

## Press Release

Leeuwarden, 26 March 2025

# Large-Scale Germany-Netherlands Collaboration on King Redbad

## European million grant for exhibition project Redbad

**The European grant programme Interreg VI has allocated 2 million for the realisation of the Redbad exhibition project. In 2026, the medieval Frisian king Redbad will take centre stage in large-scale exhibitions in Leeuwarden (The Netherlands) and Emden (Germany), educational programmes in both countries, a scientific publication, a popular book and a role-playing game. This project is made possible by the Interreg VI A Germany- Netherlands programme. The Dutch provinces of Fryslân and Groningen and the German northern region (Niedersächsische Ministerium für Bundes- und Europaangelegenheiten und Regionale Entwicklung) are co-financing the Redbad project. No fewer than nine organisations from the Netherlands and Germany will collaborate on the various partner programmes, including schools and museums, as well as the Mythemakers Foundation and the Fryske Akademy. The Fries Museum is initiator and coordinator.**

The northern Netherlands and north-western Germany share a rich cultural heritage that is not only visible in the landscape, but also in monuments and museums. The Fries Museum strives to deepen the cultural ties between the two regions. Facilitated by the Interreg grant, and as a follow-up to the exhibitions 'We Vikings' (2019) and 'Freedom, Feuds, Purgatory' (2022) at the Fries Museum, the 'Redbad' exhibition, planned for 2026, will expand on these successful small-scale collaborations with the Ostfriesische Landschaft and Ostfriesisches Landesmuseum Emden.

As initiator, the Fries Museum is working intensively with eight partners from Germany and the Netherlands on this large-scale exhibition project, which will be accompanied by an educational programme, a scientific publication, a popular book and a role-playing game based on the historical reality of seventh-century Frisia.

## **Partners**

- Fries Museum (initiator and coordinator)
- Ostfriesisches Landesmuseum Emden;
- Ostfriesisches Landschaft;
- Learning Hub Friesland;
- Firda educational institution;
- Niedersächsisches Institut für historische Küstenforschung;
- Mythemakers Foundation;
- Fryske Akademy;
- University of Groningen

The focus is on the powerful, Frisian king Redbad (<670-719). Exactly how large his kingdom was is still debated to this day. In any case, his influence spread over a vast area then known as Frisia: stretching from the entire Dutch and northern German coastline to the Utrecht river area. In addition, Redbad participated in a wider northern and western European network. On the one hand, there was contact with the coastal areas around the North Sea, and on the other with Frankish neighbours to the south. The Frisians called him Redbad; in Germany he was named Radbod; and Dutch historians speak of Radboud. With this project, the nine partners aim to reconstruct the life and times of the medieval king as accurately as possible. Using archaeological, historical and landscape historical sources, the era of Redbad will be completely mapped out for the first time. The exhibition at the Fries Museum will be on display from September 2026, after which it will be relocated to the Ostfriesische Landesmuseum in Emden, where it will open in spring 2027.

## **Interactive role-playing games**

Mythemakers, a foundation that uses role-playing games to empower vulnerable young people, will be making a special contribution. In the past, Mythemakers and the Fries Museum organised a successful Dungeons & Dragons evening at the museum to accompany the exhibition 'Freedom, Feuds, Purgatory', where storylines from the Frisian Middle Ages were woven into the popular role-playing game. For the Redbad project, Mythemakers will meticulously reconstruct the world of the mythical medieval king and translate it into a game format. Players can then re-enact supplied narratives that are based on historical reality. Supported by six youth welfare partners, this project focuses on strengthening social skills and fostering connections with the surroundings. Previous studies by Mythemakers, in collaboration with youth aid organisations, show that role playing has positive effects on vulnerable young people.

## Interreg VI

Redbad is made possible by the Interreg VI A 'Germany-Netherlands' programme. Interreg financially supports cooperation projects across European borders from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and national co-financing from both the Netherlands and Germany. Co-financing for the Redbad project comes from the Dutch provinces of Friesland and Groningen and the German northern region. All nine project partners are also making their own contribution amounting to 30% of the total budget. The Interreg programme management at the Ems Dollard Region (EDR) is supporting the implementation of this project.

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**Note to editors (not for publication): For questions, please contact the Fries Museum at [communicatie@friesmuseum.nl](mailto:communicatie@friesmuseum.nl) or 058 255 55 00.**

For high-resolution images, visit [www.friesmuseum.nl/persmappen](http://www.friesmuseum.nl/persmappen)



**Deutschland – Nederland**

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**Redbad**

