

## Doppeltür mediation project

# Project dossier

Preliminary project August 2021/Short version June 2024



### 1. Summary

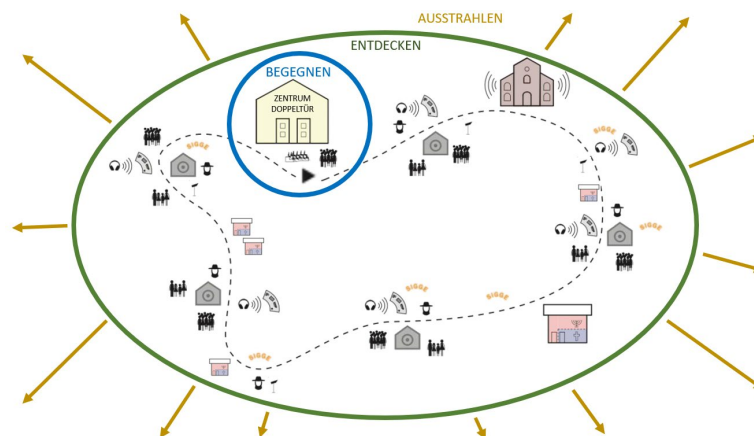
The Doppeltür Encounter Centre aims to make the fascinating and hitherto little-known Jewish-Christian history of coexistence in Canton Aargau's Surb Valley accessible to a wide audience and, as a result, to stimulate an examination of contemporary social issues. It aims to attract 30,000 visitors a year. This unique and challenging project is scheduled to be completed by 2026.

Established in 2017, the Doppeltür Association purchased an historic double-door house on the Lengnau village square in 2019, with the intention of turning it into a meeting centre. The charitable Doppeltür Foundation was then formed in 2022. Amongst other things, it is responsible for real estate, finance and relations with the public sector. The Doppeltür Centre's location is arguably the project's greatest strength: presenting this unique story in an historically correct location provides an authentic setting that would not be achievable anywhere else in Switzerland. The aim is for a modern presentation to showcase the history of Jewish/Christian coexistence in the Surb Valley (mainly in the municipalities of Lengnau and Endingen, in which it has been proven that Jews were permitted to settle from 1622 and 1678 respectively onwards), which is unique in Switzerland. There has been no comparable institution in Europe to date engaging with Jewish/Christian dialogue. The project is supported by the Swiss Federal Office of Culture. The Jewish Cultural Trail has recently been included in Switzerland's intangible cultural heritage and is on the UNESCO list of "Living Traditions". In addition, the Doppeltür Project has been one of the cultural objectives of Canton Aargau since 2021 (Canton Aargau Cultural Concept, Cultural Policy Objectives 2017 – 2022). The project was also included by Canton Aargau in the debate on the "Federal Council Proclamation on the Promotion of Culture in the Years 2021-2024".

## 2. Mediation concept

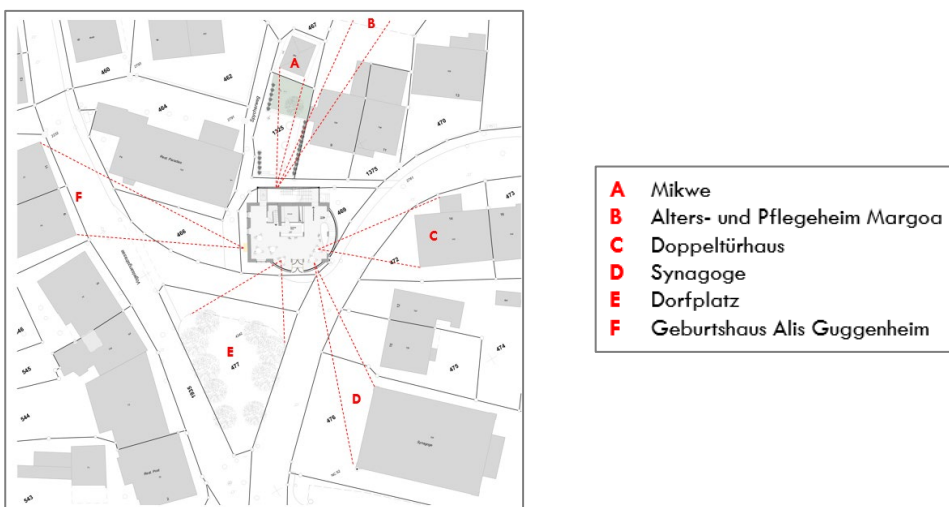
Doppeltür is aimed at a broad audience from all over Switzerland and further afield. It addresses individual visitors, as well as groups, with a range of themes by means of bespoke offerings. A particular focus is the young, i.e. families and school groups. The mediation concept is modular so as to enable it to develop in line with new research findings.

