

LVR-Jüdisches
Museum im
Archäologischen
Quartier Köln



Press folder

Contents

2021: "1700 Years of Jewish Life in Germany"	1
The LVR project family	
Partnership between the Regional Councils LVR and LWL	
Travelling exhibition "People, Pictures, Places – 1700 Years of Jewish Life in Germany"	3
Event formats	
Interdisciplinary conference / Partnerships with universities	5
Lectures and Events	6
MiQua. LVR-Jewish Museum in the Archeological Quarter in Cologne	
An Overview	8
The Permanent Exhibition: Jewish History and Culture	10
MiQua Friends: Association for the Promotion of the LVR Jewish Museum in Cologne's Archaeological Quarter	12
The Rhineland Regional Council (LVR)	13

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2021: “1700 Years of Jewish Life in Germany”

“1700 Years of Jewish Life in Germany” will be celebrated across the country in 2021 with a range of events, exhibitions and projects. They mark **Emperor Constantine’s Decree in 321** on the subject of Jews living in Cologne and the other provinces the Roman Empire, the oldest surviving document confirming the existence of Jewish communities north of the Alps.

The LVR project family

#2021JLID is a **programme of events devoted to Jewish life in Germany** that will set its stamp on cultural diaries all over the country. Many public and grass-roots organisations are contributing to this programme. The **Regional Council of the Rhineland (LVR)** has set up a **project family** based around **MiQua. LVR Jewish Museum in the Archaeological Quarter Cologne** and the **LVR-KULTURHAUS**, its own cultural centre in the former **Village Synagogue at Rödingen**, where a wide variety of events will lend visibility to the 1700-year history and present-day vibrancy of Jewish life in Cologne and throughout the Rhineland. LVR’s commitment is founded on a political resolution adopted by its plenary assembly on 16 December 2019.

The anniversary celebrations were initiated by the Cologne-based association **“321–2021: 1700 Jahre jüdisches Leben in Deutschland e.V.”** and Germany’s **President Frank-Walter Steinmeier** has agreed to **act as patron**. The **Federal Ministry of the Interior, Building and Community (BMI)** and the **City of Cologne** are supporting and promoting the anniversary year. The **ceremonial opening** on **21 February 2021** at the Synagogue in Cologne will be broadcast **live on ARD** from 4:30 to 5:30 pm CET and picked up for onward transmission by Deutsche Welle. This is not a public event due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“With our broad-based engagement during this thematic year, we are highlighting the significance to the Rhineland, to Germany and to Europe of 1700 years of Jewish culture and history. I regard it as our democratic duty to confront the pervasive anti-Semitic challenges of our time by offering a programme of cultural, education and outreach activities”, said **LVR’s director Ulrike Lubek**.

“The reasons for addressing the history of Jewish men and women in the Rhineland and reminding us all of that history are clear to the Regional Council of the Rhineland”, added **Milena Karabaic, LVR’s officer for cultural affairs and landscape conservation**.

“Preserving, researching, displaying and educating people about Jewish history and culture has been a pillar of LVR’s cultural policy for more than 30 years and has found visible expression in the LVR-KULTURHAUS in the Village Synagogue at Rödingen, as it will at MiQua. LVR Jewish Museum in the Archaeological Quarter Cologne.”

Partnership between the Regional Councils LVR and LWL

The **Regional Councils** of the **Rhineland (LVR)** and **Westfalen-Lippe (LWL)**, together with **LWL's own cultural foundation**, are pooling their efforts on behalf of this themed anniversary year in the form of a **cooperation agreement**. This will carry the ideas that guide the programme for "1700 Years of Jewish Life in Germany" out into the regions of North Rhine-Westphalia and coordinate events and activities of different formats in order to enhance their impact and generate synergies. The two Regional Councils have been working together for some time in many other contexts and on overarching cultural themes and they can therefore build on their positive experience and good relations.

Sponsors:



Travelling exhibition "People, Pictures, Places – 1700 Years of Jewish Life in Germany"

One **highlight of the anniversary year 2021 will be the travelling exhibition "People, Pictures, Places – 1700 Years of Jewish Life in Germany"** curated by the **MiQua team**, which will follow an itinerary through **Essen, Münster, Cologne, Wesel and Dortmund**.

