



# The Europe Challenge



**European  
Cultural  
Foundation**



# Book of Your Life

## Project closing event

23 September 2024



ELTE

UNIVERSITY LIBRARY  
AND ARCHIVES



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**European  
Cultural  
Foundation**

# **Welcome**

**Annamária Kulcsár Szabó**

**director general  
ELTE University Library and Archives**

# **Book of Your Life Project overview**

**Szilvia Szöllősi**

**Head of Rector's Cabinet University Strategy Office**

# Context

- @ELTE: 36,000+ student community and 4,500 staff (2,500 academic staff), over 10% of whom are from abroad
- variety of 140+ countries represented within the ELTE community
- ELTE Internationalisation Strategy – emphasis on integration
- traditionally good cooperation between the University Library and Archives (ULA) and the ELTE Student Union (EHÖK)
- students' needs of a community space with kitchen communicated towards ULA

# We aimed at...

- Enhancing acceptance and tolerance within the university community
- Promoting the cultural inclusion of international students and supporting their mental well-being
- Service development at ULA, based on the students' needs
- Introducing sustainable practices and activities in this context

To meet these goals, we created **Book of Your Life - a project to support intercultural inclusion among university students at ELTE**

in cooperation between the University Library and Archives (ULA), the ELTE Student Union (EHÖK), the Rector's Cabinet International Strategy Office (ISO) and the Rector's Cabinet University Strategy Office (USO)

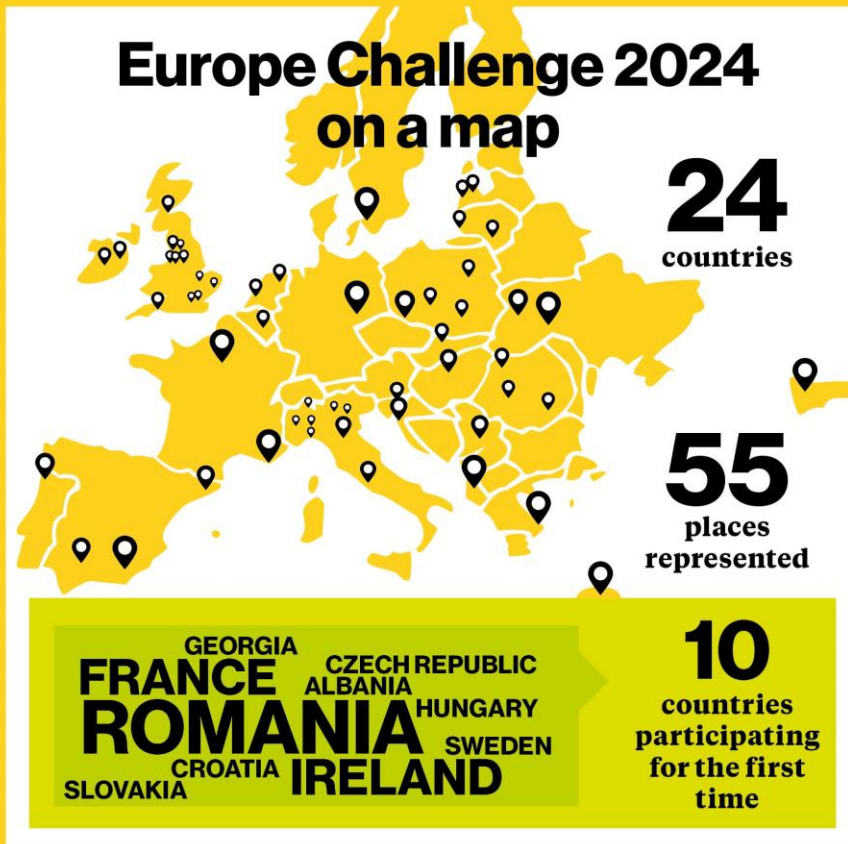
& submitted to the **Europe Challenge 2024** initiated by the **European Cultural Foundation & partners**



# About the Europe Challenge Programme

- unites libraries and their communities to jointly develop creative solutions for addressing various societal challenges
- provides a mentoring programme for librarians and community members as well as financial support for implementation of various joint activities
- 2024: 3rd edition of the programme and the most extensive to date

