



Basement Altenberger Monastery



## Invitation to

international workshop  
Erasmus+ BIP



**clausura 23**



Here you can see some photos from the last workshop „LUIGI“  
<https://www.thm.de/bau/international/safe-international-design-workshop>



## History of Altenberg Monastery

Altenberg Monastery is located at the gates of the city of Wetzlar. Wetzlar is one of the three major centers of the Central Hesse region, along with Giessen and Marburg. The upper center of Wetzlar is known for its optical industry represented by the company Oculus Medical Optics and Leica Microsystems and Leica cameras. The Technische Hochschule Mittelhessen (THM) has a location in its neighboring town of Wetzlar with the StudiumPlus course of study.

Altenberg Monastery was founded in the 12th century. It has typical characteristics of high and late medieval women's monasteries.

It was one of the larger women's monasteries in the late Middle Ages and the high status of many of its nuns and founders testify to far-reaching relationships with various counties. The proximity to the imperial city of Wetzlar favored the economic development, which was marked by growing prosperity. As the daughter of Elisabeth of Thuringia, who had already been canonized in 1235, Gertrud was able to develop the monastery into an internationally known place of pilgrimage. By the time of her death in 1297, the number of conventuals had tripled from 24 to 70, and pilgrimages increased the monastery's property. This made the construction of a larger church and extensive monastery buildings possible but also necessary. Today's convent complex is largely based on the building measures from the 13th century. A fire in 1952 spared only the church, Getrudishaus and gatehouse, but the rest was carefully rebuilt so that the medieval character could be preserved.

Due to the pilgrimages to the burial church of St. Elisabeth and Blessed Gertud, so-called Elisabethenpfade (St. Elisabeth's Paths) have developed, which use existing paths and have been spiritually developed. The expansion of the church of Altenberg Monastery was decidedly carried out within the framework of the establishment of the Elizabeth pilgrimage. The construction of the church at Altenberg was oriented in essential elements on the Elisabeth church in Marburg. The Altenberg monastery has two courtyards. One courtyard is used for the reception and supply of the pilgrims. The second courtyard was intended only for the nuns who lived there and was not accessible to lay people.

Thus, three Elisabethenpfade cross the central Hessian conurbation and end in the cities of Cologne, Frankfurt and Eisenach, which are not only actively used until today, but even experience a new popularity due to the stronger need for spirituality of the people.

The Elisabethenpfad leads along the old trade routes from Cologne to Eisenach via Wetzlar and Marburg and from Marburg to Frankfurt via Gießen. These old trade routes manifest themselves today via the modern means of transportation of railroads with the Main-Weser route and the Lahn Valley route as well as in the form of the highways of A5, A45 and B 49. Thus, the conurbation of Central Hesse is also very well connected with other agglomeration areas such as Rhine Main and Cologne Bonn.

## Submission

Altenberg Monastery is to be converted and expanded as a conference venue for companies, educational institutions, political parties and similar institutions. A closed meeting is understood to be a meeting in which a specific circle of a community of interests (e.g. the management level of a company) discusses the abundance and complexity of work requirements and tasks systematically and in a planned manner with one another and develops new ideas and strategies together. This takes place in a closed setting (retreat), far away from the interruptions of the actors' daily lives. The conferences usually take place over several consecutive days.

In addition to the conference venue, the monastery is to be further developed as a pilgrimage site with overnight accommodations and integrated more strongly into the consciousness of society. In addition, it should continue to be used as a place for wedding and other family celebrations. It should also be possible to offer private festive parties overnight accommodation in the monastery. The two user groups, conference and private festive companies, could also use the same place at other times

## General Conditions

The project „Clausura23“ will be worked on in internationally mixed small groups over a period of 10 days. Planned are 4 working groups with eight students each, so that four different conceptual approaches for the revitalization of the Altenberg Monastery near Wetzlar can be expected as a result. The four working groups will be supported by tutors from the THM's master's program in architecture in organizing the group and developing the project. Furthermore, the project work will be professionally accompanied by the German professors and, in addition, by the professors of the different universities of origin.

The workshop will be organized in the framework of a

### **Blended Intensive Program (BIP).**

### **The costs for the journey and the stay in Wetzlar will be financed by Erasmus+.**

Students receive a sum of approximately 840,00 €.

Teachers will receive a sum of about 1.200,00 €.

The workshop is planned for the period from

### **4. September 2023 to 15. September 2023**

### **The virtual phase will take place in July 2023**

We will revere accommodation in the youth hostel in Wetzlar. The costs have to be paid by the participants themselves.

Phases of physical presence in Wetzlar will be combined with virtual phases.

The virtual phase will precede the physical phase in preparation for the stay in Wetzlar.



Altenberger Altar

The altar retable from Altenberg Monastery and is on loan to the Städel in Frankfurt. Because of its importance, it has already received extensive attention from modern researchers.

If you need more information about the implementation of the workshop please contact us.

## **THM**

Technische Hochschule Mittelhessen

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