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European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards 2026

Call for Entries

The European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards aim to identify, recognise and champion best practices in the protection and conservation of cultural heritage as well as innovative developments and knowledge in the care and promotion of tangible, intangible and digital cultural heritage. Through the power of example, the scheme enables the exchange and transfer of experiences and skills across borders and between communities in Europe and beyond. It increases the visibility and understanding of the multiple values of cultural heritage for Europe's society, economy, environment and culture¹.

The Awards were launched in 2002 by the European Union and are co-funded under the Creative Europe Programme. Since its launch, Europa Nostra, the European Voice of Civil Society Committed to Cultural Heritage, has been responsible for running this awards scheme.

Outstanding heritage achievements will be awarded **in the following categories**²:

- Conservation & Adaptive Reuse
- Research
- Education, Training & Skills
- Citizens' Engagement & Awareness-raising
- Heritage Champions

Entries can be related to tangible, intangible or digital heritage. The scope of the entries can be ranging from small to large, from local to European and international.

The European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards will honour up to 30 outstanding heritage achievements, among which **up to five Grand Prix** will be awarded, each with a monetary prize of €10,000³.

In addition, the **Public Choice Award** will be presented to one of the selected award winners, following an **online vote** conducted via the Europa Nostra website and will also receive a monetary prize of €10,000³.

Furthermore, the Europa Nostra Awards recognise outstanding heritage achievements in countries that are members of the Council of Europe but do not participate in the Culture strand of the Creative Europe Programme. The Europa Nostra Awards are not co-funded by the European Union's Creative Europe Programme.

Entries for both Awards must be submitted online via european-heritage.awardsplatform.com.

¹ This includes efforts related to risk management for cultural heritage, with a focus on prevention and risk preparedness concerning both natural and human-made hazards, including climate change adaptation and mitigation, in alignment with the principles of the European Green Deal.

² Definitions of these categories can be found on page 4 of this document, together with information on the eligibility and selection criteria.

³ Please note that only winners of the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards coming from countries participating in the Culture strand of the Creative Europe Programme are eligible to win a Grand Prix and/or Public Choice Award, with a monetary award of €10.000. For further information and the list of countries see page 3.

The deadline for submissions is **9 September 2025** (23:59 CET).

For questions, please consult the [FAQ](#). If you cannot find the answer to your question, contact cs@europanostra.org.

Conditions of Entry

Eligible countries

Entries for the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards, co-funded by the European Union's Creative Europe Programme, may only be submitted from countries participating in the Culture strand of the Creative Europe Programme, i.e. the EU Member States and third countries associated to the Programme⁴.

Entries submitted from countries that are members of the Council of Europe but are not participating in the Culture strand of the Creative Europe Programme are only eligible for the Europa Nostra Awards.

N.B.: Entries to the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards and the Europa Nostra Awards apply through the same entry procedure and are evaluated together through the same process. However, only the winners of the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards coming from countries participating in the Culture strand of the Creative Europe Programme are also eligible to win a Grand Prix and Public Choice Award, with a monetary award of €10.000.

European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards (also eligible for a Grand Prix and/or Public Choice Award)	Europa Nostra Awards
Albania, Armenia, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Kosovo ⁵ , Latvia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of North Macedonia, Romania, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Tunisia, and Ukraine	Andorra, Azerbaijan, Holy See, Republic of Moldova, Monaco, San Marino, Switzerland, Turkey, and the United Kingdom

⁴https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/docs/2021-2027/crea/guidance/list-3rd-country-participation_crea_en.pdf

⁵ This designation is without prejudice to positions on status and is in line with UNSCR 1244/1999 and the ICJ Opinion on the Kosovo declaration of independence.

Types of heritage covered by all five award categories

- **Tangible heritage:**
 - Archaeological sites, including underwater archaeology.
 - Architectural heritage, encompassing single buildings or groups of buildings in rural or urban settings, including religious, industrial, and engineering heritage.
 - Building additions or alterations, as well as new building projects of any type (cultural, residential, religious, industrial, or engineering) within historic areas in both urban and rural settings.
 - Cultural landscapes, such as historic urban environments, townscapes, city or town squares, streetscapes, historic parks and gardens, and larger areas of designed landscape or cultural, environmental, and/or agricultural significance.
 - Movable heritage, such as collections or single works of art or objects of historic significance.
- **Intangible heritage**, including traditions, cultural and social practices, knowledge and skills related to traditional crafts related to traditional crafts⁶.
- **Digital heritage:** born-digitally or converted into digital form from existing analogue resources.

Awards categories & conditions for submitting an entry

1. Conservation & Adaptive Reuse

Outstanding projects aiming at the conservation, regeneration and adaptation to new uses of cultural heritage, including cultural landscapes.

- a) Must have been completed during the past three years (within the period between August 2022 and August 2025).
- b) Must adhere to the most up-to-date principles and standards of heritage conservation (identification and respect of heritage values, materials, legibility, compatibility and reversibility).
- c) Should be accessible to the public.
Buildings or sites that are regularly used by large numbers of people, for instance, schools or office premises, are considered accessible. Private buildings or sites that are regularly open to visitors, at least once a year, are also considered accessible.

2. Research

Innovative research projects that lead to measurable and visible effects in safeguarding and enhancing cultural heritage, and/or improving the access, use, and understanding of heritage assets by communities.

- a) Must have been completed⁷ during the past three years (within the period between August 2022 and August 2025).

