I also met the person in charge of museum accessibility. In the afternoon, I visited the Guillaume Bresson exhibition, which was being held in the Africa Rooms of the Palace. This visit gave me the chance to observe firsthand the integration of contemporary art within the historical context of the palace and sparked a series of questions and reflections that I would explore further throughout the week.

DAY 2:

The second day was dedicated to an extensive tour of the Palace of Versailles, during which I visited all the available exhibitions. I started with a guided tour of the private royal apartments, which provided a deeper understanding of the history and layout of the palace's personal spaces. I also used the audio guide to explore the representative sections of the palace, paying particular attention to the quality of the Polish-language version. This gave me valuable insight into the accessibility and multilingual services offered to international visitors. Throughout the day, I had ongoing discussions with the team about the organizational structure of the museum, particularly regarding the differences between the management of permanent and temporary exhibitions. We explored topics such as the length of time required to prepare temporary exhibitions, the process of designing exhibition spaces, and how materials used in construction are recycled or repurposed in the creation of these exhibitions.



DAY 3:

On the third day, I focused on researching and exploring previous contemporary art exhibitions at the Palace of Versailles. I spent time reviewing exhibition catalogs from past shows, which allowed me to gain deeper insights into how contemporary art is integrated into the palace's historic spaces. This was followed by a visit to the spaces where the previous temporary exhibition, featuring the paintings of Vernet, was held. I observed how the exhibition was constructed in practice and explored the specific challenges of displaying contemporary works in such grand and historically charged settings. Later, I had the opportunity to visit the space where the upcoming temporary exhibition featuring Bernini's sculptures was being prepared. This gave me a firsthand look at the logistics involved in creating such an exhibition, from the installation of artworks to the integration of modern display techniques with the historical architecture of the palace. Throughout the day, I engaged in discussions with the team on various aspects of museum operations. One key topic was the need for balancing the creation of exhibitions focused on ancient art with contemporary art shows, as well as strategies for attracting greater interest from the local community. We talked about ways to increase local engagement with the palace and how temporary exhibitions can influence visitor numbers.

We also discussed the impact of contemporary art exhibitions on visitor traffic, including how they may alter perceptions of the palace and its historical significance. I learned more about the museum's approach to managing tourist flow and what factors contribute to attracting more visitors. Additionally, we explored the reception of both contemporary and ancient art exhibitions, discussing audience feedback and the varying levels of interest. Another interesting part of the day involved conversations about the museum shop and the types of merchandise sold there. We discussed the differences between online sales and in-store sales, and how the physical space of the shop contributes to the visitor experience.



DAY 4:

The fourth day was centered around key discussions on curatorial practices and educational programming at the Palace of Versailles. One major topic was the process of selecting artists and artworks for contemporary exhibitions. I learned how artists are chosen based on their ability to engage meaningfully with the historical context of the palace, and how the nature of their works influences decisions regarding space, narrative, and interpretation. We also explored the organization of accompanying events such as concerts, lectures, balls, and operas. These activities are often managed separately from the museum's core curatorial work, highlighting the institutional distinction between the Palace's cultural mission and its commercial or representational functions. This led to a valuable conversation about the challenges of organizing exhibitions and managing visitor traffic in a venue that also serves as a site for official state events. Such events can affect public access, exhibition planning, and even installation schedules. Later in the day, I met with the Education Department, where I was introduced to its structure, range of activities, and target audiences. We discussed the differences between our educational programs, including audience segmentation and methods of outreach. A particular focus was placed on digital education, collaboration with schools and teachers, and the development of educational publications for children.

One important issue that arose during these discussions was the lack of designated educational spaces within the palace itself. The team emphasized the need for accessible, on-site educational zones that are integrated into the exhibition experience. We also discussed the importance of providing educational tools directly within the exhibition spaces, to better serve families, school groups, and individual visitors interested in deeper engagement.



DAY 5:

The fifth day began with a meeting with the team responsible for organizing tours for groups with special needs and people with disabilities. We discussed the differences in organizing visits for individual visitors versus organized groups, and the challenges related to adapting the palace's historical spaces to meet accessibility requirements. I learned about the communication strategies used to reach these audiences, including the potential for newsletters and regular events tailored to specific accessibility groups. The team also described their collaboration with the staff member responsible for architectural accessibility. Notably, when it came to implementing "quiet hours" for visitors on the autism spectrum, the Palace of Versailles team expressed interest in the solutions already adopted at Wawel Royal Castle. Our experience served as a reference and a source of inspiration as they considered developing similar inclusive practices within their own institution. Later that day, I rejoined my host team to discuss curatorial practices related to the frequency of artwork rotation within exhibitions.

We exchanged ideas about how changes in displayed works are communicated to the public and discussed different methods of labeling and signage. This exchange highlighted the importance of clear communication with audiences and revealed different approaches to managing collections within historical contexts. In the afternoon, I visited both the Petit Trianon and the Grand Trianon, exploring the exhibitions and surrounding gardens. This allowed me to compare the atmosphere and curatorial approaches of these spaces with the main palace. The smaller scale and more intimate character of the Trianons offered a different experience of the royal narrative and contemporary interpretation. The day concluded with a meeting with representatives of the Network of European Royal Residences, during which I shared my reflections and initial impressions of my stay at Versailles. Finally, I held a wrap-up conversation with Silvia Roman, Head of the Cultural Development Department, and my host supervisor, Emilie Neau. This final meeting provided an opportunity to summarize the week's activities, express mutual appreciation, and discuss potential areas for future cooperation between our institutions.



4. ORGANIZATION OF THE TRIP

For the duration of my stay, I was accommodated at Hotel Renoir, located at 39, rue de Montparnasse, 75014 Paris. I chose this hotel due to its central location, which allowed me to fully benefit from my time in France beyond the working hours at Versailles. I travelled to Paris by plane with LOT Polish Airlines, departing from Kraków Balice Airport to Paris Orly on May 11, 2025. My return flight to Kraków Balice was also with LOT, departing from Paris Orly on May 17, 2025, after completing my stay in Versailles. I would classify the general cost level in Paris as high, especially in terms of accommodation and food. However, staying in Paris rather than Versailles proved to be an excellent decision. It enabled me to take full advantage of my time in France — after completing my work-related program during the day, I was able to visit other museums and exhibitions in the evenings and on the weekend. This choice significantly enriched my overall experience. I met professionals from various cultural institutions, discovered exhibitions that inspired new curatorial ideas, and acquired a number of specialized art books that are not available in Poland. As an active art historian and museum professional, this extended exposure to French cultural life was not only personally meaningful but also professionally rewarding.

5. CONCLUSION: ADDED VALUES, NEW COMPETENCIES, WORKING METHODS, VISION, ETC

This study visit to the Palace of Versailles allowed me to broaden my professional perspective and confirm the validity of combining contemporary art with historic royal interiors and gardens. One of the most impactful experiences was seeing the Guillaume Bresson exhibition, which tackled complex contemporary social issues by engaging with similarly challenging themes found in historic art. The curatorial choice to present Bresson's paintings on raw concrete structures—referencing the architecture of French suburbs and the narrative context of the artist's works—demonstrated how modern exhibition design can effectively resonate within a formal royal setting. This experience reinforced my conviction that museums of ancient art, including royal residences, can and should serve as relevant spaces for presenting modern and contemporary art. These juxtapositions create new interpretative opportunities and stimulate both scholarly and public discourse. I also observed that mu-

-seum gardens offer unique potential for contemporary exhibitions: they are less restricted by conservation limitations, and the open space helps to distribute large crowds more naturally, reducing logistical difficulties. The visit also highlighted the importance of producing accompanying catalogues that go beyond documentation, incorporating critical essays and thematic texts that affirm the intellectual and scholarly value of each project. These publications are essential to position such exhibitions within an academic and curatorial framework.

My visit to Versailles strengthened my will to continue developing the contemporary art exhibition program at Wawel Royal Castle. A key question I am now reflecting on is whether to focus on recognized artists or to take curatorial risks by showcasing emerging talents. The challenge remains in defining the criteria for artist selection and in shaping a coherent and ambitious curatorial vision.



MARIANA SCHEDEL

Curator

Sending institution: Palácio Nacional da Pena – Parques de Sintra Monte da Lua, Portugal

Host institution: Palace of Compiègne, France

Date of mobility: 13 October – 17 October 2025



1. INTRODUCTION

The opportunity offered by the 8th ARRE's Mobility Grant, came in the perfect timing after seven years working as the curator at Pena National Palace, in Sintra, Portugal. This period, developing the ongoing Renewal of the Palace Rooms project, brought me knowledge and better discernment, through consistent investigation of areas like objects provenance, historical inventories and historical suppliers, but also doubts and challenges that, I suspected, could be shared with peers abroad in similar palaces and with analogous projects. Château de Compiègne has been, since the beginning of the referred project, a good example followed by distance, mainly through bibliography, namely in the textile area. Therefore, it was very clear, that it would be the right choice to learn and share old and new ways of developing our work and, most of all, connecting with the peers.

2. HOST AND SENDING INSTITUTION: DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES

In the museology and museography areas, both Château de Compiègne and Pena National Palace, share the perks and the challenges of being representative of 19th century palatial interiors of a countryside home or a place of retreat "close but far" from the city – Paris and Lisbon. The time proximity with the 19th century and the regularly good state of conservation of most of the collection and the building conducts both the curatorial teams to the same type of projects reconstituting rooms with historical accuracy. The referred proximity to the 19th century, is also, one of the explanations for the extent of the collections that belong to the original use of the two palaces. This fact places the same challenge in storage needs, on the different types of objects namely ceramics, metals, furniture, textiles, paper graphic arts, paintings and photography. In both palaces, the reconstitution of the rooms with the original furniture, lamps, textiles or reproductions of these objects and materials, implies the same challenges in maintenance, cleaning and on the security barriers. It has also been observed similar ways of hiring external teams to activities in conservation, maintenance, cleaning and art objects transportation. Another important similarity is that both palaces have no usual official functions linked to the government or the chief of state, having no constrictions on that area, but being little out of the perspective of those in charge of central power.



The main differences, on my opinion, are the location and the dimension of the buildings. Like Sintra, Compiègne is a small town close to the capital, but in Sintra the Pena Palace is up on the hill, in Sintra Mountain, very different to the Château, located amidst the town streets¹. The small dimension of the Pena National Palace in comparison with the greatness of Château de Compiègne, results in differences on areas as different as: the dimension of the collections - corresponding to the area of the buildings or the capacity to include exhibition rooms – namely three museums in Compiègne: the Museum of the Second Empire; the Museum of the Empress and the National Car Museum.

The number of visitors is also a striking difference, with 1 100 000 in Pena Palace and 101 656 in Château de Compiègne (2023 numbers). This difference accentuates by knowing the smallness of Pena, in comparison with Compiègne building. In Sintra, this fact obligates to the existence of 30 minutes slots and scheduled visits, contrary to Compiègne, which is trying to attract more public. At last, the type of management of these two royal residences is different. In Sintra, Pena National Palace is managed by a public company, which has more independence, capacity and quicker pace on the execution of the projects.

3. PROGRAMME OF THE STAY

DAY 1:



1. Meeting with Étienne Guibert – General explanation of the palace's operation and staff, preliminary organization of the week. Presentation to various departments, namely: Administrative; Financial; Security; Maintenance; Gardens; Cultural Mediation (which includes ticket offices, reservations, tourism fairs, mediation, programming). 2. Visit to the "Royal Apartments". Museography aspects discussed: - The palace is being electrified in zones (several areas are still lacking), until a few years ago the exhibition area had no electricity. - The curatorial team is, therefore, in the initial phase regarding the presence of spotlights, cables, etc.; - It has been decided to electrify some historical pieces, notably chandeliers - they consider the illumination of historical pieces to be better than the presence of contemporary spotlights; - All window frames have anti-UV filters, like Pena Palace. - White, slightly transparent curtains on the windows of rooms containing historical artifacts and use shutters as a means of protection. In some rooms, they use blackout curtains. - Some rooms, with electric lighting, have their shutters permanently closed (rooms with hanging tapestries, for example – with noticeable results in the vibrancy of the colors and the appearance of the textile fibers); - As the palace is not yet fully electrified, they use a shutter opening system on different days. - There are areas of the palace closed to visitors for a few hours a day and they remain completely dark. - Most compartments have very low barrier. - These barriers are equipped with a sound alarm, only in the bay area. - They feature some original textiles (some with tulle coverings), original curtains with glass-framed protection. 3. Visit to the Museum of the Second Empire: With the curator of the Museum of the Second Empire and the Empress's Museum: Laura Gutman. Located in one of the areas designated to receive guests during the "series" of the Second Empire. The "series" correspond to the reception in Compiègne of about one hundred guests per week, during the autumn weeks (hunting season).

The Museum of the Second Empire presents pieces in ambiances representative of that time, one of the most important historical periods of the Château de Compiègne. The objects are mostly from the Château de Compiègne and other disappeared imperial residences, such as Saint Cloud or the Tuileries – currently belonging to the National Furniture, which represent the Second Empire (Napoleon III and Empress Eugénie). The Museum of the Second Empire presents the rooms with white cotton curtains with fringe. 4. Museum of Empress Eugénie This museum was formed from a private collection of a local resident who gathered pieces related to the daily life and personal lives of members of this imperial family (from birth to death), which were enriched with other pieces from descendants of the imperial family, some with relic status (pieces about the death of Victoria Eugénie's only son), the emperor's kidney stones, etc. In the smaller compartments of the old apartments in the "series", "showcases" are presented, with reenactments of environments (including clothing, furniture, personal items, memorabilia, photographs, and paintings).