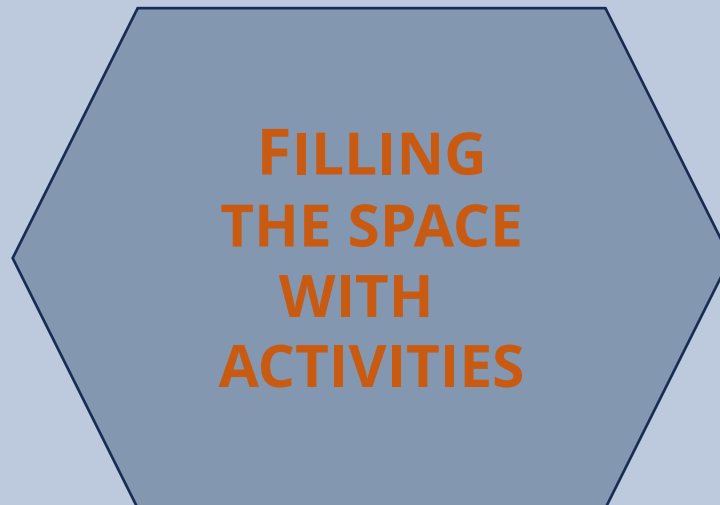
With the BoYL project,  
**ELTE is the very first and so far only  
Hungarian partner** of the programme



# Our methodology

- **Thematic background:** rooted in the library's collection as well as the cultural and linguistic diversity of international students: literature, books, cultural heritage, art
- **Participatory approach:** actively involving international & local students early on in the creation of a community space at ULA and the co-design and implementation of related activities
- **Top-down and bottom-up:** integrating institutional strategic aims with bottom-up initiatives, thus ensuring buy-in from all levels - students to top-management

## THREE MAJOR PROJECT PILLARS







**EUR 10,000 AWARD  
BY EUROPEAN CULTURAL  
FOUNDATION**

**EUR 40,000 IN-KIND  
CONTRIBUTION BY ELTE**

**GENEROUS SUPPORT  
BY FOUNDATION FOR  
UNIVERSITY LIBRARY**



**4 UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENTS**

**20+ BI-WEEKLY MEETINGS**

**15+ COLLEAGUES INVOLVED**

**COUNTLESS MAILS AND  
MESSAGES**





**10+ VARIOUS EVENTS IN  
7 MONTHS**

**30+ POSTS IN SOCIAL MEDIA**

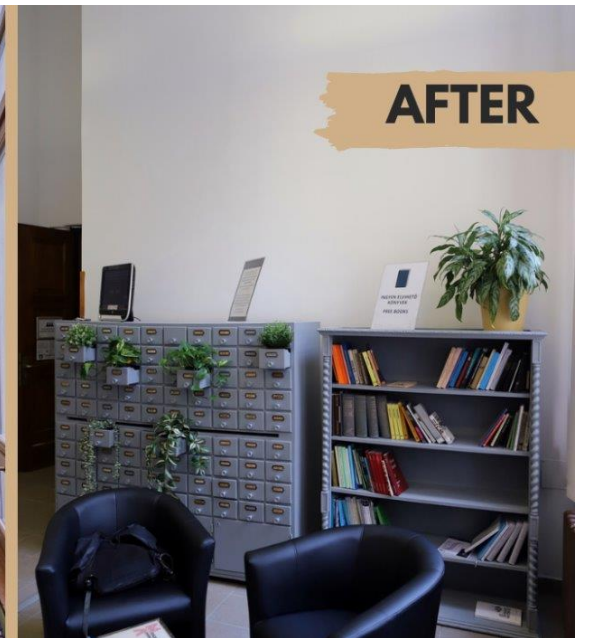
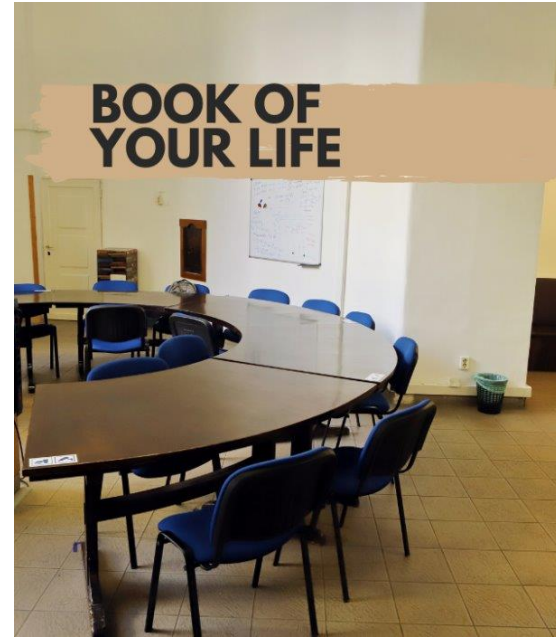
**4 INTERCULTURAL TRAININGS**