Taking Emperor Constantine's Decree of 321 as its starting point, it will narrate Jewish history and intellectual life in Germany with a geographical focus on the Rhineland and Westphalia.



The Decree permitted the appointment of Jews to city councils in provincial capitals throughout the Roman Empire. The document, which was originally dictated in answer to an enquiry, is explicitly addressed to the city council in Cologne, and it is the oldest source extant providing evidence of a Jewish community in the Cologne of Late Antiquity.

The narrative thread for the show follows the **illustrated biographies** of real-life individuals whose experiences reflect major events or important periods of Jewish life in Germany, while also broadening the perspective to include other parts of Europe. The focus is on everyday history. The cast begins with citizens of Cologne and introduces other important figures, extending the stage to the rest of Germany and incorporating milestones in the history and politics of the last 1700 years.

Poster motif for the travelling exhibition:
Emperor Constantine and a portrait of the actor,
singer and cabaret performer Dora Gerson

The exhibition consists of **four walk-around cubes** (3 x 3 x 2.5 m) with **multimedia installations**. Each cube devotes its inner and outer walls to one of the four over-arching themes: **law and injustice, life and community, religion and the history of ideas**, and **art and culture**. Each cube is self-sufficient, but their content entwines to form a whole.

Media are used to present 1700 years of Jewish history in a vivid, diverse, interactive manner. They tell of marginalisation and persecution, but also of social harmony and participation, of solidarity and belonging, and of everyday lives and settings. Each cube generates its own highly charged atmosphere, with sights and sounds to reinforce the content and interactive options enabling visitors to discover more for themselves.

Drawing on the database maintained by the **Leo Baeck Institute-New York/Berlin (LBI)**, which collects posthumous papers, photographs and correspondence and makes these

available, Jewish history, including a diversity of local aspects, has been illustrated by a selection of individual figures and their personal experiences.

The **first stop** for the exhibition, from early March, will be the **Old Synagogue – House of Jewish Culture in Essen**. A programme of guided tours, lectures and events will underpin the intercultural and inter-religious dialogue fostered at the Old Synagogue ever since it opened as a memorial site in 1980, and particularly since 2010. The later venues will also flank the exhibition with accompanying events and options for individual participation, raising awareness of community relations today and shared histories.
www.alte-synagoge.essen.de

The travelling exhibition "People, Pictures, Places – 1700 Years of Jewish Life in Germany" has been organised by MiQua. LVR Jewish Museum in the Archaeological Quarter Cologne and by the Cultural Foundation of Westfalen-Lippe. It is one of 24 projects supported by the foundation in conjunction with its funding priority "2021 – Jewish Life in Germany".

Exhibition dates

Alte Synagoge – Haus jüdischer Kultur, Essen, 3 March - 27 April 2021

LWL-Landeshaus, Münster, 6 May - 26 June 2021

LVR-Landeshaus, Cologne, 1 July - 12 August 2021

LVR-Niederrheinmuseum, Wesel, 17 August - 15 October 2021

Museum für Kunst und Kulturgeschichte, Dortmund, 24 October - 12 December 2021



Kippot, ©lucidwaters (Rafael Ben-Ari) / depositphotos ID 10847336

Event formats

Events for the anniversary year 2021 will adopt a wide range of formats with a view to establishing visibility for the topic and highlighting the significance of Jewish history in the cultural landscape of the Rhineland and across Germany.

Interdisciplinary conference on “Jewish History and Contemporary Life in Germany: Current Issues and Views”

MiQua. LVR Jewish Museum in the Archaeological Quarter Cologne has teamed up with the **Department of Jewish Studies at Heinrich Heine University** to hold an **online academic conference**, which will be based at the university in Düsseldorf on **12 and 13 April 2021**. The conference will pursue an interdisciplinary discourse to examine current approaches to **Jewish history and contemporary life in Germany**. Participants will discuss a variety of social phenomena and themes around politics and history, culture and religion. There will be a particular focus on aspects illustrating the role played by the Jewish community, with their history, religion and culture, in the social and political life of German-speaking countries for the last 1700 years or more and on issues relating to contemporary Jewish life, such as education, memory work and inter-religious dialogue.