The museum is complemented by a temporary exhibition room where thematic exhibitions are presented within the collection of the graphic arts storage of the Château de Compiègne. Currently, there is an exhibition about the Countess of Castiglione, who was present at the "series" of Compiègne - an Italian countess sent to Paris by an Italian minister to seduce the emperor so that he would embrace the cause of the unification of Italy. 5. Visit to the documentary archive, under the responsibility of an archivist who also takes care of the technical library. Main documents observed and consulted: - Inventories – these have remained the same since the 19th century (in some cases the 18th century), the numbers are associated with the objects from that period, with occasional changes. The inventories are not digitized and are consulted directly.

The Mobilier National is the same institution since the 18th century – it was the Crown Furniture, then the Imperial Furniture and currently the National Furniture – remaining relatively stable in its duties, as well as in the objects it is responsible for. - Along with the inventories came the observation of marks on the pieces. Even pieces linked to the National Furniture collection have the mark, branded or stamped, of the palace to which they belong (C – Compiègne; V - Versailles; F – Fontainebleau) and, with a sentence or punch, the inventory number preceded by the same letter. - In 1938, during World War II, an inventory was made of all pieces removed from the palace (utilitarian pieces were not removed). The inventory is in this archive, and corresponding paper labels are applied to the pieces. - In one room of the document archive, there is a file relating to the history and museography of the Royal Apartments and some of the key pieces of the collection. It is organized by boxes, where various information about each compartment can be found newspaper clippings, historical iconography, samples of historical textiles, samples of reconstructed textiles, transcripts of correspondence with orders regarding the compartments, musealization projects, technical drawings of the projects, among other similar documents. These boxes are not digitized.

DAY 2:

1. Observation of the transportation of the chandelier in the Dining Room of the Royal Apartments. This piece was lowered, partially disassembled and stabilized with structural reinforcements, packed, disassembled, suspended on its own vehicle and transported directly outside (the dining room is on the ground floor, accessible to the transport vehicle). The purpose of this movement is the cleaning and partial restoration of the piece, with the integration of the chandelier's electrification. 2. Visit to the rooms reconstructed to illustrate the Series. Observation of similarities with the Lady in Waiting and the Secretary to the Queen rooms in the Pena National Palace, notably in the typology of pieces present, in their respective models and in the textiles. The function of a reception room without personal references is evident, as in the Pena palace. During the Series, approximately 800 people stayed overnight at the Château de Compiègne, including the one hundred guests, their respective staff, the court and their respective staff, the imperial family and their respective staff, and the palace servants. Visit to the Empress's boudoir. 3. Visit to the Apartments of the King of Rome (son of Napoleon I), formerly Marie Antoinette's Apartments (never used by this queen) with Étienne Guibert. During the Second Empire, he received Princess Matilda (cousin of Emperor Napoleon III, to whom she was once engaged) and other important guests during the Second Empire series. 4. Visits to the storages with Étienne Guibert. 4.1. Ceramics and service storage of the Series - composed of several rooms. Cabinet containing clocks (fireplace/table), belonging to the rooms of the series. Cabinets containing the pieces corresponding to the "hotel" service of the Series, hundreds of identical pieces, corresponding to the room services (hygiene, breakfast, desk), mostly white or with a gold trim, and examples of a service with a crowned N (NIII) in blue, corresponding in form and function to the crown or dragon service – used for the second tables and for the kitchen). Note some different typologies, notably a bulbous jug with a lid for transporting and serving hot water for hygiene, a round sponge box with a high lid with openings, a tray with two extinguishing candle pieces, a circular porcelain inkwell. Cabinets containing glass pieces for room service – bottles for water, bottles for liqueur, stemmed glasses and water glasses, some more sophisticated pieces for the same purpose.



Cabinets with vases and vases for the rooms of the series (all had a fireplace – game table). There is a huge set of matching pairs of vases/pots, all identical for fireplaces, and various European and Oriental vases and pots, in pairs or individually, for credentials, game tables, etc. In the same storage dedicated to jugs, there is a metal storage, with pieces in zinc sheet for the interior of jugs, vases and pitchers, to hold flowers. There is also a significant set of black metal trays painted in gold with N, corresponding to this room service from the Series. 3.2. Textile Storage - Visit preceded by a visit to the sewing workshop and upholstery workshop, with a permanent employee at the Château. The permanent work consists of making white window curtains, cleaning and maintaining museum textiles, reapplying trimmings and making upholstery on chairs (with reconstituted textiles). - The technician does not have formal training in Conservation and Restoration; however she has taken courses and training in the area. Recently, he has been applying Velcro to historical tapestries and can perform small jobs, such as stabilizing the linings of historical textiles. This would be an important workshop to have in Pena National Palace.

The textile storage is in the apartments of the Series. The tapestries and carpets are found in rolls. The curtains and other 19th-century textiles (of considerable quantity and size) are found folded on shelves. There is a compartment with boxes in cabinets, where the textiles that were reconstructed for the compartments are located. Each box contains textiles, trimmings, samples, and work documentation. The boxes are identified on the outside. Apparently, this storage serves or served as a workspace when the renovations were carried out.

3.3. Furniture Storage Organized by various compartments of the series. Large number of pieces with the same form and function, intended for the guest rooms. Upholstered furniture – hundreds of armchairs, upholstered chairs, with and without arms, some chaise longues. Towel racks, coat racks, desks, wardrobes, chests of drawers, game tables, bathrooms, bidets, beds. They are organized by typology. The storage is used by conservators according to this form of “typology”, there is no precise location of the individual pieces. 3.4. Painting Storage Approximately 600 paintings are divided into several rooms and racks; the art works aren’t covered. There is a storage of frames (some have an inventory number corresponding to the painting). If necessary, frames can be adapted (that do not have a reference or inventory number). 3.5. Designated Storage of Graphic Arts (photography, engraving, watercolor, etc.) Two compartments. The first, next to the library, intended for the Series rooms (a room linked to the library), contains the photography storage, organized in boxes. This storage is not digitized.

The second is next to it and presents watercolors and engravings in a metal drawer file. Some racks with framed watercolors, pencils, pastels. Passing by an old vitrines’ storage.



DAY 3:

1. Meeting with the Director of Cultural Mediation - Amélie Fluhr, head of a team of 5 members responsible for ticketing, reservations, tourism fairs, mediation, programming, and monitoring of conservators. Themes discussed: Special Visits – Highlights: - Visit with actors, suitable for all audiences if it is well publicized. (Attention to the growing demands of theater companies regarding the need for accompaniment by the programming team, dressing rooms, props, and rearrangement of booths). - At certain times of the year (themed), nighttime visits. - Storytellers – themes about the animals present in the decoration of palaces or about the characters - located around the Christmas tree, walking through a room or in the gardens. Initially it was only for children, but it works very well for an adult audience who enjoys listening to storytelling. (Ideal for bringing families to palaces and less visited areas) - Drawing/watercolor teacher – works very well for a teenage audience teaching to see architecture in a different way than a guided tour. - Sculpture teacher - clay techniques, visit with the teacher and workshop in their own workshop. - Visit about beauty in the 18th and 19th centuries – perfume workshop (the male audience is also interested, particularly in beard essences). 2. Visit to the Louis Philippe Theatre Visit accompanying a group of friends from the Château de Compiègne who had invited Julien de Vos (director of the Museum and Cultural Heritage Service – Belgium). The theatre is preserved as a historical piece and not as a cultural facility. The sets still work, as does the stage curtain; it was possible to observe the stage curtain in motion. An extraordinary piece, a historical testament to a theater that has remained virtually unchanged since its construction – which was completed in record time (about 2 months), on the occasion of the marriage of Louis Philippe's daughter – Louise, to Leopold of Belgium in 1832.

DAY 4:

Morning - Accompanying the entire team, including the director, on a technical visit to prepare the facilities report for receiving pieces for the exhibition on Wagner's 200th anniversary, which will be organized in Compiègne next year. The origin of this exhibition lies in Wagner's relationship with Princess Matilda (a guest of Compiègne).

Afternoon – Free visit to the Château, to individually assess the common visit format of the palace, including the boutique, access, restrooms, lockers, signage, room leaflets, and visitor assistants.

DAY 5:

1. Final meetings with Étienne Guibert and Amélie Fluhr. Among other points, challenges were discussed such as: - Bringing local people to visit the palace more than once in their lives. - The difficulties in presenting 19th-century residences. - Similarities and differences in the type of audiences at the Pena National Palace and the Château de Compiègne. 2. Attendance to conferences at the Château: The Avenues of Compiègne: A retreat Between Castle and Forest From Louis XV's "Grand Project" to the Reconstruction – a Study Day organized by Éric Georgin, President of the Avenues of Compiègne Association, Professor of History at Paris II - Panthéon Assas University 3. 4. Team preparing for the event: Brandenburg Concertos by Jean-Sébastien Bach, which took place in the Château's Ballroom. Participation as an audience member in the Concerto.



4. ORGANIZATION OF THE TRIP

Compiègne is a very small town, I felt like everything was close by walking distance. I stayed in the very nice Alfred's Hotel, located 7 minutes from the train station and 5 minutes from the Château de Compiègne (walking), which turned my daily routine very easy and pleasant. From Paris Orly Airport to Compiègne I took about two hours to travel (by Orly Val and metro to Gare du Nord and then to Compiègne Train Station). The train and metro are very easy to use and took me everywhere I needed to go, including from and to the airport. For the daily needs, in terms of meals, I took a very nice breakfast in the hotel, lunch at the city center Italian restaurant Sopranos and for the evening Café de Paris or supermarket Monoprix were the choice. Except of the accommodation, which I found hard to rent for less than 700€, the level of expenses was not very significative, I was able to eat for less than 30/20€ per meal, less if I bought food from the supermarket, and transport was also affordable.

5. CONCLUSION: ADDED VALUES, NEW COMPETENCES, WORKING METHODS, NEW VISION

This experience was interesting and valuable, I would recommend for anyone on a Royal Residence to apply – gardeners, curators, registers, restorers, administration, security, tickets. One of the main goals of my mobility was to observe the daily routine of an institution with so much similarities to Pena Palace, namely in museology and curatorial areas, but it turned out to be very enriching the opportunity to meet with other areas, specifically Cultural Mediation, because we are developing new (and very disrupting) offers at this very moment in Pena, on a project that includes the whole company staff. This experience was only possible by the remarkable curator Étienne Guibert, who had the kindness to guide me every day of the week, answering all my questions, making time to discuss little themes linked to our work, making sure I meet everyone in staff and presenting the palace on long guided tours throughout the apartments, storages and archives, not closing any door or any box - everything was accessible and object to be questioned and discussed. I couldn't ask for a better host on this kind of mobility. The share and comparison of work methods, challenges and decision making in areas like lightning, conservation, security and visitors' routes, was very enriching and helpful for the projects that will be developed in the next three to six years in Sintra. Observing the well established decisions on several fields, but particularly on options like the separated nucleus inside the Château, or the different types of visits and cultural offers, was immensely valuable to me, as palace curator and, already, had enable me to be more secure on defending new ideas on Pena Palace project.

DEBORAH HOGAN

Schools Content Producer

Sending institution: Historic Royal Palaces, United Kingdom

Host institution: Paleis Het Loo, Netherlands

Date of mobility: 13 October – 17 October 2025



1. INTRODUCTION

I chose to visit Paleis Het Loo in the Netherlands as I was keen to visit a royal residence similar in style; historical period and collection to that of Hampton Court Palace and Kensington Palace where I work in London. There are direct links with the House of Orange at both Kensington and Hampton Court – both being the royal residences of William of Orange and Mary II when they ruled as monarchs of Great Britain. But beyond this, I also wanted to find out about the ambitions and challenges faced by staff – particularly in relation to audience access and inclusion – and to be able to draw similarities and differences with those of my team and the wider organisation.

2. HOST AND SENDING INSTITUTION: DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES

I observed that there are many similarities between Paleis Het Loo and Kensington Palace in particular. Both are of a similar size; built around the same time by the same individuals; and both with a similar number of historic spaces open to the public (images 1 & 2). There are also many similarities in how the private rooms of the Royals at Het Loo are represented at Hampton Court. Both palaces choose to present rooms that are sparse in furniture to reflect the fact that rooms were kept bare when not in use during this era (images 3-6). Colleagues at Paleis Het Loo told me that some of their visitors struggle with the lack of written interpretation in these rooms, which is also feedback HRP often receives. But both institutions believe that, in recreating the historic spaces as they would have looked at the time, they are providing a more evocative, 'history where it happened' experience for the visitor. At both Paleis Het Loo and Hampton Court there are signs of the direct impact of war. At Het Loo this took the form of Nazi occupation during World War II, where the palace was used as a military hospital. At Hampton Court, the Indian Army was invited to establish an encampment there during 1919 and there are many photos and footage documenting this: The Indian Army at Hampton Court Palace in 1919 | Hampton Court Palace | Historic Royal Palaces (images 7 & 8). Both sites have chosen to tell these stories which help to build a richer picture of the palaces' histories and provide a more 3-dimensional perspective of how a royal residence was and is used. Murals on the staircases at both Het Loo and Kensington showcase how monarchs sought to convey their interest in the wider world and showcase the cosmopolitan make-up of their court.



