PRESS RELEASE
World Heritage LAB: “#Managing - Site Managers and World Heritage”

Italy is the country in the world that boasts the highest number of sites registered in the UNESCO World Heritage List: a certification of the cultural wealth of the Country but also an important responsibility that falls on different subjects, from the Government to local administrations, each of which has a specific role in the activities of protection, enhancement and promotion of the sites themselves.

Proper management of World Heritage is a very debated topic among operators, in Italy and abroad. To open an in-depth comparison on the critical issues and opportunities that arise from the need for a conscious management of World Heritage, the Association of Italian World Heritage organizes and promotes the workshop “#Managing - Site Manager and World Heritage”, which will be held in Florence, at the Istituto degli Innocenti, Friday, January 25th.

"When you have to deal with with goods of such great value as UNESCO World Heritage Sites, places, works of Art and priceless contexts, the training of professionals is a fundamental asset - explains Giacomo Bassi, mayor of San Gimignano and president of the Association - The framework of knowledge, intervention planning, new technologies and the most innovative restoration techniques, the complexity of managing the properties of modern enhancement and communication formulas impose excellent training courses, in a permanent updating framework that, both the ministerial and the local level, must guarantee. Our Association strives to achieve those goals and stimulate the institutions so that these paths are not occasional but continuous.”.

The conference “#Management - Site Managers and World Heritage” will involve international experts in Management of Cultural Heritage, representatives of the UNESCO World Heritage Center and of the MiBAC, Site Managers from different European countries as well as managers and administrators of Italian World Heritage properties.

“In the general debate related to the management of World Heritage sites, the subject of the technician who has to deal with the management plan remains the same: the site manager. In the Anglo-Saxon area and more generally in the European scene, this is a well defined professional, both from an administrative and operational and from the operational point of view, while in Italy - although we have the largest number of sites recognized as World Heritage - this remains a confused figure, not outlined by any point of view. In fact, to date, in most cases as a reference to the management of the site we find a political subject and not a technician. - explains Carlo Francini, Site Manager of the Florence World Heritage site and scientific coordinator of the Association - This situation creates several critical issues in the management system of Italian Properties and for this reason the Association of Italian World Heritage has decided to focus a meeting to this topic. This workshop should therefore be useful to define the profession of the site manager and to support, at the persons responsible for the World Heritage
sites and at the Government, the decision to give a clear and unambiguous body to a technical figure, who will have the task to coordinate, through the management plan, the management of the property itself."

The Florentine conference takes place in the activities of the "World Heritage LAB", created with the contribution of the Ministry for Cultural Heritage and Activities and sponsored by the Italian National Commission for UNESCO, by the Tuscany Region, the City of Florence and Federculture. Funded with the funds of Law 77/06, the W.H.LAB is configured as a path of updating and comparison, dedicated to operators and specialists who deal with the Italian Cultural Heritage, with particular reference to the managing bodies of World Heritage sites.

"The figure of the Site Manager is by definition complex but becomes indispensable if we want to project the principles of the Convention for World Heritage towards the future in a coherent and concrete way - comments Enrico Vicenti, Head of General Secretary of the Italian National Commission for UNESCO - This is a good day for discussion and updating organized and promoted by the Association of Italian World Heritage: my hope is that it is the start of a necessary reflection on the professionalization and recognition of this task within the institutional framework".

The World Heritage LAB, which as a whole will end in the autumn of 2019, is divided into three themes: "Communicating - the new words for World Heritage", the subject of the meeting held in Ferrara last May; "#Managing - Site Managers and World Heritage" that will be tackled next Friday in Florence and "Valorizing- the territories and properties of the World Heritage", which will be held in Venice next spring. Next summer, the results, the reports and outputs of the LAB will be shown in Rome: they will be available on the Association website for downloading and consultaton.

Florence workshop will be available in live streaming from the YouTube channel of the Association of Italian World Heritage.

World Heritage Lab is supoprted by:

Progetto finanziato a valere sui fondi Legge 20 febbraio 2006, n. 77
"Misure speciali di tutela e fruizione dei siti italiani di interesse culturale, paesaggistico e ambientale, inseriti nella "Lista del Patrimonio Mondiale", posti sotto la tutela dell'UNESCO"
The Association of Italian Heritage World Heritage currently collects 52 members between public administrations, foundations, Regions that deal with the management of properties of the Italian World Heritage. It carries out an intense activity of support to the policies of protection and enhancement of the territories and of the assets endowed with the prestigious UNESCO recognition and it is a fundamental interlocutor between Italian and international Associations and Institutions.

The activities of the Association are different and mainly focused on projects related with learning, such as the recent "World Heritage in the School", on workshops and meetings about unescan themes and initiatives to promote sites and values of World Heritage towards Institutions and Citizens.

The Association, among other things, proposes itself as a facilitator between the managing bodies of Italian World Heritage properties and private companies that want to build projects and synergies in the field of valorization, conservation and promotion of cultural heritage.

In 2018, European Year of Culture, the Association of Italian Heritage World Heritage participated in the planning of activities bringing in Italy the fourth edition of the European Meeting of World Heritage AAssociations, held in Noto in October, while for the 2019 proposes various activities, among which the World Heritage LAB - a project curated and promoted with the support of MiBACT thanks to the funds of Law no.77 / 2006, which is articulated along a path of updating and comparison dedicated to operators and specialists who deal with of the Italian Cultural Heritage.

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WORLD HERITAGE LAB

The Association of Italian Heritage World organizes and promotes the "World Heritage LAB", with the support of the Italian Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities and the National Italian Commission for UNESCO.

The LAB, which as a whole will end in the summer of 2019, will be divided into three themes: # Communicating - New words for World Heritage, #Management - Site Manager and World Heritage, #Valorising - Territories and World Heritage Properties.

The LAB consists of three meetings: Ferrara, Florence and Venice plus a conference in Rome, that will be held at the headquarters of the MiBAC to present the results of the project and the reports of the three different workshops. Reports documents about THE W.H.Lab will be available on website of the Association of Italian World Heritage.

Supported with the funds of Law 77/06, the LAB is configured as a path of updating and comparison, dedicated to operators and specialists who deal with the Italian Cultural Heritage, with particular reference to the managing bodies of World Heritage properties.

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