

Dr. Wolfgang Grams Biography

Dr. Grams is the founder (1996), owner and managing director of his privately-run institute "Routes to the Roots, Research and Travel (RsRs)." The institute emerged from a research project headed by Dr. Grams, then a professor at the Department for Political Sciences at Oldenburg University. RsRs carries out historical biographical research, designs databases, exhibits and cultural projects with the focus on the migration experience and as a specialized tour operator conducts field trips and excursions. Dr. Grams teaches German American Studies and Cultural Tourism, conducts workshops, seminars and lectures in these fields.

Dr. Grams was a research consultant, project planner and content acquisitionist for Ancestry.com in Germany until February 2017. He has served this company as a contractor and project designer since 2004 starting with the implementation of Ancestry.de and its office in Munich, Germany to building up many online databases by managing co-operations with German archives. Within these projects, Dr. Grams has negotiated the digitization of the Hamburg passenger lists in a co-operation with the emigration museum Ballinstadt and the Hamburg state archives. Other projects include co-operation with archives on all levels from the Bundesarchiv to small municipal collections throughout Germany.

He was a consultant for the German National Tourist Office New York and Frankfurt, for the Deutsche Tourismusverband and the German Ministry for Economic Affairs, Berlin to promote cultural heritage projects through seminars, workshops, conceptual studies and print and online media.

Dr. Grams was the author of a World EXPO 2000 concept "Auswanderung Ober Bremen und Bremerhaven" and co-planer for the German Emigration Center I Deutsches Auswandererhaus in Bremerhaven. He was the curator of the EXPO 2000 exhibit "Abenteuer Spurensuche" and academic adviser and researcher of biographical portraits for the German Emigration Centers' exhibit until its opening in 2005.

Funded by the European Union (1993 -1996) Dr. Grams was founder and chairman of a European network "Routes to the Roots" consisting of specialized museums and research centers in Germany, the Netherlands, England, Ireland, Greece, Poland and Scandinavia, members of the Association of European Migration Institutions (AEMI).

Dr. Grams has organized many heritage tours both for Americans to Germany and for Germans to America including pilot projects in heritage cruises with HAPAG LLOYD or CUNARD. Through his academic work and heritage projects, he has developed a network for research and travel among societies, museums, and individuals in Germany and in the US. He has received his Ph.D. in 1990 from Oldenburg University in the field of German 18th-century literature and lectured in this field at the Department for German Literature at Bremen University from 1990 - 1992.