At Het Loo the main staircase features individuals who are considered to have come from the Ottoman Empire – perhaps with the aim of showing off William of Orange’s ‘worldliness’. At Kensington, King George I’s trusted servant Mehmet and his fellow Turkish valet Mustapha, feature prominently on the William Kent-designed King’s Stair mural (images 9-11). Both organisations look to tell different stories and perspectives wherever possible. The children’s book, entitled ‘Cupido and Sideron’ sold in the shop at Het Loo tells the story of two enslaved men who fled to England with William of Orange (image 12). Their story has links with the royal court at Hampton Court, as told in this blogpost: [Sideron and Cupido: Two untold lives at Hampton Court Palace | Historic Royal Palaces](#).

In terms of access and inclusion, Het Loo and HRP’s sites are working hard to cater for the varying needs of their audiences. Both Het Loo and Kensington have recently had Changing Places facilities installed (images 13 & 14). There is also a facility at the Tower of London and one soon to be installed at Hampton Court. The existence of such facilities means that some visitors, community groups and special schools can now consider visiting - where this might not have been possible before. Het Loo has benefitted from significant capital project funding in recent years. A brand new underground exhibition space was completed a few years ago that is fully accessible (images 15 17). At the same time, they were also able to install multiple lifts throughout the exhibition space and palace meaning that a large part of the palace is fully physically accessible – including the roof ! (Image 18). Both organisations’ websites host excellent accessibility pages where the visitor can quickly find relevant information : [Accessibility | Paleis Het Loo](#) [Accessibility | Hampton Court Palace](#) | [Historic Royal Palaces Accessibility](#) | [Kensington Palace](#) | [Historic Royal Palaces](#) The two organisations differ in terms of the breadth and scale of their programmes on offer to visiting schools. The team responsible for the schools programme at Het Loo is doing an amazing job of tailoring sessions to meet the specific needs of the students visiting. There are now sessions that explore the palace itself – including one for Early Years children. There are also sessions focused on the permanent and temporary exhibition spaces. I had the pleasure of observing two sessions based in the Orange Family exhibition space. I was amazed at how well the students (aged 11-12 years) were able to navigate an exhibition space so efficiently and effectively to answer specific enquiry questions. And the standard of spoken English and comprehension was excellent.



From speaking with colleagues at Het Loo, I learnt about a new session that they have started to run for students at ‘technical schools’. My understanding of the Dutch school system is that it is streamed from age 12 at which point there are a number of academic or practical routes that students follow (the state school system in the UK is comprehensive, although the grammar school system does also run in certain areas of the country). This poses a challenge for anyone developing content for secondary-aged students in the Netherlands. Technical schools cover more practical subject areas and it is my understanding that students from these schools do not always make trips out as part of their school day.

The new session I was told about explores the historic spaces and focuses on the lives of particular historical characters, where students were invited to use empathy to discuss topics and themes that were relevant in the past and are still important today. HRP's school programme is large-scale at both the Tower of London and Hampton Court, but we are still looking for ways to grow the schools audience at Kensington (207, 551 students visited one of the 3 sites last academic year – the vast proportion of whom visited either the Tower or Hampton Court). For a number of years now HRP has run the Access Fund for Schools which provides financial support to schools enabling free visits and sessions and a contribution to travel costs: [Access Fund for Schools | Historic Royal Palaces](#) From talking to colleagues at Het Loo, financial barriers to visits are a significant problem also for schools in the Netherlands – and I will be sharing with them evaluation reports and key information about how we set up our Access Fund.

3. PROGRAMME OF THE STAY

DAY 1:

Met with Stephanie Hermes (Head of Programming, Education and Participation) and had a general overview of the work that her team does. Stephanie gave me a detailed overview of the Dutch secondary school system which helped set the context for the work that her team does with schools. It was extremely interesting to understand the challenges that this system poses to heritage and museum sites when developing content. I also met with Dorothy van Rijt (Schoolprogram Account Manager) who talked me through her work as the point of liaison between the palace and schools wanting to book onto a particular programme. Finally I met with Johan Splint (Head of Service Cluster and Management Team Member) who took me to look around the site from an accessibility perspective, looking at the Changing Spaces facilities, lifts and step-free access.

DAY 2:

Met with Annette de Vries (Head of Knowledge, Collection and Programming Cluster) who was really interested to hear about the work that HRP is doing to tell more diverse histories as part of its interpretation, knowledge-sharing, online content and schools and communities programming. I also met with Bedel Bayrak (Program Maker) who leads on an annual community event that seeks to bring together all diverse members of the local community to share and celebrate cultural practices. He also works with dementia patients at local residential homes to run reminiscence groups. I then had a tour of the temporary Dress Codes exhibition with Adjo Tjon-A-Tsien (Program Maker) who told me about the input she was able to give at give at planning stage of the exhibition. The middle section of the exhibition had been curated by Adjo where she brought together individuals from the local area and exhibited their unique fashion styles to exemplify what 'dress codes' can mean in society today. The interactive elements included tactile swatches of a wide range of different materials to heighten awareness of the dangers of fast fashion.



I then met with Ilse Helmons (Visitor Services Team Lead) where we discussed what equity, diversity and inclusion means for our sites and how we welcome new audiences who may face barriers to visiting. The first place to do this is to ensure that our workforces reflect the diversity within society. We agreed that both organisations still have more work to do in this area. We talked about how HRP is soon to be a Sunflower Lanyard accredited member: For charities - join the Sunflower and she shared how she is bringing her experience of working at Make A Wish charity to her role at Het Loo.



DAY 3:

Met with Emma Bulens (Schoolprogram Team Lead) where we discussed at length the challenges of developing content for schools that meets a wide range of curriculum areas. This was a half day as I was presenting at a pre-arranged online conference in the afternoon.



DAY 4:

After an independent museum visit first thing, I met with Famke Mesch (Visitor Services Team Lead) who discussed her role in managing multiple rotas and teams. I then had a tour of the historic spaces with Marit Berends (Curator of Cultural History). Marit talked to me about her work into telling more diverse stories as part of the interpretation at Het Loo. I talked to her about the work that we are doing at HRP to develop content that reflects the often under-represented stories of our palaces. Examples include: Black History at the Palaces | Historic Royal Palaces John and Mary: Black Children at Queen Anne's Court? | Historic Royal Palaces The Boy on the Staircase: Peter 'the Wild Boy' from Hanover | Historic Royal Palaces 'Below Stairs' in Sickness, Death and Old Age | Historic Royal Palaces Sophia Duleep Singh: The Indian Princess who fought for women's rights | Hampton Court Palace | Historic Royal Palaces She talked to me about the research that was done to find out about the Ottoman individuals represented on the mural on the main stairs.

DAY 5:

I met Matthias de Groot (Museum Educator) and observed two school sessions based in the House of Orange exhibition.

4. ORGANIZATION OF THE TRIP

I stayed at the Hotel Het Loo which was a 5 minute walk to the palace. I found the hotel myself easily online. The hotel was comfortable and reasonably priced. I got one taxi during my stay which was to take me from the hotel to the station. Other than this my mode of transport was either train to and from the airport or on foot.

5. CONCLUSION: ADDED VALUES, NEW COMPETENCES, WORKING METHODS, NEW VISION

I found the whole experience of being at Paleis Het Loo fantastically enriching. I met a wide range of different people working in different areas that were both familiar to me and different. They posed some of the same challenges that I recognize in my role. And I identified many areas where we could share good practice and learn from one another.



LETICIA GARCÍA DE CECA

Curator

Sending institution: Patrimonio Nacional, Spain

Host institution: Royal Danish Collection, Denmark

Date of mobility: 31 August to 07 September 2025



1. INTRODUCTION

This report describes my professional and personal experiences during my stay in Copenhagen in the first week of September 2025, which was made possible through the ARRE Mobility Grants programme. The purpose of my visit was to learn from the practices of the Royal Collections of Denmark (Den Kongelige Samling), with a particular focus on the carriage and stables collection at Christiansborg Palace.

I had the privilege of being mentored by Olene Bergman, the curator responsible for these collections. The experience was further enriched by the presence of Marit Berends, also a grant recipient. Marit is a cultural historian and curator at Het Loo Palace, in Apeldoorn, Netherlands.

2. HOST AND SENDING INSTITUTION: DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES

The Royal Collections of Denmark oversee a wide range of cultural assets located across sites such as Rosenborg, Amalienborg, and Christiansborg Palaces. As with Patrimonio Nacional, they face the challenge of preserving heritage collections that are still partially in use and largely housed or displayed in historic buildings with limited environmental control. Both institutions are deeply committed to exhibitions, registration, and conservation.

With regard to the carriage and Royal Harness collections, the Royal Collections of Denmark appear to benefit from greater resources and from standardized procedures that we would like to adopt in Madrid. Their work is also distinguished by a closer connection to the Danish monarchy.

Nevertheless, our shared concerns, such as preventive conservation, public engagement, sustainability, and diversifying narratives, made it easy to identify points of convergence and opportunities for collaboration.

3. PROGRAMME OF THE STAY

Day 1:

In the morning, Olene Bergman, our mentor, welcomed Marit Berends and me at our hotel and brought us to Rosenborg Palace for an introduction breakfast with members of the library, archives, collections, and research teams. We were presented with their ongoing projects, such as the Royal Childhood exhibition, or research on coronations and ceremonies. Lydia Skov Andersen, newly appointed museum inspector studying courtly ceremonies, and Michael from the King's Royal Library, were among the colleagues we met.

Later in the afternoon, we visited Christiansborg Palace and the Royal Stables, meeting Niels Randlov (Stable Master) and Ole Frank Mortensen (Senior Coachman). We observed daily horse training, uniforms, and equipment, gaining useful insights for the management of active stables. The day concluded with a visit to the exhibition on Queen Caroline Mathilda, directed by Olene, where a carefully designed scenography, projections, and museography made the historical narrative more vivid.



Entrance sign to the Royal Stables, the Carriage and the Royal Harness Museums at Christiansborg Palace.



One of the daily tasks involves moving carriages within the museum and exhibition spaces, a process requiring multiple operators to ensure safety and proper handling.



Prop horses at the Harness Museum allow children to try different types of saddles, including side-saddles and riding astride. A popular feature that encourages interaction and engagement with the collection.



Side-saddles belonging to various queens displayed in a showcase at the Harness Museum.



The indoor riding arena at Christiansborg Palace used for the daily training of the royal horses.



Welcome area of the temporary exhibition on Caroline Mathilda at the entrance of the Royal Stables.



The tent in the background conceals a riding astride saddle that belonged to Queen Caroline Mathilde, the centerpiece of the exhibition. It symbolizes her independence and desire for freedom. The carriage is positioned as if taking a curve, suggesting dynamism and movement.



On the left, one of the printed pamphlets criticizing Queen Caroline Mathilde for her scandalous affair with the Enlightened physician Struensee, enlarged and reproduced for the exhibition. On the right, the video of a woman riding, projected on the museum ceiling, evokes the queen's presence, adding vividness and realism to the exhibition.



Day 2:

The day focused on the management of the stable collection. We were fortunate to arrive just in time to see the horses being harnessed for their daily training and to join a carriage ride through the center of Copenhagen. A truly unique and unforgettable experience.

We then attended a meeting with the State Surveyor of Works of Art, Inspector Klaus Dahl; wheelmaker Ivan Bak (also president of the Danish Carriage Driving Association), and collections inspector Anders Hørsbøl Nielsen. Discussions revolved around conservation, collection care, and carriage restoration.

In the afternoon, we visited the State Inventory Storages at Amalienborg, which offered an overview of how Danish heritage collections are monitored in storage.



Riding out from the stables to traverse central Copenhagen. This is part of the daily training routine for the royal carriage horses.



Inside the Royal Stables, Kladuber horses being led to their stalls.



At the Royal Stables, posing in front of the carriage and the draft horses, lead by Senior Coachman, Ole Frank Mortensen.



Ceremonial harnesses displayed hanging inside the Royal Stables.

Day 3:

At the offices next to Rosenborg Palace, Marit and I gave presentations about our institutions to a diverse team of staff from different areas of the Royal Collections of Denmark. Besides formal exchange, we shared practices on introducing “new perspectives” in royal collections: themes like colonialism, women’s emancipation, and the lives of servants. We discussed strategies to reanimate objects no longer in use, including staff stories, photographs, and biographies. After the meeting, Peter Kristiansen, curator at the Royal Danish Collections and responsible for Rosenborg, accompanied us on a guided tour of the Palace.

In the afternoon, I focused on collection management systems, with Klaus Dahl showing their software (developed by Gallery Systems) and the migration process from spreadsheets to a comprehensive database. These will be useful references for my own institution.

Day 4:

The morning was devoted to conservation practices at the Royal Stables with conservators Pernille Kokfelt and Anna Sparr. We discussed common problems: leather deterioration, mould from rising humidity, insect infestations, metal corrosion caused by horse stables (e.g.: ammonia in horse urine), and light exposure. Preventive strategies included ethanol cleaning for mould, insect traps, light filters, and weekly dusting. We also examined challenges caused by earlier inappropriate restorations and the importance of interdisciplinary consultation.

Later, we visited the Amalienborg library with Julie Mork Hansen and Michael Rasmussen. We explored material related to horses and carriages, together with a small exhibition on Queen Margrethe’s youthful Tolkien illustrations—an inspiring example of integrating the monarch’s personal creativity with cultural programs.



Engravings from 18th-century books in the King’s Library at Amalienborg

Day 5:

We joined a workshop on interpreting royal stable collections, led by Olene Bergman, with the participation of Emil Givskov, Sinne Kappel, Lydia Skov Andersen and Mads Damsbo. We first explored innovative strategies to better engage audiences, confronting the static nature of vehicles while attempting to create a "sense of movement." Suggestions included dynamic lighting, projections, soundscapes, immersive VR experiences, tactile displays, and even interactive harness demonstrations. We also reflected on delicate themes raised by objects such as Carrousel Slaves, which demand careful contextualization regarding colonialism and representation. Another exercise involved rating objects by power, elegance, and mobility, followed by linking these concepts to interpretive possibilities.