Partnerships with universities

In the Summer Semester 2021, MiQua will be working together with several universities: the **Archaeological Institute at the University of Cologne** will offer a seminar on “archaeological sources for Jewish cultural heritage from the first millennium”. The **Department of Jewish Studies at Heinrich Heine University in Düsseldorf** will enquire into “literacy and liturgy in Cologne’s medieval Jewish community”, while courses in **public history at Freie Universität Berlin and the University of Cologne** delve into theories and forms of historiography, casting light on the significance of learning about history and on the culture of history.

Lectures

At an online event during the academic conference on 12 April 2021, the Hebrew poetry specialists Elisabeth Hollender and Efrat Gal-Ed will read **original texts from the Amsterdam Mahzor**, one of the principal exhibits at the future Museum MiQua. An autobiographical soirée with stories by and about the **jeweller Fritz Deutsch** will be presented by Dr Klaus Grosspeter on 6 May 2021 at the Synagogen-Gemeinde in Cologne. Professor Hanna Liss will lecture on 10 June 2021 about **“The Jewish Laws on Ritual Purity: Then and Now”** at the Roman Baths in Zülpich (Haus der Badekultur). In later lectures, Professor Werner Eck will be at the Wallraf-Richartz Museum on 7 October 2021 to explain how the Jews came to the Rhine and to analyse the historical circumstances behind the Decree of 321, and on 18 November 2021 at the synagogue in Stommeln Dr Christiane Twiehaus of the MiQua team will provide an overview of 1000 years of **“Synagogue Architecture in Germany”**.

Events

On 18 August 2021, MiQua and the Antoniterkirche will host a **concert** by and with **Aron and Olga Proujanski**. The **Russian-German artist Yury Kharchenko** will join a discussion with Dr Kay Heymer, Dr Rita Kersting und Professor Micha Brumlik on 5 October 2021 in the Praetorium of the future MiQua. **Katalin Fischer** will be reading from her **family epic** "Die Fischers, die Hamburgers und die Bánds" at the University of Bonn in October. A **panel discussion** will bring together representatives of **Judaism, Islam and Christianity** to exchange their views on alternative definitions of family life and the "relationship between religion and sexual identity". A sofer – an official Torah scribe – will offer a **workshop on Hebrew script**, explaining how to use a quill and parchment and helping participants to write a few lines in Hebrew. The latter two events will probably take place at the University of Bonn during the Winter Semester 2021.

Exhibition: MiQua visits Kolumba in Cologne

An exhibition to be curated jointly by MiQua. LVR Jewish Museum in the Archaeological Quarter Cologne and Kolumba – Art Museum of the Archdiocese of Cologne is currently at the preparation stage. Featuring top-class exhibits from Germany and abroad, it will outline themes, continuities and upheavals from 1700 years of Jewish history and culture. The show is scheduled from September 2021 until August 2022.

The Decree of 321: A brochure

The Decree of 321 is the subject of an introductory brochure entitled "The Decree of 321: Cologne, the Emperor and Jewish History", published in German and English by MiQua. LVR Jewish Museum in the Archaeological Quarter Cologne. This **free brochure** can be ordered from MiQua.

Address for orders: MiQua. LVR-Jüdisches Museum im Archäologischen Quartier, Augustinerstr. 10-12, 50667 Köln or by email to: miqua@lvr.de

For the latest details about all the events in anniversary year 2021:

<https://miqua.blog>

<https://2021jlid.de>, #2021JLID

MiQua. LVR-Jewish Museum in the Archeological Quarter in Cologne



MiQua from Obenmarspforten (simulation). © Wandel Lorch Architekten

An Overview

Name & Purpose

A new museum of international significance is currently being built in Cologne at the heart of the city centre: **MiQua. LVR-Jewish Museum in the Archeological Quarter in Cologne**. The name **MiQua** is short for “**Museum in the Quarter**” and it refers to the 6,000 m² of excavation work taking place right underneath the town hall square in the city’s Archaeological Quarter. More than **two thousand years of Cologne’s history** have come to light here – first in 1953, then more intensively from the 1990s onwards and above all after 2007 – from the monumental **Praetorium** where the Roman governor once resided to the **medieval Jewish Quarter** and the **Christian Goldsmiths’ Quarter**. Above these archaeological monuments, a **new museum building** will house exhibitions both permanent and temporary, offering insights into the archaeology below ground, including the medieval Synagogue and the ritual Jewish bath, the **Mikveh**, which is also reflected in the name **MiQua**.

