PRESS RELEASE

International Award for the Obersalzberg Documentation Center: The Best in Heritage Project of Influence 2026

Berchtesgaden / Barcelona (19 November 2026). The annual *The Best in Heritage* conference brings together award-winning projects from around the world in the fields of cultural heritage and museums. At the close of this year's conference in Barcelona, the Obersalzberg Documentation Center was named *Project of Influence*.

Each year, an expert jury selects around two dozen outstanding international projects that received museum or cultural heritage awards in the previous year. They are given the opportunity to present their work at *The Best in Heritage* conference and discuss it with colleagues from around the world. In addition to the Obersalzberg Documentation Center, representatives from across Europe had travelled to Barcelona, as well as participants from countries including Argentina and Barbados, China and Japan, Canada and Nepal.

The Obersalzberg Documentation Center was invited to Barcelona as the recipient of the *Luigi Micheletti Award* from the *European Museum Academy*. Dr Sven Keller, Head of the Documentation Center, presented the permanent exhibition *Idyll and Atrocity*, which opened in 2023 in the newly constructed extension building. He explained the concept behind making the history of Obersalzberg – Adolf Hitler's chosen home and mountain residence – accessible to the many visitors who travel to Berchtesgaden every year through well-founded historical information.

He emphasised that a responsible approach to the site's history and remembrance, free from commercial interests, is both possible and worthwhile. Transparency, openness and comprehensive information are essential to prevent the site from being depoliticised or shrouded in myth. At the same time, everyday uses of the site,

lernen und erinnern

THE BEST IN HERITAGE
PROJECT OF INFLUENCE 2026

European Museum Academy Awards
Luigi Micheletti Award 2025
WINNER 2025

European Museum of the Year Awards
Special Commendation 2026

including tourism, help counteract its sacralisation and glorification. The Obersalzberg Documentation Center sees itself as a place for everyone, is committed to democratic and pluralistic values, and offers an extensive programme of educational activities and events.

At the end of the productive conference, the approximately 150 participants had the opportunity to vote for one of the projects presented and honour it as the *Project of Influence* of 2026. The vote went to the Obersalzberg Documentation Center.

In its laudation, the *The Best in Heritage* Advisory Board described the Obersalzberg Documentation Center as an example of how

> "Museums have the ability to take traumatic events that seem to live in the past and connect them to the time and space in which we currently exist. Obersalzberg Documentation Center is educating for our times. It tells the story of a landscape that was appropriated, and media that must be examined in order to discern a more complex story. Grounded in the ideals of democracy and equality, this museum reminds us of this history, ensuring the perpetrators of the past are not re-established as heroes in the present. Its work helps shine a bright light of knowledge for those who will shape our future."

Dr Sven Keller was visibly moved when the result was announced and commented:

> "It was already a great privilege to have the opportunity to present our work at Obersalzberg to this distinguished audience at *The Best in Heritage*. It was a wonderful opportunity to discover fascinating projects, meet inspiring colleagues and exchange ideas. To learn that these experts have now chosen the Obersalzberg Documentation Center from among their peers as *Project of Influence* 2026 has come as a complete surprise and has left me overwhelmed – I can hardly put it into words. In any case, this extraordinary recognition belongs to the entire team at the Obersalzberg Documentation Center, and I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to them for their daily work. We see this as encouragement and motivation, but also as an obligation for the future."

Bavarian State Minister for Finance and Home Affairs Albert Füracker commented on the award:

> "Since 1999, the Obersalzberg Documentation Center has been an institution of national and international significance in confronting the history of National Socialism. The permanent exhibition *Idyll and Atrocity*, which reopened in autumn 2023, vividly illustrates the close connection between Obersalzberg and the horrific mass crimes committed by the Nazi regime. Being named *Project of Influence* once again demonstrates just how indispensable the

contribution of the Obersalzberg Documentation Center is to the culture of remembrance: remembering, warning and learning – this is the only way to keep the terrible injustices of National Socialism present in our collective memory. Almost 700,000 visitors since the reopening in September 2023 are remarkable confirmation of this new concept. I am all the more pleased that the new permanent exhibition is also receiving such high recognition from international experts. Congratulations to the entire team at the Obersalzberg Documentation Center on this award."

The *Best in Heritage* is a non-profit organisation operating under the patronage of the *International Council of Museums* (ICOM) and the European cultural heritage network *Europa Nostra*. This year marked the 25th edition of the *The Best in Heritage* conference.

For the Obersalzberg Documentation Center, this is already the third international award recognising its new permanent exhibition and its work.

In 2025, it received the *Micheletti Award* from the *European Museum Academy*. The award is one of Europe's most prestigious museum prizes and recognises outstanding permanent exhibitions that translate their subject matter into a unique museum narrative.

In addition, in June 2026, the Obersalzberg Documentation Center received a *Special Commendation* at the *European Museum of the Year Awards* in Bilbao.

The Obersalzberg Documentation Center is located in the heart of the former off-limits area around Hitler's mountain residence, above Berchtesgaden. The permanent exhibition *Idyll and Atrocity* focuses on the history of Obersalzberg, which Adolf Hitler made his chosen home. The museum opened in 1999 with its first permanent exhibition and became a major visitor attraction over the following decades. In 2023, a modern museum building was therefore opened, providing space for a much larger, completely redesigned permanent exhibition. The former exhibition building was converted into an educational centre.

Further information about *The Best in Heritage* is available at:
www.thebestinheritage.com/conference

A brochure featuring all the projects presented at the conference is available here:
heyzine.com/flip-book/a835b67978.html

For an overview of the Obersalzberg Documentation Center's exhibitions and programmes, please visit: www.obersalzberg.de

Photo 1: Dr Sven Keller presents the Obersalzberg Documentation Center at The Best in Heritage Conference 2026 in Barcelona, 13 November 2026.

Photo 2: On behalf of the Obersalzberg Documentation Center, Dr Sven Keller (centre) receives the Project of Influence award in Barcelona from Prof Tomislav Šola (Director of The Best in Heritage) and Sara DeYoung (Co-Chair of The Best in Heritage Advisory Board), 13 November 2026.

Photo 3: International award winners from the museum and cultural heritage sectors gathered to exchange ideas at The Best in Heritage Conference in Barcelona. Dr Sven Keller can be seen in the centre holding the Project of Influence award, 13 November 2026.

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CONTACT
Melanie Diehm
Press and Public Relations
Tel.: +49 (0)89 12688-244
presse@obersalzberg.de

POSTAL ADDRESS
Dokumentation Obersalzberg
Press and Public Relations
Salzbergstraße 41
83471 Berchtesgaden