Day 6:

The stay concluded with a visit to the Hermitage Hunting Lodge (Dyrehaven Park), a baroque hunting palace built for Christian VI. Instead of a conventional guided tour, we hired a coach to travel across the park, a choice that enriched our understanding of courtly hunting traditions and carriage use in their original context.

The interior of the Hermitage has been dismantled, but there are still elements that recall the building's past as a hunting lodge. This is something it shares with many Palaces of Patrimonio Nacional, and something that particularly caught my interest, as I am also a Natural Science curator and we are currently immersed in the remodeling of the Hunting Museum at the Royal Palace of Riofrío (Segovia).



The Hermitage Hunting Lodge and its surrounding parkland, North of Copenhagen

4. ORGANIZATION OF THE TRIP

Accommodation was arranged at a centrally located hotel in Copenhagen, convenient for reaching Rosenborg, Christiansborg, and Amalienborg Palaces. The booking was kindly handled by Olene, allowing us to benefit from the staff discount available to employees of the Royal Collections of Denmark. Transfers from the airport and main train stations were easily managed using public transportation. Within the city, our location was excellent, enabling us to walk or rent bicycles for most journeys.

It is worth noting that costs in Copenhagen are relatively high, with daily expenses exceeding the European average, particularly for meals and lodging. This may be useful information for future fellows. Booking accommodation and flights well in advance is highly recommended.

5. CONCLUSION: ADDED VALUES, NEW COMPETENCIES, WORKING METHODS, VISION, ETC

Our objectives of learning how the Royal Collections register, display, store, and communicate their carriage and Royal Harness collections were fully achieved. The support and dedication of staff from different palaces, areas, and disciplines were outstanding, and I am deeply grateful for their generosity. Olene's work as a mentor was exceptional: she organised meetings, workshops, and visits that directly addressed our interests and concerns.

In particular, the guidance of Klaus Dahl on how to approach object registration in the collections database proved illuminating. For example, when cataloguing objects composed of multiple components, they assign differentiated inventory numbers, sequenced with alphabetic letters. We found this method extremely useful, as it provides a practical solution to many of the challenges we face when registering harnesses, riding equipment, or carriages in our own database.

The discussions and exchanges on how to attract new audiences and make our collections more relevant were especially inspiring. The application of pedagogical strategies and critical museology to a field such as the Royal Stables is not common in Spain, and it was truly eye-opening. Equally, the scenographic techniques and the installation of the Caroline Mathilda exhibition will serve as valuable inspiration when planning the display of my own collections in Madrid.

Looking ahead, my intention is to continue working with our collections, improving their organization, and, when the time comes, preparing them for exhibition. In this regard, we are developing a new carriage museum project, which we hope will once again make the rich Patrimonio Nacional collection accessible to the public after more than forty years out of sight.

I would also like to foster collaborations with Marit at Het Loo and with our colleagues in Copenhagen: joint events such as horse and carriage parades, conferences and seminars, and joint publications. After all, our palaces preserve and display some of the richest collections in Europe, and they retain the unique tradition of still using carriages for ceremonial occasions, such as the presentation of ambassadors' credentials. This intangible heritage, characteristic of European constitutional monarchies, is something we are committed to safeguarding and ensuring remains meaningful for citizens.

Finally, I would like to thank the Association of European Royal Residences for making this exchange possible.

WIKTOR JURA

Coordinator of Nature Education

Sending institution: Museum of King Jan III's Palace at Wilanów, Poland

Host institution: Parques de Sintra - Monte da Lua, Portugal

Date of mobility: 01 to 08 June 2025



1. INTRODUCTION

During my visit to the Parques de Sintra-Monte da Lua complex, I aimed to meet the staff and observe their nature education classes. I was especially interested in the Montserrat complex, with its Nature Interpretation Centre and farms, but I also hoped to visit the botanical garden at the Palace of Queluz and the Garden of the Countess of Edla. I intended to meet educators, farm and garden managers, and possibly someone with responsibilities similar to mine. I was lucky to have all of my expectations met.

2. HOST AND SENDING INSTITUTION: DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES

Similarities:

- Both manage a collection of different types of properties: nature reserves, palaces and gardens.

Differences:

- Parques maintains a smaller team of educators than Wilanów, a lot of whom are outsourced.
- Parques functions as a semi-independent company, while Wilanów is directly managed by the Ministry of Culture.

3. PROGRAMME OF THE STAY

DAY 1:

Reception and institutional presentation of Parques de Sintra (Rita Alves/ Educational Programming Team EA). I was introduced to some of the staff. I gained knowledge about the local water management systems. It was also my first visit to the Monserrate Palace, where I would return almost every day of the mobility, as it was the main place of stay of Ms Alves. I had an opportunity to see a species of newt that I have previously not seen.

DAY 2:

Forest School (Partner/MoviBloom Association)

Field trip to Pena Park and the garden of the Chalet of the Countess of Edla (Elsa Isidro/ gardeners team coordinator)

On this day I visited the Tapada used for agricultural education. It was also an opportunity to see how the Parques work with one of their partners, the MoviBloom association, who develops education within the "forest school" community.

Possible application: use the acquired know-how to start our own agro education program, with connections to the royal polish folwark system.



DAY 3:

10.00: Field trip to Queluz National Palace Gardens/botanical garden (Ana Sanches - Queluz gardens coordinator)

14.00: Monserrate park: Accompanying a guided tour of the palace and gardens in English. I talked for a long time with Ms Sanchez and one of the other garden managers, whose name I have sadly forgotten. I gained new insights about the combined approach to pest management in historical gardens. I am particularly fond of the use of parasitic wasps.

Another highlight of the day was an opportunity to see a guided tour in Monserrate and talk with the educator who was doing it.

Possible application: Apply the knowledge gained about the boxwood protection methods and invasive species eradications to our own royal gardens. Consultation with our team of gardeners already ongoing.



DAY 4:

10.00: Pena Park/ Moorish castle: Field trip on accessibilities for inclusion (Carolina Martins/ Accessibilities; Project "Parques de Sintra Welcomes Better")

14.00: Monserrate park: Accompanying a guided visit to the Nature Interpretation Center. In the morning hours I discussed the infrastructure, equipment and training that Parques utilizes to increase the accessibility of their attractions. Later that day, I saw a class in the nature interpretation center. The children seemed quite interested in the class and couldn't wait to interact with the electronic educational devices in the center.

Possible application: Apply the knowledge and solutions seen in the NIC to improve our Pump Station programme and turn it into a proper nature education center. Improve our park's accessibility to physically disabled visitors with experience gained from the conversation with Carolina. Meeting with our accessibility coordinator already scheduled.

DAY 5:

10.00: Parks and forests areas: Field trip on nature conservation projects in Parques de Sintra areas (Inês Moreira/Biologist)

20.30: Tapada de Monserrate: Night walk: Fireflies and other nocturnal fauna (Mário Carmo)

I was driven around a few of the conservation areas and saw a lot of the damage caused by the extreme weather events. I learned more about the topic of invasive species in Portugal, and was surprised (and somewhat relieved) to find out that communicating environmental issues to the public is not met with as much resistance as it is in my home country.

Possible application: Increase the biodiversity of our park and reserve with creating new static bodies of water that would create breeding ground for amphibians and freshwater invertebrates.



4. ORGANIZATION OF THE TRIP

I have traveled to the target country and back by plane. Train and other forms of transport were not really an option. At the site of mobility, that is the Sintra region, I have used trains and taxis interchangeably to travel. I found the accommodation at booking.com

5. CONCLUSION: ADDED VALUES, NEW COMPETENCIES, WORKING METHODS, VISION, ETC

In conclusion, I have acquired an ambition to establish our own programs of agro education, create new water bodies in our gardens and upgrade our education done in the Pump Station.

I have gained a new understanding of how beneficial a working communication between garden managers and nature educators can be. I also gained insight into how a historical garden can contribute to protection of endangered species.



SILKE KIESANT

Curator of the Clocks and Sculptures Collection

Sending institution: Prussian Palaces and Gardens Foundation Berlin-Brandenburg, Germany

Host institution: Royal Palace of Naples, Italy

Date of mobility: 17 November – 21 November 2025



1. INTRODUCTION

From 17 to 21 November 2025, I completed my Mobility Grant at the Palazzo Reale in Naples, the first time in the palace for me. I was very curious about the clock and sculpture collection, the varied history of the inhabitants, the breaks and reconstruction after the war. Antonella delli Paoli accompanied me during my stay for several hours, and I got to know some of her colleagues.

2. HOST AND SENDING INSTITUTION: DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES

Our two institutions are similar in that they both have the difficult task of research, communicating and presenting the different periods, builders and inhabitants of the palace. One important difference is that the Palazzo Reale team is responsible for 'only' one palace and additionally the Villa Pignatelli in Naples. Accordingly, there are far fewer employees, and they are responsible for many different tasks. My institution has around 30 historic buildings from different eras. This requires more staff to carry out research, restoration and conservation work, with each member performing very specific tasks.

3. PROGRAMME OF THE STAY

DAY 1:

First I met Antonella delli Paoli, my mentor. She organized an excellent tour focused solely on the topic of clocks in the castle with the freelance clock restorer Diego Ferventino responsible for them. I was very impressed by the abundance and high quality of the clocks, which mainly originate from France and England. I was impressed by the fact that almost all of the clocks are still working. This is not the case at my institution, as we follow a different conservation approach. However, unlike the Palazzo Reale, we do not have a clock restorer who permanently looks after the pieces. It was interesting for me to learn that there was a collaboration between the Palazzo Reale and the Tari Società Consortile per Azioni, the goldsmith centre near Naples, which sponsors the restoration of the clocks. For next year, Palazzo Reale is planning an exhibition with 30 clocks. We talked about the formerly research and restoration project of our Potsdam magnificent so-called Pompadour clock financed by the Getty Foundation (2004).



Charles Guillaume Manière/P. Philippe Thomire: Clock with the Time and Clio, France, 19. cent.



France: The genius of the arts, 19. cent.



The restorer Diego Ferventino with one of his restored clocks made by Guiton with a planetarium, 19 cent.



In the afternoon, a photographer took pictures of the restored clocks financed by TARI for the documentation.



The automatic clock with flute mechanism (1730) by the English clockmaker Charles Clay is awaiting its restoration. It plays melodies by Georg Friedrich Händel.



Diego Ferventino's own special toolbox.

I found the Museo della Fabbrica on the ground floor very helpful to understand the architectural history of the palazzo. The small, clearly laid out exhibition consists not only of facts and figures, but also displays valuable works of art together with multimedia that illustrate individual historical periods. The residents of the time after 1861 are presented in busts. Together with the introductory film shown in the passageway near the ticket office, you get a good overview of the history of the palace.



What particularly impressed me: Behind the Throne Room there is a small space, where visitors can enjoy a special experience: By interacting with a button panel, the visitor will be able to take a real journey through the different eras that have marked the history of Palazzo Reale. It is an interactive virtual elevator, which transports the viewer to evocative scenes of court life from various times.

DAY 2:

Before the rush of visitors, I have the privilege of seeing the (almost) empty castle. Today, I have the opportunity to accompany the restorers: the carpet (19th cent.) in the throne room is to be cleaned and restored. Textile restorer Graziella Palei has travelled from Siena for this purpose. She has already restored three other carpets in the palace. The restoration is taking place directly on site in the throne room, so visitors can watch too.



Morning: the palace awakes



The canopy dates back to the 18th century, while the carpet is from the 19th century.



Graziella Palei prepares herself.



Visitors are interested in rolling in the carpet.



Done: The carpet is now rolled out on the work table...



... and is ready for the restoration work.



The dirt has to be removed and loose parts reattached.



DAY 3:

For an exhibition in the Mobilier National Paris next year, the large carpet in the Hall of Guards is being photographed. The impressive carpet was created based on a design by Charles Le Brun (1619-1690) and is part of a series of 93 carpets commissioned by French King Louis XIV for the Grand Gallery of the Louvre and manufactured at the Savonnerie factory between 1668 and 1688. It arrived in Naples in 1814 under King Joachim Murat. The artwork will not be travelling to Paris itself, which is why the photographer will digitally combine many individual photographs to create an overall image and the planned 1:1 reproduction on a textile background.

The restorers Ilaria Lavolla, Graziella Palai, Francesca di Martino and the curator Antonella delli Paoli (from left)



The Savonnerie carpet measures 8.30 x 7.90 metres, the photographic campaign took several hours.



On one side, Francesca di Martinon, Elena Carelli and Grazielle Palei discover a piece of another carpet that has been used, which raises many questions.

Later Antonella took me with other colleagues to a tour through the roof structure to the Belvedere of the Palazzo. She didn't promise too much: from up here, you have one of the most beautiful views of Naples, the harbour and Mount Vesuvius:



The inner of the Belvedere



The old roof construction



View from the Belvedere to the Vomero hill with the castle St. Elmo and the monastery San Martino



And opposite: View to the port and Mount Vesuvius

In the afternoon I could see with the German speaking librarian Mariaelena Faienza the library and together with her colleague the archives of the Soprintendenza Archeologia, Belle Arti e Paesaggio per il Comune di Napoli, which is also accommodated in the Palazzo.



The archives in the former stables



One room of the library



DAY 4:

The team of the Palazzo Reale is responsible for the Villa Pignatelli in Naples. It is one of the most significant examples of Neapolitan classical architecture. The original furnishings, which include many sculptures based on ancient models, reflect a mix of different styles.