Owner & Operator

In **2013** the **Rhineland Regional Council (LVR)** and the **City of Cologne** signed a framework agreement to implement the museum project. The **City of Cologne is the developer and owner** of the museum and archaeological monuments and is responsible for constructing and equipping the museum, maintaining the building and carrying out the excavations. The archaeological input is provided by “Archäologische Zone”, a direct works department run by the city council, and the Romano-Germanic Museum/Department of Archaeological Monument Conservation, which are city council institutions. The State of North Rhine-Westphalia has contributed funds towards the construction costs. The **LVR is drawing up the conceptual blueprint for the museum and its operations**.

After the handover, **scheduled for late 2024**, the **LVR will become the operator** and will run the museum as an independent agency. A six-month test phase is envisaged prior to the official opening. The City of Cologne reports on building costs, cost movements and the precise timeline.

However, the Praetorium and the museum’s education center can be used by the MiQua from 2021. The two locations as well as the underground area of the museum under the ceiling field

in front of the Wallraf-Richartz-Museum & Fondation Corboud, will host events in 2021 on the occasion of the nationwide festive year "1700 years of Jewish life in Germany".

Unique Features & Museum Blueprint

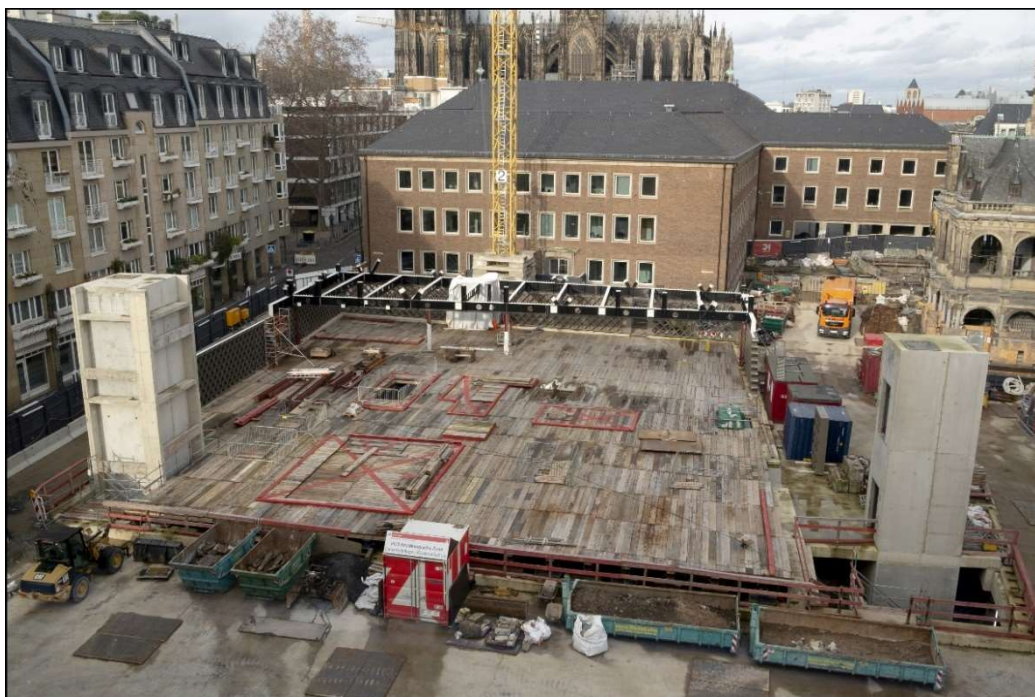
"The star of the museum is the monument!"