**3 UPCYCLING WORKSHOPS**

**2 EXHIBITION OPENINGS**

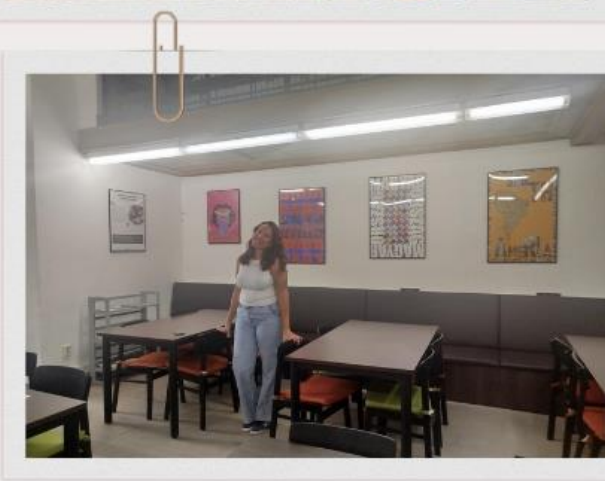


# Creating a community space





# Filling the space with activities



**BOOK OF  
YOUR LIFE**



**BOOK OF  
YOUR LIFE**



# Creating sustainable practices

## an example - student art exhibitions

### Liminal Quarters

An exhibition by James Clifford Viloria  
Curated by Armie Loraine Corpuz and Rezq Nedal Hamed

In an environment of escalating accommodation costs and housing issues in Hungary, dormitories are not just mere temporary shelters for international students but also vibrant hubs of cultural exchange and community building. This exhibition serves as a window into the lives of students from diverse cultural backgrounds, offering glimpses of their diversity, social interactions, and moments of solitude within the confines of their communal living spaces.

My exhibition shows the dynamic intersection of cultural diversity and housing instability within the context of dormitory life. Against the backdrop of housing insecurity, this exhibition also mirrors the creative ways in which students transform dormitory spaces into personalized sanctuaries, infusing them with cultural artifacts and expressions of identity to cultivate a sense of belonging and familiarity. Despite the transience of their living arrangements, students forge deep bonds of friendship and solidarity within dormitory walls, drawing strength from collective experiences and shared struggles as they navigate the uncertainties of transient living.

#### ABOUT THE ARTIST:



My name is James Clifford Viloria, I am a cultural anthropology graduate who is pursuing a PhD in Earth Science at ELTE. With years of expertise as a visual storyteller, my journey began in the city streets, where I captured the raw essence of urban life through street photography. My work combines academia and art, focusing on urban spaces, historical preservation, and spatial justice. Using participatory visual tools, I hope to engage communities in meaningful discourse and enable them to reclaim their narratives in the built environment. Through my lens, I hope to reveal the hidden stories woven into the fabric of our cities, casting light on the interconnections of culture, identity, and power dynamics that shape our common spaces.

LIMINAL  
QUARTERS  
2024

### Traditions Transcended An Artistic Voyage

An exhibition by Kamila de Oliveira Sousa

“

Traditions have the power to transcend their origins, reaching beyond their native lands. Some countries and cities are celebrated for their music, cuisine, or breathtaking landscapes. Through a curated blend of images and graphic elements, I invite you to embark on a journey to an imaginary destination. This exhibition aims to foster a deep connection with diverse cultures, offering a unique voyage that transcends geographical boundaries.

”



#### ABOUT THE ARTIST:

Kamila de Oliveira Sousa is a designer from Brazil and a Media and Communication MA student at ELTE. With years of expertise in graphic design and illustration, her work focuses on exploring different creative possibilities. Passionate about street art and how citizens interact with their urban surroundings, she aims to build a connection between art and public spaces.

@milamorart



**Tuğberk Sev**, a psychologist and PhD candidate at ELTE, focuses on the intricacies of intercultural matters. His academic journey intertwines with his white-collar identity in artificial intelligence and machine learning projects. As a poet, Sev has published several poem books, characterized by a blend of futuristic melancholy, reflecting his deep examination of the human experience in an increasingly mechanised world.