To achieve its vision, Doppeltür is pursuing three overarching goals. The first is to create a central *meeting place* that serves as a rendezvous and starting point and as a place for mediation and dialogue in the form of events and workshops – this is the Doppeltür Centre. The second is to facilitate the *exploration* of sites on the Jewish Cultural Trail in a variety of interactive forms, while the third is to *disseminate* the Surb Valley's unique history throughout Switzerland and abroad in partnership with selected related institutions.



## 3. Exhibition concept

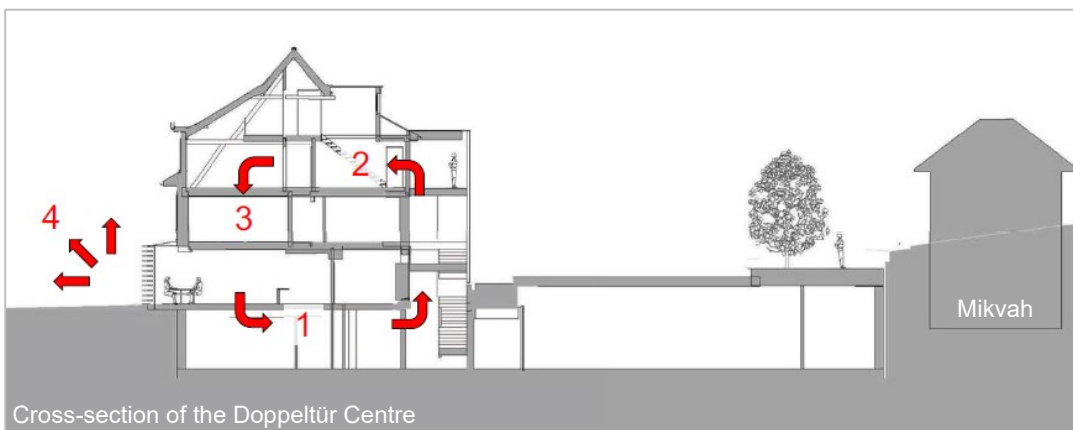
The impressive double-door edifice in Lengnau is to be the aforementioned central place of encounter. Ideally located in the village square, in the immediate vicinity of the synagogue and mikvah, it is being developed and expanded as Doppeltür's main contact centre – its beating heart, so to speak. As a multifunctional venue it will be home to a number of central functions.



The Doppeltür Centre does not see itself as a museum, but as a place for exploring the coexistence of people with different origins, and for “encountering” history in the original locations. The Centre is working closely with Baden’s History Museum and is envisaging collaboration with the Höfli Museum in Bad Zurzach, the Jewish Museums in Basel, Hohenems and Gailingen, and Christian institutions such as the Paulus Akademie.

### 3.1. Presentation

The Doppeltür Centre’s exhibition concept is composed of four mediation components. In the first section, visitors are introduced to the Surb Valley’s history, while the second brings the narrative back to the present. The third component focuses on self-awareness, encouraging you to explore personal issues of coexistence and mutual respect across several thematic areas. The fourth component of the concept is the Jewish Cultural Trail and the environment of the villages of Lengnau and Endingen. Based on the actual internal arrangement of Lengnau’s Doppeltür Centre, the four mediation components give rise to the following narrative flow, which also serves as the common thread: 1. Submersion/2. Emergence/3. Immersion/4. Expansion.