The sensational excavations in Cologne's Archaeological Quarter are unique in the international arena and they provide the focus for the museum concept. A **600-metre tour under the town hall square** will guide visitors through **6,000 m² of exhibition space**, integrating numerous original

features with some of the most significant archaeological finds from **two thousand years of history in the city of Cologne and the Rhineland: Roman history** from the 1st to the 4th century, **Jewish history** from the 11th to the early 15th century and again from the 19th to the 20th century, and **medieval and early modern urban history** from the 7th to the 20th century.

The archaeological remains of the **Praetorium** – the governor's palace and the centre of Roman rule on the Rhine – are **unmatched in size and condition**, having been **preserved underneath the fabric of a big, modern city** as it evolved above ground. Equally outstanding are the **relics of the Jewish Quarter** with its Synagogue and ritual bath, the Mikveh, dating from the 11th and 12th centuries, together with other residential and communal buildings, not least a hospital and dance hall. **In no other German town has a medieval Jewish Quarter of such magnitude survived.**

Thanks to these archaeological finds and features and the few written sources, the first section of the **permanent exhibition will facilitate an uncommonly well-researched and complete presentation of German Jewish history in the Middle Ages**. This has rarely been highlighted by museums to date and constitutes a ground-breaking conceptual emphasis.



View of the construction site of the MiQua, 21.01.2021, Köln © Jasmin Anilgan/MiQua

The museum blueprint remains intricately interwoven with the **architecture of the museum building**, a hall-like structure erected over the archaeology to shield it. Büro Wandel Lorch Architekten, an architecture firm based in Saarbrücken, designed the new museum structure. The new building has no interior supports: its glazed load-bearing structure encases plenums, enabling air to circulate over the excavations while permitting multiple views from the upper exhibition levels onto the archaeological features below. In addition, the upper level contains spaces for events and for permanent and special exhibitions to complement and enrich the The exterior of the upper level is covered with a mainly closed stone façade to meet conservatory requirements. At ground level glass panels allow for views of the museum's highlights, the remnants of synagogue and mikvah.

“Jewish history is part of universal history.”

The history of Jews in Cologne from the 15th century onwards is reflected in the second section of the **permanent exhibition in the new museum building**, where the narrative continues **into the present**. It is embedded within the historical context of the city as a whole and also within

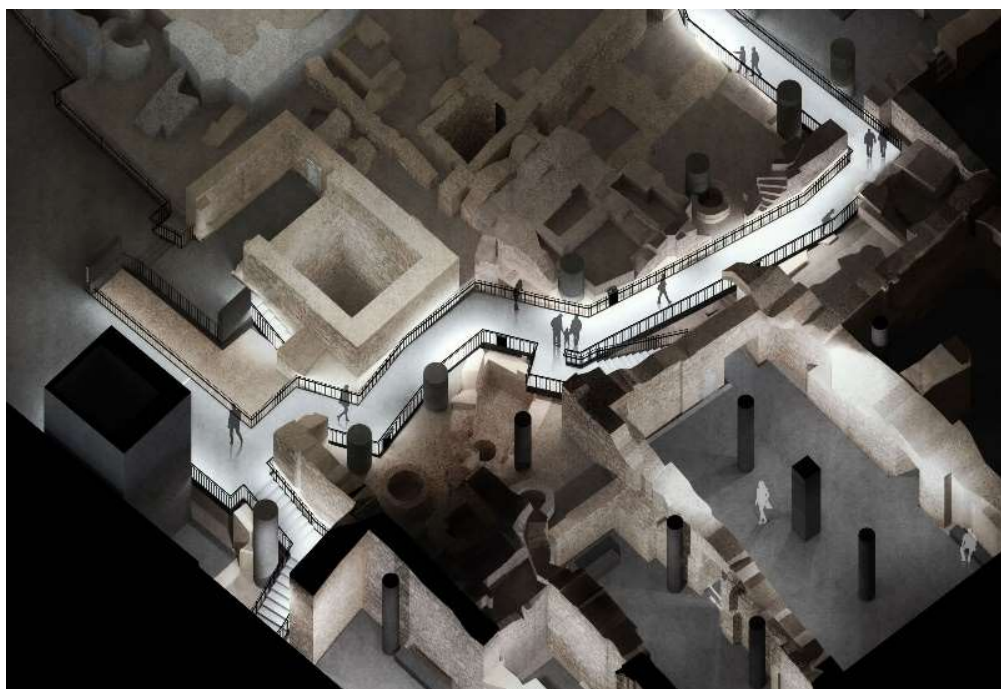
German Jewish and European Jewish history. This methodology has been adopted by historiographers for many decades: Jewish history is not studied in isolation but as an integral part of universal history. MiQua offers tremendous potential to share this research approach with the broader public.

