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## PRESS RELEASE

# The Český Krumlov State Castle and Chateau, which has operated the Castle Museum for five years, will also open the International Study Centre this year

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Open year-round, the Castle Museum on the grounds of the Český Krumlov State Castle and Chateau will celebrate its fifth anniversary at the beginning of 2016. More than 250,000 people have visited the museum since its opening, and public interest continues to grow. The International Study Centre will be opened in the chateau in the second half of this year for domestic and foreign students. Both projects confirm the success of the National Heritage Institute in securing financial support from the Financial Mechanisms of the European Economic Area and Norway.

### Castle Museum

The unique exhibits of the Castle Museum with year-round operation have attracted more than **256,000** inquisitive visitors during the first five years of its existence. In addition to viewing the museum, more than 80% of visitors also climb to the tower gallery to enjoy the stunning views. 'Czech and foreign tourists are intrigued by the fascinating exhibits, including a reliquary case with relics of Saint Reparata, a martyr with a compelling story, a collection of the Schwarzenberg Guard and a cinematograph showing authentic short films from the lives of the Schwarzenbergs at the beginning of the twentieth century', which was named by Pavel Slavko, the Site Manager of the Český Krumlov State Castle and Chateau, as the museum's greatest attraction.

The museum exhibits were created with a timeless nature from the very beginning in order to present visitors not only the earliest history of the nobles families that owned the castle and the chateau but also the atmosphere of the private and working life of the administrator of the vast Schwarzenberg domain. In addition to historical displays, visitors can also enjoy a large model of the Český Krumlov Castle capturing its appearance in the mid-sixteenth century, as well as breathtaking views of the town.

Plans to open the 'Little Castle', one of the oldest parts of the chateau grounds, were created within the Rožmberk 2011 project. The building was repaired, restored and opened to the public for CZK 40 million. 'The National Heritage Institute received support for this work from the Financial Mechanisms of the European Economic Area and Norway', explains Director Petr Pavelec of the National Heritage Institute, Regional Historic Sites Management in České Budějovice.

### International Study Centre

The National Heritage Institute's success in acquiring funds from the Norway Grants is also underscored by another prepared project. 'The International Study Centre will be established in 2016', said Pavelec, adding that 'the realisation of this 'chateau university' is budgeted at CZK 32 million, 80% of which will come from grants, with the remainder covered by the state.

The first phase of this demanding project involved exploratory and rescue work, the 'aim of which was to identify and classify individual elements and structures (woodwork elements, windows, doors, wall panels, staircases, etc.), document them and then contract experts for restoration and the production of replicas', explains Josef Masaryk, Project Administrator and Head of the Department of Administration and Presentation of Cultural Assets of the National Heritage Institute, Regional Historic Sites Management in České Budějovice.

The north and south facades of the building were also restored: the valuable plaster layers were strengthened and conserved, and missing sections were filled in using the original material and colour structure. 'Thanks to the favourable weather conditions at the end of 2015, it was also possible to renovate the entire roof, including the repair of the roof frame and the addition of original dormers', said Masaryk.

Interior work is also progressing according to the established plan. 'After removing the unsuitable interior walls that had been added over the years, we were able to return the original architecturally unique layout to Hall of Columns', said Masaryk. Work continues on the second and third floors to build spaces with accommodations and social facilities for individuals staying at the International Study Centre.

Work in the coming winter months will involve the installation of new wiring, health and HVAC equipment and security technology, and interior woodwork, staircases and similar features will be restored. 'The restoration and conversion of the building for a new purpose is planned and will be completed by the deadline, which was extended by the provider of the grant – EEA/Norway – until 30 June 2016. Interior furnishings will be installed by the end of September 2016, and the first visitors will be welcomed in the autumn,' Masaryk concluded.

A seminar and symposium held in the autumn of 2015 served as a practical example and pilot project for joint cooperation between the National Heritage Institute and foreign and domestic partners. Participants at the seminar on the subject of 'Enterprise and Innovation in Local Czech Communities' included representatives from the Norwegian University College for Agriculture and Rural Development, Charles University in Prague and the Český Krumlov Baroque Theatre Foundation. The conclusions of the seminar were summarised at the following symposium with the same name.

More information is available at <http://www.npu-cb.eu/projekt-centrum-studijnich-pobytu> and <http://www.npu.cz/ups-cb/centrum-studijnich-pobytu>.

**The National Heritage Institute, Regional Heritage Administration in České Budějovice**, is one of four institutions dealing with the administration of listed buildings in the care of the National Heritage Institute. The National Heritage Institute, the largest state-funded organisation under the Czech Ministry of Culture, manages and welcomes the public to more than one-hundred landmarks. The Institute also cares for approximately three-quarters of a million collection items at these sites as well as typical features of castle and chateau grounds: historical parks and gardens. Seven of the landmarks under the administration of the National Heritage Institute are inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. The National Heritage Institute, Regional Heritage Administration in České Budějovice, cares for 30 heritage sites in the South Bohemian, Plzeň and Vysočina regions, including the following castles and chateaux: Červená Lhota, Český Krumlov, Dačice, Hluboká, Jindřichův Hradec, Kratochvíle, Landštejn, Nové Hrady, Rožmberk, Třeboň with the Domanín tomb, Vimperk, Zvíkov, Červené Poříčí, Gutštejn, Horšovský Týn, Kozel, Manětín, Nebílovy, Přimda, Rabí, Švihov, Velhartice, Jaroměřice nad Rokytou, Lipnice, Náměšť nad Oslavou, Telč, the Kladruby, Plasy and Zlatá Koruna monastery grounds as well as monuments of vernacular architecture (the U Matoušů homestead in Plzeň-Bolevec). More information is available at [www.npu.cz](http://www.npu.cz).

#### **Contacts:**

**PhDr. Pavel Slavko**, Site Manager of the Český Krumlov State Castle and Chateau and Project Head, tel. 607 559 430, [slavko.pavel@npu.cz](mailto:slavko.pavel@npu.cz)

**Mgr. Petr Pavelec, Ph.D.**, Director of the National Heritage Institute, Regional Historic Sites Management in České Budějovice, and Project Manager, tel. 607 661 967, [pavelec.petr@npu.cz](mailto:pavelec.petr@npu.cz)

**Ing. Josef Masaryk**, Project Administrator and Head of the Department of Administration and Presentation of Cultural Assets of the National Heritage Institute, Regional Historic Sites Management in České Budějovice, tel. 606 541 090, [masaryk.josef@npu.cz](mailto:masaryk.josef@npu.cz)

**Mgr. Jitka Skořepová**, PR and Spokeswoman, National Heritage Institute, Regional Historic Sites Management in České Budějovice, tel. 386 356 921, 602 626 736, [skorepova.jitka@npu.cz](mailto:skorepova.jitka@npu.cz)