The exhibition will motivate visitors to act by addressing them as experts. Particularly in the third component (Immersion), they will be invited to bring their own values to bear in the proceedings. The Doppeltür exhibition will repeatedly prominently refer to the Surb Valley’s setting, with its villages of Endingen and Lengnau. Hotspots such as the historical double-door houses, the two synagogues, the two mikvahs, the Jewish cemetery on the perimeter of the municipality and numerous other sites of Jewish life in Endingen and Lengnau will feature prominently.



Following one of the various routes along the Jewish Cultural Trail, visitors will be able to see for real the places they have already encountered (virtually) in the Doppeltür Meeting Centre. Info-panels along the Cultural Trail, group tours with expert guides and self-guided tours using audio or media technology will provide visitors with additional information or activities, depending on the selected route. All this will address the needs of the various target groups.

### 3.2. Scenographic concept

Like the curatorial concept, the scenographic concept also places people and their coexistence at the centre of the presentation on every level. It sets out to use this and the location at the original sites to generate identification potential and to create receptiveness in visitors to engage with contemporary questions of coexistence. As a whole, it seeks to offer an intense, enduring and compelling experience through uniqueness.

#### 3.2.1. Entry: the present

The Doppeltür Centre's ground floor is devoted to the welcome. This features six real people who have very different links with Endingen and Lengnau. Displayed on video screens and audible via single-hand earpieces, they talk about their diverse backgrounds and their lives today. Alongside individuals who have always lived here, there are others who have only recently moved here, or who live elsewhere but whose families originated here.



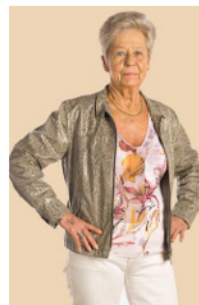
**Name:** Monica Steiner, \*1976  
**Nationalität:** Schweizerin  
**Religion:** Konfessionslos  
**Wohnort:** Endingen  
**Surbtalbezug:** Hier wohnhaft



**Name:** Erich Dreyfuss, \*1941  
**Nationalität:** Schweizer  
**Religion:** Jüdisch  
**Wohnort:** Lengnau  
**Surbtalbezug:** Hier wohnhaft



**Name:** Roger Bollag, \*1964  
**Nationalität:** Schweizer  
**Religion:** Jüdisch  
**Wohnort:** Zürich  
**Surbtalbezug:** Urgross-eltern aus Lengnau



**Name:** Ute Krumbein, \*1956  
**Nationalität:** Deutsche  
**Religion:** Reformiert  
**Wohnort:** Endingen  
**Surbtalbezug:** Hier wohnhaft



**Name:** Jacky Guggenheim, \*1994  
**Nationalität:** Amerikanerin  
**Religion:** Jüdisch  
**Wohnort:** New York  
**Surbtalbezug:** Ururgross-vater aus Endingen



**Name:** Valon Kasami, \*1985  
**Nationalität:** Kosovare  
**Religion:** Muslimisch  
**Wohnort:** Lengnau  
**Surbtalbezug:** Hier wohnhaft

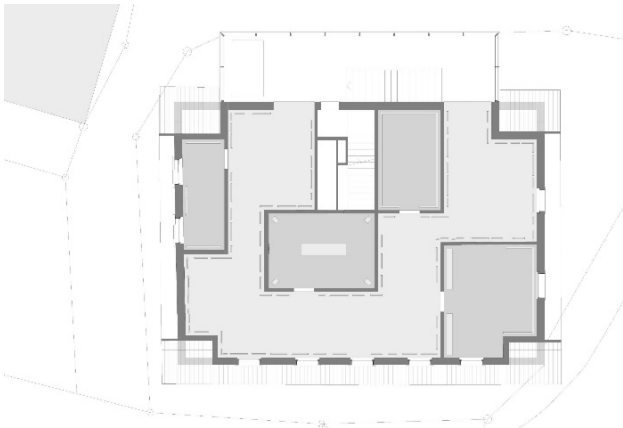
#### 3.2.2. Submersion: the historic Surb Valley 1820-1866