Baronetto Sir Ferdinand Richard Edward Dalberg-Acton, son of Prime Minister to King Ferdinand I of Sicily commissioned the Villa in 1826. In 1867, the villa became the property of Diego Pignatelli Aragona Cortés, Duke of Monteleone.



The Veranda inspired by the temples of Paestum. Among the marble sculptures, in the centre, the seated statue of the Duke of Monteloene by Leonardo Pennino.



The Ballroom

During my tour through the villa, I was particularly interested in the sculptures on the veranda, such as the two busts of Pope Innocent XII Pignatelli and Pope Clement XI Albani from the second half of the 18th century, both by Domenico Guidi, as well as the marble sculpture of Diego Pignatelli, Duca di Monteleone, a work by Leonardo Pennino, who depicts the duke in classical clothing and in a classical pose, like an ancient Roman emperor. The statue of the dancer by Carlo Chelli also made an impressive impact in the room. The Museo della Carozze, the second Museum belonging to the Villa, was unfortunately closed.



Manuel Tolsá: Bust of Ferdinando Cortés (1485-1547), 1794, ancestor of the Pignatelli family. He conquered the Aztec Empire, Governor-General of New Spain.



Miniature portrait of Rosina Pignatelli, painted on ivory, Naples 19 cent.



The Library with leather tapestry and bronze figures after the antiquity



Set of seating furniture with original textiles



The marble bath

DAY 5:

At my last day I visited the National Library, located in the eastern wing of the Palazzo. Queen Caroline Murat was the first sovereign to live there and commissioned transformations of the architecture. After 1834 the wing was converted into festival Appartements. In 1837, a devastating fire started here. After the renovation, the east wing became the residential core of the palace, hosting Ferdinand II, Francis II during his short reign and the sovereigns of the House of Savoy. Between 1922 and 1924 the wing underwent profound transformations, being emptied of furniture and decorative elements to make room for the National Library, third largest Library of Italy.



Between 1840 and 1842 Caroline Murat's private theatre was transformed into a mirrored ballroom which is now the Reading Room of the National Library.



The Library contains maps, projects, drawings, manuscripts, and collections of literature, art and architecture, as well as the papyri from the Villa dei Papiri of Herculaneum.



Rooms of Queen Maria Teresa in Pompeian style by Salvatore Giusti



Left: Some relevant furniture still remains in the library: particularly a table, whose turning top is inlaid with woods in the form of a wind-rose surrounded by Bourbon fleur-de-lis. It belonged to the Queen and was made in the 1780's.

Right: A turning reading-desk made by John Uldrich for Maria Carolina of Austria (1794), another one is exhibited in the Royal Apartment by permission of the library.

4. ORGANIZATION OF THE TRIP

I travelled by plane and found my accommodation myself by browsing the internet, but my mentor Antonella gave me the important hint, which street is to prefer. From my B&B-room (without breakfast), it took only 5 minutes' walk to the Palazzo. There are a lot of little restaurants or cafés, mini markets, and a super market.

5. CONCLUSION: ADDED VALUES, NEW COMPETENCIES, WORKING METHODS, VISION, ETC

My stay at the Palazzo Reale was an enriching experience: I not only learned about the art-historically rich furnishings, but also about the everyday work of my colleagues. I found the presentation of the various historical periods of occupation and furnishing, demolition (fire in the 19th cent. and WWII) and reconstruction of the castle very easy to follow. As inspiration for a special type of teaching, I am taking the 'virtual elevator' with me. I am very grateful to my kind colleagues Antonella, Illaria, Francesca, Elena, Mariaelena, and Diego for five intense days at the Palazzo Reale filled with visitations, a look behind the scenes (e.g. depot), informative discussions, visual impressions and great openness. Special thanks also goes to Mariaelena Faienza, who opened the library to me.

To enrich my clock collection project, I am bringing the following to my work at the SPSG:

- The search for a sponsor interested in the content who will support, for example, the restoration and scientific research of the clocks.
- The opportunity to find and finance a freelance restorer for ongoing clock maintenance.

I cannot yet comment on the scientific analysis of the clock collection in the Palazzo Reale, as a major clock exhibition will not take place until next year.



Here I am (left) with my dear colleagues: Antonella delli Paoli, Illaria Lavolla and Francesca di Martino (2nd from the left etc).



A look at the exhibition

ISABEL GONZALEZ-CONDE

Painting Conservator

Sending institution: Patrimonio Nacional, Spain

Host institution: Palace of Versailles, France

Date of mobility: 19 to 23 May 2025



1. INTRODUCTION

I participated in the on-site restoration of the ceilings of the Salon of Diana at the Palace of Versailles. These ceilings, painted in the 17th century by Charles de La Fosse, Gabriel Blanchard, and Claude II Audran, are part of the celebrated pictorial cycle of the King's Grand Apartments. Objectives: The main objectives of my participation were:

1. **Technical Training:** To deepen my expertise in the restoration of mural paintings, particularly those executed using the marouflage technique.
2. **Knowledge Exchange:** To engage in the exchange of restoration methodologies and best practices with fellow professionals.
3. **Institutional Collaboration:** To explore potential avenues for future collaboration between the Patrimonio Nacional and the restoration teams at the Palace of Versailles.

2. HOST AND SENDING INSTITUTION: DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES

Patrimonio Nacional and the Public Establishment of the Palace of Versailles share significant similarities. Both institutions are committed to the preservation of historic and artistic movable and immovable assets, with the common goal of safeguarding cultural heritage for future generations. Additionally, both serve as venues for official state events. However, there are notable differences in their operational structures. At Patrimonio Nacional, restoration work is largely carried out in-house, with a greater number of dedicated restoration workshops. In contrast, Versailles outsources much of its restoration work and collaborates closely with the Centre de Recherche et de Restauration des Musées de France (C2RMF). From a technical perspective, a key distinction lies in mural painting techniques. In Spain and Italy, the fresco technique is more commonly practiced, whereas in France, the marouflage technique predominates. As a result, French institutions have developed more advanced expertise in the restoration methods specific to marouflage. With regards to film and television projects, the biggest difference between Versailles and Schönbrunn is that Versailles is closed on Mondays, while Schönbrunn is open to visitors every day. For film productions, who most of the time seek exclusive access without visitors, this is a very big difference. Versailles therefore offers something that Schönbrunn can never offer: a full day for filming inside the Palace without visitors. At Schönbrunn film and photography projects inside the Palace must always take place outside the opening hours, so either early in the morning or late in the evening or at night to avoid the daily visitors. The biggest similarity is that both Palaces are not only very popular tourist destinations, but also very popular locations for film and photography projects and that both receive a high number of film and photography requests.



For this reason, both institutions even have their own film/photography department, which manages these projects. Another similarity is that we both work with film production companies and TV networks, who often make last-minute requests and tend to change their plans on short notice, which requires a high degree of flexibility.

3. PROGRAMME OF THE STAY

From May 19 to 23, 2025, I had the privilege of participating in a training residency at the Palace of Versailles, supported by the ARRE Mobility Grants Programme. This immersive experience allowed me to integrate into the Department of Painting and Graphic Arts, located in the historic "Grand Commun" building, and to collaborate with professionals from various institutions dedicated to heritage conservation.

DAY 1:

Due to the "Choose France" summit attended by President Emmanuel Macron, the Palace of Versailles and its gardens were closed to the public, so all activities took place at the "Grand Commun," where I arrived at 9:00 AM and was welcomed by Madame Béatrice Sárrazin at the offices of the Department of Painting and Graphic Arts; shortly after, I completed my registration and received an ID card, computer access, and intranet credentials, and then we held the project presentation and planned the objectives and activities for the week together, during which I also gave a presentation on the restoration work carried out by the Department of Restoration of Patrimonio Nacional and introduced the new Galería de las Colecciones Reales; in the afternoon, I met the ARRE Association team, and to end the day, I visited the historic "Jeu de Paume" Hall, which is one of the emblematic buildings of Versailles.

DAY 4:

I arrived again at the "Grand Commun" at 9:00 AM and joined a technical visit to the Salon of Diane restoration site with the Versailles technical committee; at 12:30 PM we visited the painting restoration workshop in the "Provence" Room, where I observed the work of restorer Alexie Lantenoie, and later, from 3:50 to 5:30 PM, I visited the painting storage facilities for both small- and large-format works at "La Petite Écurie," accompanied by Élodie Vaysse and Paola Fava from the Documentation and Inventory Review Department.

DAY 2:

I returned to the "Grand Commun" offices at 9:00 AM and at 9:30 AM joined a guided visit to the King's and Queen's Grand Apartments led by Clémence Couderc, from the École du Louvre, which offered a valuable contextual understanding of the decorative programs; we had a typical lunch at the crêperie "La Place", and in the afternoon, I explored the Gardens of Versailles and the Trianon Estate.

DAY 3:

I spent the entire day, from 9:30 AM to 5:00 PM, at the restoration site of the ceiling of the Salon of Diana in the King's Grand Apartments, working alongside Chiara di Marco from ARCANES and under the supervision of Madame Sárrazin, which was an intense and technically enriching experience.



DAY 5:

At 9:20 AM, I visited the C2RMF (Centre for Research and Restoration of the Museums of France) at “La Petite Écurie” with the scientific committee to assess the condition of ongoing restoration projects from several institutions, including the National Museum of the Palace of Versailles and Trianon, the Departmental Museum of Ancient and Contemporary Art in Épinal, the Museum of Fine Arts of Lons-le-Saunier, and the “Grand Siècle” Museum of Saint-Cloud, with participation from conservators Marie-Ange Laudet-Kraft, Claire Gerin-Pierre, Dominique Vandecasteele, and teams from the Louvre and Versailles Museums. The day concluded with a full visit to the Palace of Versailles from noon to 5:00 PM, followed by a farewell at 5:30 PM.

4. ORGANIZATION OF THE TRIP

Finding accommodation through the Airbnb platform was straightforward. I stayed at an apartment located at 88 Rue Royale, Versailles, hosted by David & Mélodie. They were responsive and helpful throughout the stay. Contact: +33 7 77 76 16 60 I booked a direct flight with Air France, which included Allianz Multi-risk insurance as part of the travel package. For transportation to Paris Charles de Gaulle Airport, I arranged a transfer with a reliable taxi service called Cars Prestige 28, which offered competitive pricing. Contact Désiré: +33 6 61 55 39 83.

5. CONCLUSION: ADDED VALUES, NEW COMPETENCIES, WORKING METHODS, VISION, ETC

This experience significantly enriched my professional development and contributed to strengthening the relationship between two leading cultural heritage institutions. It also opened the door to future joint initiatives in the field of art conservation.

This residency provided a unique opportunity to deepen my understanding of restoration techniques, particularly marouflage, and to engage directly with leading professionals in the field.

The experience offered valuable insights into the operations of one of Europe’s most prestigious heritage institutions and fostered meaningful professional connections that will support my future work in painting conservation. During my residency, I gained a comprehensive understanding of how large-scale restoration projects are organized and managed at the Palace of Versailles. One of the most enlightening aspects was observing the coordination between technical and scientific committees, which conduct regular evaluations and maintain close oversight of restoration processes. This structured approach ensures both methodological rigor and transparency, and I believe it can be effectively adapted to projects within Patrimonio Nacional. I also learned about the selection and application of materials and techniques that have yielded successful results, particularly in the restoration of the ceiling in the Salon of Diane. The documentation practices at Versailles were especially noteworthy: restoration reports are meticulously prepared before, during, and after each intervention, providing a clear and traceable record of the work.



In addition to restoration methodologies, I explored aspects of preventive conservation, including the organization of workshops and storage facilities. The visit to the Centre for Research and Restoration of the Museums of France (C2RMF) was particularly valuable in this regard, offering insight into best practices for conservation environments and inventory management.

The training residency at the Palace of Versailles allowed me to fulfill the objectives outlined in my initial project proposal, particularly regarding the study of the marouflage technique and the management of large-scale restoration projects. One of the most significant outcomes was my direct involvement in the restoration of the ceiling of the Salon of Diane, a paradigmatic example of marouflage application in a Baroque decorative context. Working alongside the team led by Madame Béatrice Sárrazin and the ARCANES company, I was able to observe and understand the technical and organizational complexity of such an intervention. This included the design of scaffolding adapted to immovable pictorial surfaces, the selection of compatible materials, and the implementation of cleaning, consolidation, chromatic reintegration, and final protection procedures.



INEZ TOKAJ

Financial Projects Control Specialist

Sending institution: Wawel Royal Castle - State Art Collection, Poland

Host institution: Patrimonio Nacional, Spain

Date of mobility: 19 to 23 May 2025



1. INTRODUCTION

Between the 19th and 23rd of May, I took part in a professional mobility programme, during which I had the opportunity to visit and work alongside colleagues from a partner royal residence in Madrid, Spain. This week-long exchange proved to be an intense and inspiring period of learning, collaboration, and professional development. The experience allowed me to gain first-hand insight into the daily operations, challenges, and innovative practices of a similar institution. It was also a valuable opportunity to exchange knowledge, build meaningful professional relationships, and reflect on how similar goals can be approached in different cultural and organisational contexts.

2. HOST AND SENDING INSTITUTION: DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES

There are many similarities as well as differences between the host institution, Patrimonio Nacional, and my home institution, Wawel Royal Castle. Both are engaged in museum-related activities and have a complex administrative structure, with comparable departments and management models. Many of our internal processes are based on the same general principles, particularly those governed by EU regulations. We also share similar specialized departments, such as promotion and marketing, conservation of artworks, architecture, and curators responsible for individual collections. Both institutions work on exhibition planning, produce catalogs, and even employ gardening staff to manage historic green areas.