#### tears of a machine

"Wherever we come from, we are citizens of the state of emotions, or at least we pay taxes. I generated and collaged abstract, realistic, futuristic interpretations of emotions by using AI. I asked a mechanism that has no emotions (maybe not yet) to produce visuals contains common joys, anxieties, astonishment... in different scenarios. The more I tried to define emotions, the more I tried to make sense of them, and the more I tried to portray them as a 'moment', the more mechanical they became. Suddenly I remembered Tarkovsky's quote 'If you look for meaning, you will miss everything that happens'. Thereupon, I wrote that poem in which I tried to explain the simple universality and individual chaos of human emotions to a machine which is programmed to understand and produce meaning."



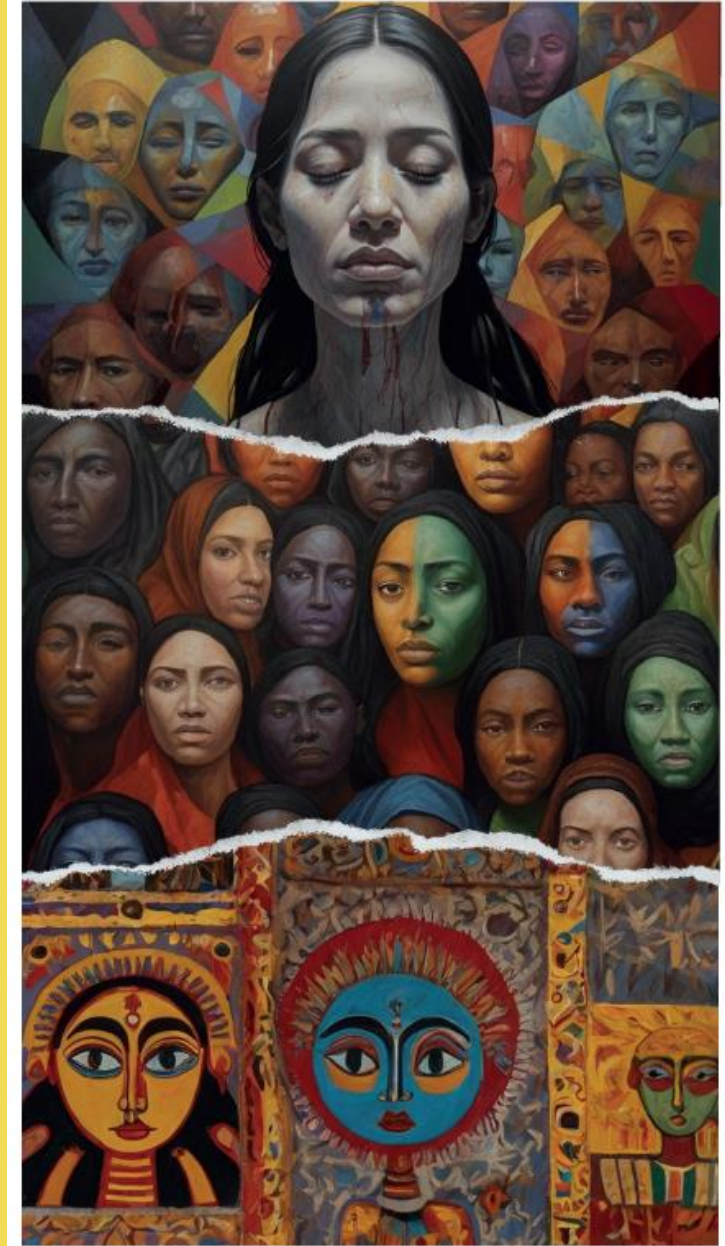


**James Clifford Vilorio – Liminal Quarters**



**Kamila de Oliveira Sousa – Traditions Transcended**

**Tugberk Sev – tears of a machine**



**Collages created at the 17 September creative workshop**

# Challenges & lessons learnt

- co-creation process & audience management
  - Careful balance necessary between top-down and bottom-up
  - Importance of word of mouth - "bring your friends"
- use of space, amortisation & regulations
  - Ambitions & reality
  - Don't be surprised by anything
- sustainability & event management
  - Booking system
  - Financial co-contribution – a must

# **Personal Perspectives**

*European Challenge 2024 Learning Programme*

**Flóra Szelestei**

**ELTE University Library and Archives**



# About the Learning Programme



- Online summits (2024.01.24. / 2024.09.04.)
- Regional summit in Milan (2024.03.17-19.)
- Online Presentation (2024.05.15.)
- Follow-Up Sessions (2024.06.18. / 2024.08.27.)
- The Marketplace in Amsterdam (2024.09.25-26.)