The floor plan chosen, consisting of two total and four partial cinema rooms, offers appealing room sizes and an economical use of projection technology. Depending on the time allowed for room changes, groups can start every 18 to 20 minutes. To tell the various stories on video, the plan is to film costumed actors in front of a green screen so that the scenes can receive the appropriate backgrounds in post-production. To avoid time-consuming casting, the aim is to work with a theatre company (complete with costume department), as in previous productions. Alongside set scripts, keyword-based scripts, around which the actors could improvise, are also conceivable.



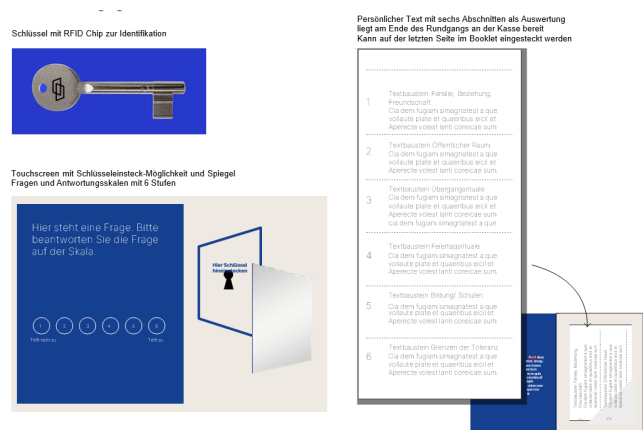
### 3.2.3. Emergence: 1867-present

In order to present the thematic fields, events and stories to be depicted from the time when laws were relaxed up to the present, a connecting “time tunnel” is proposed that relates these themes to each other and places them in the context of world history. Within this chronology, the use of a range of media is conceivable, from text via audio and video formats to objects in display cases. The themes are differentiated through use of colour. Here, too, people should play an important role in the themed fields. There are a number of focus spaces distributed along this time tunnel, in which different topics or contents can be presented in more detail using specific media forms. These could include family histories and documentaries, as well sound and film installations.



### 3.2.4. Immersion: the present

It is conceivable that the exhibition here might be in any media capable of serving the respective themes. In order to reprise the production values of the entrance area, it could be enriching to have the people appearing there reappear here and speak in an interview format. Touch-screens integrated into items of furniture allow visitors to leave comments in all the rooms. To do this, they insert their personal Doppeltür key into a keyhole and answer the questions using a rating system. The focus is on a complex contemporary religious and social situation. The exhibition offers an intelligent way of approaching multiple issues, some of which are socially emotive. The Doppeltür Centre is open – religiously, culturally, ethnically and socio-politically.



### 3.2.5. Expansion

Offering a view of the synagogue and other double-door houses, both sides of the circular entrance structure on the ground floor feature information points equipped with touch screens. This is where visitors can once again meet the various people they will encounter on the tours, in addition to the wide range of offerings, routes and buildings. The media to be deployed are shown on another page. Visitors following the Culture Trail come across columns presenting brief information about the buildings and people. By scanning QR codes, visitors can obtain more details about what they have read and watch videos in which people tell their stories regarding that particular location.



### 3.3. Offerings for schools, workshops and activity programmes

The Doppeltür Meeting Centre should be explicitly available for visits by schools and for workshops and events. A separate room in the basement which can accommodate 80 persons is envisaged for this purpose. It could also accommodate concerts, readings and lectures. For example, discussions and debates on current issues could be held at Sunday matinees using interactive electronic media. Other venues, such as the synagogue in Lengnau, can be used for bigger events.