The most significant difference lies in the scale of operations. Patrimonio Nacional manages numerous royal estates, including museums, palaces, former monastic buildings, and expansive historic lands. In contrast, my institution is responsible for only three historical sites.

Another key structural distinction is that my insti-

-tution operates under the Polish Ministry of Culture and National Heritage, while Patrimonio Nacional reports directly to the Presidencia del Gobierno. Additionally, Patrimonio Nacional plays a much more prominent role in supporting the Spanish Royal Family's current needs, including organizing and hosting official state visits and events, whereas this function is much more limited and reserved for select state-level occasions in our case.

Patrimonio also employs a significantly larger number of staff, and many of its departments are more specialized and better resourced. At Patrimonio Nacional the digitalization of administrative processes is at a more advanced stage—employees use dedicated systems for electronic document circulation, and all administrative staff have personal digital signatures. While my institution is also moving in this direction, the implementation is still in progress. Interestingly, Patrimonio Nacional is now introducing a system called Canoa, whereas we already use a similar system Enova, which is well integrated into our workflows and provides comparable analytical capabilities.



Under Spanish public procurement law, the price of an offer cannot be disclosed to the team evaluating qualitative criteria during the assessment stage. This separation is mandatory to ensure impartiality. In contrast, Polish law allows and commonly applies joint access to both technical and financial aspects during evaluation. This key structural difference between the two systems came as a shared surprise. One particularly interesting difference is that Patrimonio Nacional has a dedicated department for animal management—an aspect entirely absent from our structure. While we occasionally oversee limited forest areas at one of our sites, this is not comparable to the systematic care of fauna across the extensive lands managed by Patrimonio Nacional. Both institutions are led by outstanding and forward-thinking leadership, open to innovation and staff development.

3. PROGRAMME OF THE STAY

DAY 1:

Meeting with Mr. Pablo Zurita Tejedor (Director of Administración y Medios; Mobility Mentor):

- Overview of Patrimonio Nacional's organisational structure as well roles and responsibilities of each department
- Discussion of agenda and mutual expectations
- Introduction to Mr. Germán Baños Jiménez (Advisor for Economic Affairs)

Participation in departmental meeting on Canoa system implementation, led by Mr. Baños

- Insights into digital transformation initiatives

Follow-up meeting with Mr. Zurita

- Discussion on Patrimonio National budget structure: main expenditures, revenue sources, and allocation process

Independent visit to the Royal Apartments at the Royal Palace (museum section)

DAY 2:

Meeting with Ms. Esther Ocaña Martín (Head of the Accounting Department)

- Presentation of the electronic accounting system
- Overview of document workflow and cooperation between involved departments

Meeting with Ms. Karina Marotta Peramos (Technical Advisor, Cabinet of the President, Board of Directors)

- Discussion on potential collaboration between royal residences and recommendations on relevant institutional contacts
- Exchange of views on operational similarities and differences

Meeting with Ms. Paula Arenas Molina (Head of Installations Area, Directorate of Properties and Natural Environment)

- Detailed overview of Patrimonio Nacional's activities related to the Recovery, Transformation and Resilience Funds (RRF)
- Explanation of funding acquisition, cooperation with managing institutions, implementation, and financial reporting

Follow-up meeting with Mr. Zurita

- Exchange of views, daily summary and agenda for the next day

Afternoon attendance at a public talk at the Royal Collections Gallery auditorium

- Conversation between the Director de las Colecciones Reales and Ms. María Bolaños about evolution of museums in Spain over the past 25 years



DAY 3:

Meeting with Ms. Natalia Valbuena Martínez (Service for Procurement Programming)

- Presentation of the public procurement management system for minor contract and procedures
- Explanation of operating rules, document workflow, and electronic templates for various processes

Site visit with architect Ms. Clara Martín López

- Access to the cubierta (roof area) of the Royal Palace
- Presentation of ongoing works related to the replacement of the historical lead roof covering, carried out under the EU-funded programme (RRF)

Meeting with Mr. Roberto Muñoz Martín (Textile Conservator, Royal Palace)

- Discussion on potential collaboration within a conservation project
- Tour of the textile conservation workshop

Follow-up meeting with Mr. Zurita

- Summary of the day and planning for the next activities

Independent visit to the Museo Nacional Thyssen-Bornemisza



DAY 4:

Meeting in Public Procurement Department - Major Contracts

- Overview of the procurement process for large-scale contracts
- Demonstration of the document workflow, digital system, and electronic templates for various processes

Group visit to the Royal Collections Gallery guided by Ms. Irene Domènech (Deputy Director of the Gallery)

- Presentation of the collection and the logistics behind the building and movement of objects
- Insights into the building's maintenance, ongoing conservation, and visitor management

Meeting with Mr. Antonio Sánchez-Luengo (Deputy Director of the Gallery, Coordinator of the Alteraciones programme)

- Discussion on potential inter-institutional collaboration
- Exchange of ideas regarding joint exhibition projects and contemporary art interpretation
- Expression of mutual interest in developing a shared initiative

Meeting with Ms. María Teresa Vaquerizo Ruiz and Mr. José Luis Abajo Izquierdo (Communication Department)

- Interview recording for Patrimonio Nacional's social media platforms

Independent visit to the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía



DAY 5:

Meeting with Carolina Rodríguez García (Budget Service)

- Discuss on the institution's budget and the challenges related to the fact that the current budget is outdated but remains in effect.

Meeting with Ms. M^a del Prado Serrano (Head of the Procurement Service)

- General discussion on the coordination of procurement procedures and institutional practices
- Exchange on challenges in managing complex procurement processes and regulatory compliance

- Presentation of the bid opening and evaluation procedures carried out by the mesa de contratación (procurement committee)
 - Explanation of the steps for verifying bidders' technical and financial solvency and legal capacity
- Farewell walk-through across departments
- Informal meetings and farewell conversations with most of the colleagues met during the week
- Final meeting with Director Mr. Zurita
- Summary of the mobility programme - Exchange of impressions and feedback
 - Signing of the participation certificate
- Meeting with Ms. Elena Alliaudi (Coordinator of the Network of European Royal Residences)
- Exchange of experiences and reflections related to the mobility

4. ORGANIZATION OF THE TRIP

Apart from the mobility grant provided by Network of European Royal Residences, my home institution arranged the flight through an agreement with the Polish national airline. I searched for accommodation using Booking.com and Airbnb, eventually choosing an apartment through Airbnb due to its closer proximity to the Palacio Real. During my stay in Madrid, I mainly used public transportation to get around the city.



5. CONCLUSION: ADDED VALUES, NEW COMPETENCIES, WORKING METHODS, VISION, ETC

One of the greatest added values of this mobility experience is the network of professional contacts I have established, which may lead to further joint initiatives. We are currently in discussions about a potential collaborative project. On a mini scale, one such collaboration already took place– I participated in the recording of a short video for Patrimonio Nacional's social media.

After returning to Poland, I was asked to contribute a few additional shots referencing my home institution, which we successfully coordinated with the parallel promotion department in my institution. Another valuable insight was observing how nearly all internal processes at the Palacio Real are managed electronically, with a fully paperless document workflow. This is a solution I will strongly recommend for implementation at my home institution. On a personal level, this mobility also gave me the opportunity to return to active use of the Spanish language, which was both motivating and rewarding. It was also a deeply enriching intercultural experience.

ELENA VAQUERO REDONDO

Coordinator of educational and accessibility programmes

Sending institution: Patrimonio Nacional, Spain

Host institution: Musei Reali di Torino, Italy

Date of mobility: 29 September – 3 October 2025



1. INTRODUCTION

During my training stay at the Musei Reali di Torino, I had the opportunity to learn about the actions and activities aimed at improving accessibility for people with visual impairments that are carried out in this institution.

The main objective of this mobility was to learn from the methodologies implemented at the Musei Reali di Torino—especially activities such as tactile visits and the use of sensory materials—in order to incorporate practices and resources that can be adapted to the spaces managed by Patrimonio Nacional in Spain.

Thanks to the availability and dedication of the educational team, as well as the support of my scholarship supervisor, I was able to explore the accessible routes, the materials used with visitors with sensory disabilities, and the use of both original and reproduced three-dimensional models. I also had the opportunity to become familiar with the multisensory panels displayed in the exhibition rooms and with various tactile educational resources.

Furthermore, I observed the implementation of architectural barrier removal solutions in different areas of both the Musei Reali di Torino and the Venaria Reale. This experience has been profoundly enriching, as it allowed me to learn about well-established practices in the field of accessibility and cultural inclusion, which will now serve as a foundation for developing new lines of work at Patrimonio Nacional aimed at promoting more inclusive and accessible environments for all audiences.

2. HOST AND SENDING INSTITUTION: DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES

Both Spain's Patrimonio Nacional and the Musei Reali di Torino share a common purpose: to preserve, research, interpret, and display the legacy of former monarchies —palaces, gardens, religious buildings, and royal collections— transforming them into spaces open to everyone. Both institutions show how a heritage that once symbolized dynastic power has become today a shared cultural asset, serving education, culture, and public enjoyment.

In the case of Patrimonio Nacional, its work extends across Spain: it manages palaces such as those of Madrid, El Prado, and La Granja de San Ildefonso, as well as monasteries, historic gardens, and valuable art collections that still occasionally host official ceremonies of the Spanish Crown. The Musei Reali di Torino, on the other hand, brings together within a single large complex the Royal Palace, the Armory, the Galleria Sabauda, the Museum of Antiquities, and the Royal Gardens, offering a unified experience that spans centuries of the House of Savoy and the history of Italy.

Both institutions face a shared challenge: to keep an immense heritage alive, make it accessible without compromising its authenticity, and connect the past with the sensibilities of the present. Ultimately, they represent two different approaches —one broader and more ceremonial, the other more focused and museological— to showing how royal heritage can continue to inspire, move, and educate people today.

3. PROGRAMME OF THE STAY

During my training stay in the city of Turin, I had the opportunity to learn about the operations of the Musei Reali di Torino, as well as to visit the Reggia di Venaria Reale for a day. This experience has been crucial in broadening my knowledge of accessibility, heritage education, and cultural inclusion, especially regarding visual and sensory disabilities — priority areas in my work at Patrimonio Nacional.

DAY 1:

The day began with a meeting with Dr. Lorenza Santa, who offered a comprehensive introduction to the history and structure of the Musei Reali di Torino, an extensive museum complex that brings together several heritage spaces of great historical and artistic significance.



The Musei Reali comprise the Palazzo Reale (Royal Palace), the Armeria Reale (Royal Armory), the Galleria Sabauda, the Museo di Antichità (Museum of Antiquities), the Biblioteca Reale (Royal Library), the Giardini Reali (Royal Gardens), and the Palazzo Chiabrese, as well as the Cappella della Sindone (Chapel of the Holy Shroud), an architectural jewel linked to the most emblematic relic of Turin's tradition.

These spaces form a journey spanning more than three thousand years of history, from archaeological remains to masterpieces of the Renaissance and Baroque periods, with special emphasis on the figure and legacy of the House of Savoy, the dynasty that unified Italy in the 19th century under the reign of Victor Emmanuel II. Dr. Santa highlighted how the Musei Reali complex preserves and conveys the memory of this family, who ruled the Kingdom of Piedmont-Sardinia and later the Kingdom of Italy until 1946. The palace complex and its collections reflect the splendour of the Savoy as patrons of the arts, urban development, and European diplomacy, as well as their role in shaping modern Turin.

Later, I held a brief meeting with Dr. Giorgia Corso, head of the Educational Services, with whom I discussed the programmes dedicated to accessibility and the educational initiatives carried out by the museum throughout the year. After these presentations and meetings, I toured the various buildings that make up the Musei Reali di Torino, exploring each space in greater depth.

The Musei Reali are an outstanding example of how to integrate accessibility into contemporary museological practice. The institution has developed specific itineraries for people with sensory needs, designed in collaboration with the Unione Italiana Ciechi e Ipovedenti di Torino (Italian Union of the Blind and Visually Impaired of Turin) and the Istituto dei Sordi di Torino (Institute for the Deaf of Turin). These routes include adaptations both in content and interpretive resources, offering a more inclusive, participatory, and multisensory experience.

DAY 2:

The morning was dedicated to the direct observation of the work carried out by the Educational Services team, coordinated by Dr. Giorgia Corso. I was able to examine the materials used during visits for people with visual impairments, among which tactile models, three-dimensional reproductions, and multisensory panels stand out.

In the Archaeological Gallery, I observed the presence of multisensory totems distributed throughout the rooms, combining relief panels, audio descriptions, and tactile maps. These resources, developed in collaboration with specialised associations, allow for an autonomous and enriching interaction with the exhibited pieces. In addition, many of the rooms feature QR codes linked to adapted audio guides, and in certain spaces visitors can explore artworks or reproductions through touch, accompanied by relief maps that help them navigate the exhibition route.



DAY 3:

The day was focused on conservation and museological research. Dr. Lorenza Santa presented the main ongoing projects related to preventive conservation, restoration, and the study of collections. Afterwards, I had the opportunity to take a special tour of the apartments that are usually closed to the public, including the Royal Kitchens, the Apartments of Queen Elena and King Vittorio Emanuele III, the Apartments of the Foreign Princes and of Queen Maria Theresa of Habsburg, as well as the Apartments of the Princes of Piedmont.

DAY 4:

The fourth day was dedicated to the Reggia di Venaria Reale, one of the most iconic Baroque complexes in Europe. After travelling by bus from Piazza Castello, I held a meeting with representatives of the Reggia to learn in detail about their educational services, accessibility policies, and recent exhibition projects.