The Jews and Christians of Cologne often crossed paths in their everyday lives, as the written and material sources vividly illustrate. Together, for example, they defended the town wall around Cologne, and for a while they shared the use of the butchers' row on the old marketplace. With many exhibits it is impossible to tell whether they originated from a Jewish or a non-Jewish household. This exhibition has the potential to dispel age-old clichés, some of which still persist today.

The question of **cultural identity** runs like a thread through every section of the permanent exhibition, and a versatile picture emerges. The **guiding principle**, both along the archaeological tour and in the period-based displays in the new building, is to narrate Jewish history and culture from multiple perspectives and through people who set their stamp on urban life in Cologne. The museum draws life from the very place where it is located. Two thousand years of European history can be observed and experienced here. MiQua will be a forum for collecting, studying and spreading knowledge about history and culture. The aim is not simply to showcase existing items, but to illustrate how people in different times and with different interests organised their lives within society, and how the various stakeholders co-existed side by side with all their similarities and differences. History is the springboard for references to our own day, revealing both change and continuity. **Archaeology operates here like an open book setting out two thousand years of history.**

The Permanent Exhibition

Jewish History and Culture



Archaeological tour through the Jewish Quarter, the path from the Synagogue to the Goldsmiths' houses (simulation) © Wandel Lorch Architekten

Jewish history and culture will feature in **two exhibition areas** at MiQua. In the light of the historical records, the archaeological structures and finds are particularly fascinating. **As early as 321, Emperor Constantine** issued a decree stating that Jews could be elected to the curia in Cologne. The **archaeological tour on the lower level** runs through the **medieval Jewish Quarter of Cologne** as it has been unearthed by the excavations. It was during this period from **the 11th to the 15th century** that the **Synagogue** is known to have undergone its four phases of construction. These can be visited, as can the vestiges of the ritual bath (**Mikveh**), the **dance hall**, the **hospital** and the **houses** of Jewish families. Finds and historical sources serve to introduce individuals who lived and worked here. The outstanding collection of **slate tablets** displaying Hebrew names, biblical quotations and writing exercises is unmatched anywhere in the world. They illustrate life within the Jewish community and its strong ties with the town, bringing to life Jewish history as an integral part of Cologne's history. The unique written sources include the "**Judenschreibsbuch**", a kind of medieval Jewish land registry listing details of property ownership, but also agreements drawn up between Jewish and Christian neighbours in the Jewish Quarter. To this will be added, in the immediate vicinity of the Synagogue, the **Amsterdam Mahzor**, spectacularly acquired for the collection in 2017 (see page 11), which will be a pivotal feature in the future exhibition.

The second period covered by the exhibition rooms in the **new building** begins with the expulsion of the Jews from Cologne in **1424** and continues down **to the present**. Three segments address Jewish history and culture in Cologne, focusing on individuals who exerted an influence, witnessed key events or explored issues of Jewish identity.

The first segment addresses **the exhibition and collection of Judaica in Cologne over the last 100 years**. Drawing on a number of examples – from the Werkbund Exhibition in 1914 to “Monumenta Judaica” in 1963/64, which presented “2,000 years of history and culture on the Rhine” – different motivations, approaches and historical contexts for the exhibition of “Jewish” objects are showcased here. This is a stage where collectors and curators can express their views. The second segment tackles Jewish history from the **biographical perspective of individuals** who have lived here **in the last 600 years**. Figures such as Ernst Zwirner, the architect of the Glockengasse Synagogue, or the Sterns, a husband and wife who in 1798 were among the first Jews to return to Cologne after the medieval expulsion, personify the close ties between Jewish and non-Jewish history in Cologne in both past and present. The third segment of the exhibition offers an **interactive, digital tour of the city**, a chance to discover places in Cologne that play a part in Jewish history and culture or are defined as Jewish. Different guides link the museum to its urban environment within a reciprocal relationship. Cologne’s Jewish history and culture are presented as a **history of places and authentic sites**, their past, present and future.