# About the Learning Programme

- The mentor programme
- Online sessions
- Connecting with each other
- An experience for life



# What's Next?

*BoYL follow-up activities connected to the  
ELTE Internationalisation Strategy*

**Eszter Knyihár**

**Head of Rector's Cabinet International Strategy Office**



# Strategic Goals

## Internationalisation Efforts:

Working for international students' wellbeing

- Promoting student integration, bridging the gap between the Hungarian and international students
  - Developing the services for international students
  - Ensuring multicultural representation, multicultural campus

# Continuing Traditions 1

## Embedding in Student Life:

- BoYL has become well-known among Hungarian and international students (EHÖK, International Student Ambassadors Council = ISAC)
- A detailed plan will outline events throughout the year
- Generally thinking about the "space"

**Female leadership & women in academia: questions and challenges**

*Panel discussion with our guest:*

 **Cathy Allen**  
President & CEO  
The Connections Group

*Participants from ELTE:*

 **Dr. Judit Bóna**  
Vice-Dean of Research and Academic Affairs  
Faculty of Humanities

 **Laura Alzmeter**  
President, International Student Advisory Committee, ELTE

 **Kövér-Van Til Ágnes**  
Professor  
Faculty of Social Sciences

 **Réka Judit Boros**  
Vice-President of International Affairs, ELTE Student Union

 **Lara Scekic**  
PhD Student  
Doctoral School of Psychology

11:00-12:00,  
12 September

BoYL Community Space,  
University Library  
and Archives

 **ELTE** EÖTVÖS LORÁND  
UNIVERSITY

# Continuing Traditions 1.2

BoYL Think Thank will continue its work: so far, representatives from EHÖK, ISAC, NSI

- 1- ISAC X EHÖK in collaboration with "Around the world in 96 days" Club (Faculty of Economics, GTK), "Culture Club" (Faculty of Humanities) + existing language institutes at ELTE: event showcasing one culture per event with eg. food tasting, virtual travel, short movie in respective language, etc.*
- 2 - ISAC X EHÖK: Movie night no1: presentation of short movies made by ELTE media students*
- 3 - ISAC X EHÖK: Movie night no2: in collaboration with QLTR Film Club (Faculty of Economics) and Movie Club of the Faculty of Humanities*
- 5- ISAC X EHÖK: Book evening, in collaboration with the Faculty of Humanities Book Club*
- 4 - ISAC X EHÖK: Chess evening in collaboration with BEAC (ELTE Sports Club)*
- 5 - ISAC X EHÖK: Board games night*
- 6 - ISAC X EHÖK: Trivia night*
- 7- GTK ISAC X GTK HÖK: Debate event for students of the Faculty of Economics*
- 8 - ISAC X EHÖK: DIY events (eg. in December, Christmas DIY event in collaboration with the Faculty of Economics' Creative Club)*

# Continuing Traditions 2

## Incorporating Other Departmental Units:

- Channeling relevant programs from other organizational units into the space.
  - Hosting inclusion trainings, panel discussions, workshops, club activities



# Creating New Traditions

## Welcoming Delegations

- The space can be used during ambassadorial and university delegations' visits
  - Representing how ELTE approaches international student integration (ELTE is inclusive, innovative place of the *knowhow*).

## Supporting the work of ISAC – to be discussed

- Office hours?
- Would help to advertise the space and the library among the international students





# Future Considerations and Experience Utilization

## Using Insights from BoYL:

Leveraging experiences from the BoYL project to submit new project proposals

- For example: PPK-NSI-ISAC Bridge Project submission
- Importance of collaborative space design with students, utilizing upcycling methods



# Summary

- **Key Takeaway:** The community space has become a key part of student life.
- **Future Vision:** Ensuring this knowledge is passed on, with ISAC and EHÖK continuing to embrace this development, with the support of the Library and NSI.

# **Book of Your Life in 5 minutes**

**mood video**