Together with the exhibition representatives, I visited the exhibitions "Fernand Léger!" and "Magnifiche Collezioni. Arte e potere nella Genova dei Dogi", both designed according to criteria of full motor, visual, and cognitive accessibility. They feature tactile panels, relief reproductions, and sensory resources that facilitate understanding of the content for all audiences.

In the gardens of the Reggia, I observed — and was shown — how the natural surroundings are transformed into an inclusive and sensory space. Visitors are encouraged to experience heritage with all their senses, especially through the works of Giuseppe Penone, sculptures that invite tactile exploration and establish a dialogue between art and nature.



DAY 5:

The final day was dedicated to a specialised visit focused on cabinetmaking and historic furniture preserved in the Royal Palace apartments. The session was attended by members of the Furniture History Society from the United Kingdom, as well as leading specialists in the history of furniture and decorative arts. It was an exceptional opportunity to delve deeper into the techniques used for the conservation and study of courtly furnishings, as well as to reflect on the dialogue between craftsmanship, design, and historical context.

Throughout the visit, we addressed topics such as material identification, intervention methods, and restoration criteria, comparing the different practices employed across European institutions. The direct observation of original pieces—many of which are not normally accessible to the general public—provided a valuable insight into the technical and symbolic complexity of palace interiors.

We also engaged in a productive exchange with Dr. Lorenza Santa, with whom we discussed both the most innovative aspects we had gained from this stay and the common challenges faced by our respective institutions. Dr. Santa generously responded to our questions, clarified methodological doubts, and offered valuable advice for applying what we had learned to future research and heritage dissemination projects.



4. ORGANIZATION OF THE TRIP

I arranged the accommodation thanks to the recommendation of an acquaintance who had lived in Turin and who directly provided me with the contact of the person renting the apartment. Once the official stay had concluded, I decided to extend my time in the city for an additional four days on a personal basis in order to deepen my understanding of its cultural richness; all expenses incurred during those days were entirely at my own cost, except for the return taxi journeys, which I would have used in any case on a normal travel day. I travelled to Turin by plane, taking a taxi from my home in Madrid to Madrid-Barajas Airport, and then another taxi from Turin Airport to the apartment. For the return journey, I followed the same route in reverse: a taxi from the apartment to Turin Airport and, upon arrival in Spain, another taxi from the airport to my home. During the official stay, I moved mainly on foot and by public transport, as the apartment was very well located in the city centre.

Only on the day of the visit to the Reggia di Venaria Reale did I use the bus, both outbound and on the return. As Turin is a city in northern Italy and I expected the weather to be cold, I brought warm clothing (although temperatures turned out to be milder than anticipated), and I took the opportunity to transport educational materials produced by the Education Department of Patrimonio Nacional as a sample of our work, which required the use of a slightly larger suitcase than a carry-on and therefore had to be checked in, including the corresponding cost. I also contracted travel insurance, although I have not included daily subsistence expenses, as these are covered by Patrimonio Nacional. Overall, the logistical organisation of the trip was simple and efficient.

5. CONCLUSION: ADDED VALUES, NEW COMPETENCIES, WORKING METHODS, VISION, ETC

This experience has been truly enriching and has allowed me to learn first-hand how other institutions approach areas such as accessibility, conservation, and heritage education. Beyond the technical content, the most valuable part was being able to exchange ideas with professionals facing similar challenges and realising that many of our own practices are already heading in the right direction, even though there is always room for improvement. I return with new ideas, contacts to collaborate with in the future, and a broader perspective on how to make heritage truly accessible and meaningful for everyone.



MAŁGORZATA ZIEMIŃSKA

Assistant in Educational Department

Sending institution: Museum of King Jan III's Palace at Wilanów, Poland

Host institution: Palace of Fontainebleau, France

Date of mobility: 13 September – 20 September 2025



1. INTRODUCTION

The main scope of my mobility was to acquire knowledge about reenactment, especially organization of big reenactment events. My French colleagues not only answered to all my questions concerning this subject but also enriched my program with meetings, observations of lessons, visiting different parts of the Museum. This approach allowed me to better understand the similarities and differences between our institutions in broadly understood education. I would like to express my gratitude towards employees of Château de Fontainebleau for sharing their knowledge, thoughts, expertise and also for warmth and care with which I was met there.

2. HOST AND SENDING INSTITUTION: DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES

Although Château de Fontainebleau covers much bigger area than Muzeum Pałacu Króla Jana III w Wilanowie there are more similarities than I expected. Both residence were enlarged and remodeled in the past, both are surrounded by formal gardens, landscape gardens and finally protected forest area. The number of employees is almost the same but there are important differences in structure. Service pédagogique, that is the closest to Educational Department in Wilanów, takes care of school groups and cooperation with teachers. The rest of the public is under the care of Service culturel. We have ca 50 educators on temporary contracts (though many of them work with us for many consecutive years) that provide guided tours and workshops. Service pédagogique has 4 educators on full-time contracts. To cover the needs of school groups they provide educational materials and courses for teachers to enable them to lead lessons, workshops or guided tours by themselves. Château de Fontainebleau practices many different forms of cooperation with artist, teachers and students that were new and inspiring for me. I think that we share similar approach to education and reenactment, where we are looking for the meaning, trying to understand, why things work the way they do.

3. PROGRAMME OF THE STAY

DAY 1:

- Reception at the Service pédagogique's office – discussion about my expectations and interests (post-colonialism, difficult questions in reenactment, ecological education etc.)
- Guided tour in the castle
- Observation of the "Integration Day" – the idea of providing whole day of activities (3 different types: guided tour, outdoor game and workshops, i.e. historical dance workshops) might be applicable in our museum and interesting for schools in Warsaw • Visiting spaces dedicated to educational workshops. During the visit I learnt also about artistic residences and American artistic summer camp/school





DAY 2:

- Trying my best at jeu de paume ☺ - not only this sport activity was enjoyable but also I learnt a lot about influence of the game on language and art. I required knowledge about the way the museum is cooperating with specialist, how do they learn the mastery of the craft. The approach, presented by the museum, that combines reenactment, sport activity, history and art history lesson is very refreshing and worth copying.
- Meeting with Damien Heurtebise (Direction de l'accueil et des publics) and David Millerou – discussion about narration in the museum and how to make the complex history, visible in the monument, readable for the Public (As Mr Millerou pointed out we share common problems – the residence is advertised in connection with 2 main historical figures but it's not enough to understand why the building looks the way it looks today. Moreover – the tourist starts their visit in the apartments for different era that those key figures lived, which might be misleading); joint visit to the castle – following the path of the tourist, exchanging ideas
- Meeting with Anne Meny-Horne (Administratrice générale) – discussion about the authenticity in the reenactment, the truths uncovered thanks to the experimental archeology. I would like to thank the Director for recommending me interesting books on this subject, that I'm currently reading.
- Visiting storage spaces

DAY 3:

- Meeting with Mélanie Lefebvre, responsible for reenactment events – Mrs. Lefebvre shared with me very detailed and practical knowledge about organizational side of big reenactment events as well as her thoughts about what is important in this type of events
- Meeting with David Millerou and discussion about traps hidden in reenactment, need of historical commentary and possibly controversial subjects and how to present difficult matters (i.e. St. Hubert and hunting traditions)
- Visiting Empress Eugenie's museum (Chinese Museum) and discussion about the ways how to deal with a difficult past in the museum (and challenges that educators encounter)
- Visiting Napoleon I's Petits Appartements, The Turkish Boudoir and Napoleon III's theatre – learning about more human characteristics of the historical figures.



DAY 4:

- Observation of the lesson/guided tour for the high school students in the gardens on the exhibition Grandeur Nature II. L'esprit de la forêt – this lesson (as well as the excursion to the forest) was a part of a school project on George Sand. It was very inspiring to see the school project carried out in cooperation of the museum and the ways the narration about modern art, nature and George Sand were combined.
- Walk through the gardens with the Head of the gardeners and employees of Service pédagogique – discussion about different aspects of historical gardens: how to care about them, the influence of climate changes, invasive species, connection between castle/palace and its gardens, communication with the Public.
- Excursion to Franchard with high schoolers – it was yet another interesting example of combining physical activity, nature, history and art history classes (even geology class). As a part of school project that should provide inspiration to the students and their own artistic projects on George Sand, this excursion could have been very fruitful. I think that we could implement some version of this kind of cooperation between museum and school.

DAY 5:

- Meeting with the content creator for the mobile application for the families – talking about how to convey entertaining yet valuable and not oversimplified knowledge to the younger audience.
- Observation of the pre-event meeting before the European Heritage Days
- Participation in the meeting with internship teacher – the idea of close cooperation between a teacher and a museum is very interesting and profitable to both sides. Although it would be impossible to implement internship without a support of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Culture, as we don't have programs similar to DAC, it seems worth trying to encourage teachers to work on joint projects.
- Observation of the meeting with representatives of other institutions and an ecologist on guidelines for cultural institutions regarding outdoor exhibitions and sustainable development, biodiversity and ecology – consultations with experts in different fields and working together on guidelines for outdoor exhibitions is a very valuable idea and applicable in Wilanów.



4. ORGANIZATION OF THE TRIP

I choose the airport closer to Fontainebleau, that is Orly, which dictated the choice of the airlines. Before the travel I asked my colleagues, who visited Fontainebleau earlier, how to commute from the airport to Fontainebleau and learnt that it might take longer than expected. The voyage went well in both directions. The only surprise (an issue) was that the arrows in the Paris subway indicate directions in a different manner that we're used to in Poland and it was a little bit misleading. I found accommodation on booking.com.

5. CONCLUSION: ADDED VALUES, NEW COMPETENCES, WORKING METHODS, NEW VISION

I learnt a lot about practical side of organizing big reenactment events but also the importance of commentary and context. The artistic residence, individual projects for students and close cooperation with teachers is something I would like to work on. I communicated mostly in French, which I'm proud of, as I wasn't very confident in my French linguistic skills.



IVANA GLORIA FRANK

Museum Educator - Employee of the Children's Museum

Sending institution: Schönbrunn Group, Austria

Host institution: Royal Palace of Gödöllő, Hungary

Date of mobility: 09 to 13 September 2025



1. INTRODUCTION

To begin with, I would like to express my sincere gratitude for the opportunity to take part in the Mobility Grants Programme. From the very beginning, I felt well supported by everyone involved. My mentor Erzsébet Demeter-Guba was a perfect host, very helpful, very kind. She was preparing a suitable schedule for my stay. I was able to meet as many co-workers as possible. I can report that the team in Hungary was clearly well-prepared for my arrival and seemed genuinely happy to welcome me. This was such a great feeling.

During my stay, I was able to gain a lot of new experiences – both professionally and personally. Everyone I met was polite, welcoming and always ready to help. Again, I would especially like to highlight my mentor, Erzsébet, who was so dedicated and supportive throughout the entire process. She helped me with the hotel and the travel back to Budapest, when I had to leave on my last day.

I spent many hours in the palace and by the third day in, my mentor and I had such lovely chats, we oversaw the time and talked until the late evening, so I had some kind of royal palace by night experience – I really enjoyed that evening.

I was also more than thankful that I was able to join my co-workers on their guided tours. Christina, who is half American, half Hungarian gave me a great tour in her very likeable American English style. At this point I must mention that I was so glad to have had all my co-workers speaking English to me on a fine level. The director, who I also met, was even talking in German, my mother tongue to me. I was honored that he also took some time to welcome me. As there are some German speaking guides on the team, I was offered a guided tour through the palace by Lili, who was practicing for her German guided tour exam. This part I particularly liked as we were kind of the same peer group. She showed me around, explained historical facts, while I helped with some German vocabs and phrases, which made me feel especially included and valued.

To sum up this introduction I had a very pleasant stay in Gödöllő and the chance to build new friendships, which made the experience even more meaningful. I felt truly welcome and motivated; this study trip was an invaluable time.

2. HOST AND SENDING INSTITUTION: DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES

STRUCTURES:

I had the impression that our museum education systems are quite different from the structures. In Gödöllő there was one person in the lead on the museum educators' team. In total it was a group of about five colleagues, who come up together with new ideas for new topics or programs. All of them are working as guides, birthday party guides, and in the office, answering emails and answering phone calls. In Vienna we are a separate team in the children's museum with a lot more employees.

Our heads of department oversee the program development, all the staff related topics, and correspondences with visiting groups/visitors whereas a group of about 25-30 colleagues work as guides, birthday party guides, at the cash desk or as museum guards. Some co-workers, about five, are also mainly involved in the office work like checking emails and booking guided tours for school groups.

As we have an area where children can dress up in beautiful



costumes, some colleagues are involved in the maintenance of the dresses and jackets, like ironing. In Gödöllő they also have costumes but only for the birthday parties, not for regular visits as we have.

METHODS:

When it comes to methods of teaching school groups and visitors, we work in a very similar way. We also work with a lot of pictures and additional material for our guided tours, however in Vienna in the children's museum we do not have audio guides, but written information. I noticed that in Gödöllő my co-workers used baskets to carry the teaching materials, we use bags. I was on a tour through the park, where my colleague Melinda used a tablet to show pictures of birds and she also played their sounds, so you could hear it as well – this we do not have yet in Vienna.