The medieval Mikveh © Michael van den Bogaard / Stadt Köln

MiQua Friends: Association for the Promotion of the LVR Jewish Museum in the Archaeological Quarter in Cologne

Founded originally in 1996 as a “non-profit association for the promotion of a building and museum for Jewish culture in North Rhine-Westphalia”, the “MiQua Friends” placed **the construction and operation of a Jewish museum on the square outside Cologne’s town hall** on their agenda from the outset. Then as now, acquiring donations and creating a climate conducive to the project and the location among politicians, the general public and the media were key activities. In 2002 the association and the City of Cologne jointly organised a **symposium on the purpose and content of a house and museum devoted to Jewish culture** with eminent experts from Germany and abroad. In 2008 the association worked with the City of Cologne to hold an **architectural competition** for the new museum. A year later it handed over its initial role as developer in this ambitious project to the City of Cologne and resolving instead to continue its work in the supporting role of an association of friends. Since 30 November 2017 it has been known officially as **“MiQua Friends: Association for the Promotion of the LVR Jewish Museum in the Archaeological Quarter in Cologne”**, extending its radius to MiQua project as a whole.

Activities funded by the association include **public promotion of the museum project** – for example at town festivals, the Cologne Museum Festival and the Long Night of Museums, International Museum Day and Open Monument Day. The MiQua Friends also contributed financially to designing an information fence around the construction site. Another focus is **fundraising from donations and grants** to help MiQua **purchase exhibits** such as the Amsterdam Mahzor, to **restore excavation finds**, to support the **educational presentation of museum content** based on principles of **inclusion and integration** and to help ensure **disability access**.

There is also vigorous backing for **lectures and publications**. 2011 saw the launch of a series of volumes on Judaeo-Rhenish history called **“Beiträge zur rheinisch-jüdischen Geschichte”**, which has since produced issues devoted to Jews in Roman Cologne, the Synagogue in Glockengasse in 1861–1939, cultural transfers from Cologne to Tel Aviv, and most recently “An Encounter With Two Millenia”, which outlines the latest conceptual strategy for MiQua. LVR Jewish Museum in the Archaeological Quarter in Cologne (2018). This volume is also available in English.

Serving on the **Executive Board** are founding director Dr Thomas Otten, Dr Christiane Twiehaus, who heads MiQua’s Department of Jewish History and Culture, and Dr Marcus Trier, director of the Romano-Germanic Museum. The lawyer Dr Klaus Burghard has chaired the Board since 2010.

More details at: <https://miqua.blog/tag/foerdergesellschaft/>

The Rhineland Regional Council (LVR)

The Rhineland Regional Council (Landschaftsverband Rheinland, LVR) is a local government association made up of 13 towns and 12 districts in the Rhineland and the urban region of Aachen. According to the constitution of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia, local affairs are to be managed independently by local councils. Frequently, however, tasks of this kind extend beyond the borders of separate administrative units: examples are cultural activities, health, education, or youth and social services. For this reason there are two regional associations of local authorities in the State of North Rhine-Westphalia: LVR, based in Cologne, is one, and the other is Landschaftsverband Westfalen-Lippe (LWL), based in Münster. They perform functions of this kind on behalf of towns and districts in the region and are important components in the administrative structure of North Rhine-Westphalia. In this way the principle of self-management in local affairs, with local residents participating in the administration of governance, is also applied on a regional level.

The LVR maintains 20 museums across the Rhineland, including the LandesMuseum Bonn, the Archaeological Park in Xanten with its Roman Museum, the two open-air museums in Kommern and Lindlar, the Max Ernst Museum in Brühl and the LVR Industrial Museum with its six different locations. Moreover, the LVR is responsible for conserving monuments in the Rhineland and for preserving archaeological monuments and ensuring that they are safe.

More details at: <https://lvr.de>



The Long Night of Museums in the Praetorium © Michael Jakobs / LVR