Special school modules are planned alongside the permanent mediation project. The first two, newly developed teaching materials on the history of Judaism (master module) focussing on Baden (Baden module), are available to download from [www.doppeltuer.ch/schulen](http://www.doppeltuer.ch/schulen) from June 2024. The school modules are oriented towards Switzerland's "Lehrplan 21" curriculum and aimed at upper secondary school students (secondary level 1) and middle schools/vocational schools (secondary level 2).



As part of "Dialogue en route" (an IRAS COTIS inter-faith working group project), a number of pupils gave the Jewish Cultural Trail a trial run. (Photos: Marie-Christine Andres Schürch)

## 4. Architecture

The gable-roofed building, comprising two dwellings, was completed in the latter half of the 18th century. Several changes of ownership later, the two parts of the house were united in 1866 and the façade facing the square refashioned to be typically symmetrical. The original two-dwelling structure can still be seen, however. The ground floor of the larger part of the house is being converted into a shop selling spices, while, probably at the same time, the double door at the back on the mezzanine floor will provide access to the dwellings. The building received its present Heimatstil style with the addition of a storey and half-hipped roof in 1934. The symmetry of the façade facing the square, now accentuated by a bay window, transforms this standalone building into the most impressive edifice on the village square, aided and abetted by a dormer almost as wide as the façade itself. An asymmetrical shop window was inserted on the ground floor when the shop was extended around 1960/70.

### 4.1. Design concept

From a historical monuments standpoint, this building in the Heimatstil vernacular is worth preserving as a contemporary witness. As such, this prestigious standalone building will be repurposed, while retaining its characteristics and dimensions. The rear extensions and complicated roof extensions with trailing dormers will be replaced by a simple, clear volume. The space available for the planned building programme is very limited, so a basement will be inserted beneath the whole of the existing house and garden. The removal of the loggia behind the house allows for targeted access to all floors. Thanks to the earlier conversions, the existing building structure lends itself well to a flexible exhibition area. The small-scale room structure on the first floor, together with the double door and the narrow stairs, is original and will be integrated into the concept.



The original symmetrical square-facing façade will be restored and supplemented with a new axially symmetrical entrance area. The façades of the main building are being carefully renovated. New paintwork to the woodwork will eliminate the rather heavy impression made by the gable façades.

## 5. Project schedule

<b>Preliminary project / scenographic / competition / fundraising / completed</b>	<b>2021 to 2023</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Exhibition and mediation concept: project organisation/project development</li><li>▪ School module: master plan and milestones/project organisation/project launch</li><li>▪ Property: consultation with the historical monuments agency and authorities/preliminary project completed/start of construction project/detailed studies/cost estimate</li><li>▪ Project costs/infrastructure fundraising</li><li>▪ Fundraising for expansion, exhibition and school module</li><li>▪ Establishment of foundation</li></ul>	
<b>Construction project / exhibition concept / educational concept</b>	<b>2024</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Submission of planning application</li><li>▪ Planning permission process, tenders, start of implementation project</li><li>▪ Board of trustees/conclusion of research/scenographic concept</li><li>▪ Educational concept</li><li>▪ Development of operational organisation and operating concept (incl. marketing concept)</li></ul>	
<b>Realisation</b>	<b>2025 / 2026</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Building implementation</li><li>▪ Expansion/exhibition implementation</li><li>▪ Preparation of operational organisation/recruitment of Head of Operations</li></ul>	
<b>Completion / preparation for operation / opening</b>	<b>2026</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Recruitment of employees for operations</li><li>▪ Completion of building/commissioning of the Doppeltür Centre</li><li>▪ Official opening</li></ul>	

Short version\_June 2024

**Illustrations:** see captions in the text.

**Mediation and exhibition concept:** Doppeltür Association/Doppeltür Foundation

**Design:** Doppeltür Association/Doppeltür Foundation