In Gödöllő they have created a whole world for kids with their books about Prince Magnus Mousecastle by the lovely author Ildikó Faludi, who also works in the palace. The books are very popular in Hungary and have been awarded too. So, a big part of the children's program is based on the mouse story. There is a game inside the palace, in every room you can find a little mouse, and it is a riddle-game for the young visitors. The audio guide for kids is also related to this plot and only available in Hungarian, like most of the children's program. Besides that, there is a playroom where they can read the books, play a board game, and a computer game also linked to Prince Magnus Mousecastle. There have been competitions too where kids should create a tiny little house for Prince Magnus, made of a shoebox. In the summer children can also take part in a summer camp hosted by the Royal Palace of Gödöllő. That's a main difference to Schönbrunn we do not have books or a board game about our mascot ghost Poldi, but we do have guided tours and birthday parties related to him. Summer camps we also do not offer.



FAMILY-FRIENDLY ROOM:

This room was outstanding to me; I really liked the idea of having a family-friendly room. I would love to see this implemented at our palace too. In Gödöllő it is publicly accessible, not just for regular visitors, but also for families, who have spent time in the park for example. It is intended for breastfeeding babies and feeding toddlers. There you can find a microwave, water, a crib, a comfortable armchair and a changing table. I think this is a truly thoughtful space for mothers and families. Staff would always knock on the rooms door before entering it. The Royal Palace of Gödöllő has received an award for being a family-friendly place.

In Gödöllő it is not allowed to carry children in a stroller, so families can borrow a baby carrier provided by the palace. This idea is also interesting for the children's museum. We do allow strollers in the museum, however sometimes visitors bring huge baby carriers on their backs, these specific ones we can not allow due to our house rules. There is a repeating event in Gödöllő, especially for mothers carrying their babies, where the focus is on the mothers, to enjoy the palace in a rather adult related program, as they are probably more used to kid's programs on a daily. Again, some pictures below:

3. PROGRAMME OF THE STAY

DAY 1:

- Introduction to the Museum Education Team, Front Office, and other departments.
Educational Program: Austro-Hungarian Monarchy (Royal Suites)
 - Led by: Orsolya Papházi-Lovas
 - Focus: Historical context of the Austro-Hungarian era presented in the permanent exhibition.
- Experience Exchange
- Lunch Break
- Educational Program: Career Guidance for Students
 - Led by: Ivett Villangó-Török
 - Focus: Helping students explore career paths through museum education.
 - Very interesting to sending institution!
- Experience Exchange

DAY 2:

- Educational Program Introduction
 - Overview of various museum education programs (e.g. fairytale figure of the Palace, learning spaces, teaching objects, replicas).
- Meeting with Ildikó Faludi, author of the Palace's fairytale book.
 - It was such an honor for me to have met Ildikó and listened to her presentation, got to ask her many questions about the books and events related to it!
- Child-focused activity: Game sheets and activities in the permanent exhibition.
- Lunch Break
- Family-Friendly Services in the Palace; I got to see the room for little kids and baby carriers
- Tour of the Museum Education Room
- Overview of birthday programs featuring historical costumes
 - This is where children can dress up while birthday parties
 - Dressing up is only for birthday parties, there is no regular dressing up part like in Schönbrunn
- Guided tour through the palace in German by Lili
- Experience Exchange



DAY 3:

- Educational Program: The Baroque Period
 - Led by: Ivett Villangó-Török
 - Focus on Baroque history and context through exhibits.
- Experience Exchange
- Photographer took some pictures to document my stay, we took a group picture, which is a great souvenir!
- Lunch Break
- Introduction to The Secret Life of the Palace, an engaging storytelling-based format
- Experience Exchange



DAY 4:

- Educational Program: Portraits, Coats of Arms & Heraldry
 - Led by: Anna Alina Lénárd
 - Focus: Symbolic elements in Palace artwork and design.
- Experience Exchange
- Lunch Break
- Educational Program for a visitor group with disabilities in Hungarian in the park of the palace
 - Combined with audio elements, tablet
 - About flora and fauna
- Guided tour for university students in English in the park, former riding hall, Queen Elisabeth's Garden
- Experience Exchange
- Exploring the palace again only with an audio guide
- Permanent exception, baroque theatre, cellar, palace by night
 - with my mentor Erzsébet Demeter-Guba
 - Discussion on specialized educational programs held at these venues

DAY 5:

- "Palace Friends" Children's Club (Royal Gardens)
 - Led by: Ivett Villangó-Török
 - Outdoor educational activities tailored for children.
 - Crafting
- Visiting the stables
- Experience Exchange
- Lunch Break
- Taking pictures with colleagues, saying goodbye
- Farewell



4. ORGANIZATION OF THE TRIP

My mentor helped me find a suitable accommodation, I chose the one she recommended, which was also the closest to my workplace. I was happy about that, as I could walk to work. I personally felt more secure staying in a hotel with staff around the whole day compared to an Airbnb where no one would be around. I was also glad to have had breakfast included and enough time in the morning, as the hotel was very close to the palace.

For my arrival I came one afternoon early to be prepared the best way possible. I had a lot of luggage, as I was happy to bring some presents for my mentor and co-workers in Gödöllő from Schönbrunn. I also brought some food from home, so it was very helpful to arrive by car. I also had an appointment back home prior to my departure, so catching a suitable train was also not possible.

I left the palace on my last day, the 13th of September 2025 in the afternoon, my train was scheduled in the evening. I took the bus, the tram and the train to a train station in Hungary close to the Austrian border, where I was picked up by my family by car. In the aftermath I noticed on the financial report file, that I could have stayed one night more and leave in the morning after my last day at work. That was sad for me, I didn't know about it earlier, I really missed that piece of information unfortunately. So, the last day of my stay in Gödöllő was rather short.

5. CONCLUSION: ADDED VALUES, NEW COMPETENCIES, WORKING METHODS, VISION, ETC

To conclude I want to point out that I absolutely enjoyed my time at the Royal Palace of Gödöllő. Not only my mentor and my co-workers were so friendly and open minded, I also had nice conversations with a visiting student group from a university located in Gödöllő. I was so happy to speak English daily and be in an international sphere, I loved how warm everyone was towards me, and I felt comfortable in the flat hierarchies. I also had my own desk; I was so amazed by that gesture. My co-workers were interested in my opinions and my experiences, I really felt seen. For sure I gained many new impressions on how to teach, but also to embrace team work even more. I got to see that sometimes you can ask for help from your colleagues and you do not have to feel bad about it, as everyone can have a difficult day. Coming to new visions: I loved that they offer a guided tour on strong women like the later blind wife of Antal Grassalkovich I. – I would support such a concept in Schönbrunn too! Besides that, I appreciate everything beneficial to families as the family-friendly room and special activities for kids. I got to know that there are some different structures in Gödöllő also concerning the funding, however maybe we can implement some of the best practices also in Schönbrunn or other palaces in Europe. Another topic I think is great, are programs for children and adults with disabilities. There must be done more for sure all over the world.



BLANCA CABRERA ANDONAEGUI**Head of service in the Department of Education**

Sending institution: Patrimonio Nacional, Spain

Host institution: Schönbrunn Group, Austria

Date of mobility: 26 to 30 May 2025

**1. INTRODUCTION**

My objective when I applied for this mobility grant was to learn about the educational activities aimed at schools and the general public that took place at Schönbrunn Palace. Specifically, I was very interested in the activity offered for secondary school groups regarding the marriage policy of the House of Habsburg. It is at this point that I see a coincidence between the activities held at Schönbrunn Palace and those we carry out in the Royal Collections Gallery, since our museum has a floor dedicated to the House of Habsburg, where we currently offer an educational visit for second-year secondary school groups.

This marriage policy has largely determined European geopolitics since the 15th century. It is very interesting to talk to students about this situation, as most of them are unaware of the importance of weddings planned within a royal house. In Spain, for example, we have very clear examples of the political effects of weddings between royal houses, beginning with the marriage between Joanna of Castile and Philip of Habsburg, which led to the birth of Charles I, the great Habsburg emperor of the 16th century.

My idea is to bring the activity on Habsburg marriage policies to the Galería de las Colecciones Reales for the next school year, because I think it's perfect as a finale to the visit organized for high school students. During my mobility at Schönbrunn Palace, I was able to gather a lot of information about the Austrian branch of the House of Habsburg, and I expanded the idea I had at the beginning for the activity, so that we could talk to the students about some important figures of that family, such as Leopold I, married to the Infanta Margarita, the famous protagonist of the painting "Las Meninas".

The activity will be carried out in the same way as in Schönbrunn. Students will receive one card, each with a member of the Habsburg family, and they will have to find their spouse using clues written on the cards.

When they find them, they will be arranged in chronological order, creating a family tree. My idea is to discuss the political repercussions of these marriages with the group afterward and to consider what European geopolitics would have been like if, instead of these marriages, different marriages had taken place.

2. HOST AND SENDING INSTITUTION: DIFFERENCES AND SIMILARITIES

I was surprised by the many similarities between Schönbrunn Palace and the Royal Palace in Madrid, especially in terms of the large number of visitors and the way in which the flow of visitors is managed. I also saw that the educators who work with school groups have similar methodologies, such as the use of images to support the visit and the visits are always participatory and dynamic.

A big difference between Schönbrunn and Patrimonio Nacional is the enormous number of resources available, both material resources and classrooms, and the fact that they have a museum dedicated only to school groups and families.

Another difference is the number of educators specialized in school groups that the Schönbrunn group has, much greater than the one we have in National Heritage. But not only at Schönbrunn Palace. Schloss Hof Palace, while conceptually like palaces managed by Patrimonio Nacional, such as the Royal Palace of La Granja or the Royal Palace of Riofrio, is very different in terms of how it is oriented towards children and families. The resources and classrooms found at Schloss Hoff Palace bear no resemblance to those at La Granja or Riofrio. In this sense, our institution could find inspiration in the Schloss Hof palace.

I think our two institutions are very similar in the fields of conservation and research. Both house large royal collections and show visitors palace life and the importance of the monarchs who lived there, particularly during the 18th century.

But the Schönbrunn group has a strong focus on school groups and families, with a children's museum and an active program aimed at families at Schloss Hof. Our institution does not yet have such a varied, stable program, although the work of the education department is focused in that direction, which is why it is so important to have been able to experience these programs firsthand.

3.PROGRAMME OF THE STAY

DAY 1:

The first day I met at 9:00 with Mr. Wolfgang Smejkal, Head of Guest Services and Cultural Education. After a short chat, he took me to meet the education team working at the Kinder Museum at Schönbrunn Palace. I was able to talk with Isabella Barta and Susanne Gruber-Hauk, both responsible of the divisional management for children's and young people's programs. Later, after lunch, I had the opportunity to meet the team of educators who had developed the activity "Habsburg marriage policy" in which I have a particular interest, since I believe it can be transposed to our Galería de las Colecciones Reales.

DAY 2:

During the entire second day, I accompanied Mr. Smejkal to spend the day at Schloss Hoff. The palace offers an impressive array of possibilities for school and family activities, and it made a pleasant impression on me.

DAY 3:

On the morning of the third day, I attended several guided tours for school groups. First, it was a group of 9- and 10-year-olds, and later, a group of teenagers. I was able to appreciate the work of the educators and see that their methodology is very similar to the one we use in our museums. In the afternoon, I had an interesting meeting with museum curator Dr. Birgit Schmitt-Messner and had a talk about the exhibition she curated "Royal Weddings" where I was able to gain a lot of information for the project I am interested in about the Habsburg marriage policy.

DAY 4:

Since this day was a holiday in Austria, I was able to take advantage of the opportunity to visit the capital's major museums and gather information about the educational programs at the Kunsthistorisches Museum, the Leopold Museum, and the Albertina.





DAY 5:

In the morning, I visited the Sisi Museum, accompanied by Mr. Smejkal and the museum staff. I was able to learn about the museography and the educational programs that are being developed there.

In the afternoon, we visited the Furniture Museum (Möbel Museum), exploring the collection, the educational resources, and the classrooms available for school groups. We had an interesting discussion about whether the museum's content (the history of furniture design) was attractive to children. This is a debate we also encounter in our institution, and it is a challenge for us as professionals to find ways to appeal to all audiences.

4. ORGANIZATION OF THE TRIP

I traveled directly from Madrid to Vienna via Ryanair. Since it was impossible to find a seat on the flights for Saturday the 24th or Sunday the 25th, I flew to Vienna on Friday the 23rd of May. I tried to adjust the

time of the stay and flight back on Friday 30, that is why I reserved my apartment until Friday 30. But unfortunately it was not possible, so I had to book one extra night. I rented an apartment through Airbnb very close to Schönbrunn Palace, the address was: Schwendergasse 1A apartment 17, 4 tram stops away, and close to the city center via the same tram. I purchased a 7-day travel card so I could get around during my stay.

5. CONCLUSION: ADDED VALUES, NEW COMPETENCIES, WORKING METHODS, VISION, ETC

This trip has been a great learning experience for me. I was able to learn about the Schönbrunn Group's approach to museum education. The group has greater financial resources than my organization, so some things aren't applicable. However, when I spoke with my colleagues about the budget we manage at Patrimonio Nacional, they also took the time to show me very low-cost resources they use, and I was able to see the enormous creativity of their teaching teams. This has been a great inspiration for me, and I've seen how much can be done with little material. My initial idea for this trip was to specifically learn about one of the educational workshops they offer at the Schönbrunn Kinder Museum: "Habsburg Marriage Policy." I think this activity could be perfectly replicated at the Galería de las Colecciones Reales next year, as part of our visit to the Habsburg Museum floor that we do every Tuesday with second-year secondary school groups. I spoke with the teacher who develops the program, because she was at the moment intended to update the content. Between the two of us, we came up with several ideas on how to improve the activity, and it will be very satisfying to see if the same activity we created will be carried out next school year, both at Schönbrunn Palace and at the Galería de las Colecciones Reales.