⁶ Intangible cultural heritage, as defined by UNESCO, refers to practices, representations, expressions, knowledge and skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognise as part of their cultural heritage (*inter alia* oral traditions and expressions, performing arts, social practices, rituals and festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe and traditional craftsmanship). Source: [UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage](#).

⁷ In the case of research projects funded under specific programmes (e.g., Horizon Europe or others), it is recommended to apply two to three years after the end of the project implementation. This allows for a focus on the long-term impact and results that extend beyond those defined by the grant agreement.

- b) Should entail one or more of the following types of activity:
 - Academic research⁸
 - Applied research/ pilot studies
 - Scientific publications (e.g. book, volume, manuscript) on the results of research
 - Citizen science projects
- c) Should be innovative in terms of scientific approach, methodology applied, interpretation and dissemination of research results, with presented and clearly explained research issues addressed and solved, as well as the scientific approach and methodology applied, and the target group expected to benefit (or have benefitted) from the results.
- d) Should clearly present argumentation about the claimed benefits for the targeted heritage sites/assets and stakeholders, and the expected impact on the scientific and policy debate.
- e) Transferability and replicability of the methodology would be an added value.

3. Education, Training & Skills

Exemplary projects or initiatives related to cultural heritage with the aim of fostering knowledge transfer, capacity-building and/or enhancing traditional or new skills and crafts related to heritage⁹.

- a) Must have been completed during the past three years (within the period between August 2022 and August 2025) or should be ongoing and at an advanced stage in order to have led to tangible results (quantitative and qualitative) that have generated an improvement for heritage sites/assets, as well as for their users and stakeholders in the given context. Projects at initial phases or in pilot stages, which have not yet demonstrated significant outcomes or impact, may not be considered.
- b) Should be interactive and participatory and lead to the engagement and empowerment of the participants.
- c) Should reach beyond the standard educational or academic framework.

4. Citizens' Engagement & Awareness-raising

Outstanding heritage-led projects which foster social cohesion, inclusion, multicultural dialogue and understanding, nurture a sense of place and belonging, celebrate diversity and multiple identities as well as stimulate citizens' engagement, ownership and civic responsibility.

⁸ In the case of a PhD thesis, the submission must be accompanied by a supporting letter from a supervisor or professor. Master's theses are not eligible.

⁹ Education – Projects that promote broader public understanding and appreciation of cultural heritage. These typically involve formal or informal learning activities aimed at general audiences such as school programmes, public lectures, heritage interpretation materials, digital learning resources, museum educational initiatives, or community awareness campaigns. The primary focus is on expanding knowledge about cultural heritage among diverse audiences.

Training – Projects that develop professional competencies for individuals already working or planning to work in the heritage sector. These typically involve structured learning programmes to equip participants with specific methodologies, approaches, or theoretical frameworks. Examples include conservation workshops for museum staff, heritage management courses for site administrators, or professional development programmes for tour guides. The primary focus is on improving the professional capabilities of heritage practitioners.

Skills – Projects that preserve, transfer or innovate specific practical techniques related to tangible heritage. These typically involve hands-on instruction in traditional crafts or contemporary conservation methods. Examples include apprenticeship programmes in traditional building techniques, workshops on historical textile production, or innovative digital documentation methods for heritage artefacts. The primary focus is on the mastery of concrete, technical abilities rather than theoretical knowledge.

- a) Must have been completed during the past three years (within the period between August 2022 and August 2025) or should be ongoing and at an advanced stage in order to have led to tangible results (quantitative and qualitative) that have generated an improvement for heritage sites/assets, as well as for their users and stakeholders in the given context. Projects at initial phases or in pilot stages, which have not yet demonstrated significant outcomes or impact, may not be considered.
- b) Should be interactive and participatory and lead to the engagement and empowerment of the participants.

5. Heritage Champions

Influential and inspiring individuals or organisations whose exemplary action demonstrates an exceptional level of dedication, impact and civic engagement for the safeguard and enhancement of cultural heritage.

- a) Candidates must be nominated by another individual or organisation.
- b) The nominee(s) can be an individual, organisation or group of people. An acting head of an international heritage network or heritage organisation should not be nominated until such time as they are no longer in a leadership position of this network/organisation.
- c) The achievement in question may be remunerated or non-remunerated/voluntary.
- d) The nominee(s) must demonstrate a high degree of commitment, coupled with excellence in the protection, conservation and enhancement of cultural heritage in Europe.
- e) The achievement must have far exceeded normal expectations from heritage professionals or volunteers in the given context.
- f) The results achieved by the nominees must have generated an improvement for heritage sites/assets, or for their users and stakeholders in the given context.

Entry procedure for all awards categories

- The project/entry may be submitted in one category only. In case of hesitations about the most suitable category, please contact cs@europanostra.org.
- Entries may be submitted by individual(s) or organisation(s) who are entitled to represent the initiative, as long as they have included the consent from the owner of the related heritage site or collection (for category Conservation), from the author or owner/leader of the project (for categories Research, Education, Training & Skills and Citizens Engagement & Awareness-raising), or from the nominee (for category Heritage Champions). The entrant must inform all associated partners and stakeholders that they are applying.
- Entries, or nominations in the case of the category Heritage Champions, may not be submitted by members of the Selection Committees, the Heritage Awards Jury, nor the Board of Europa Nostra.
- Entries may be re-submitted once, with the necessary adapted text of the entry dossier and/or with additional documentation.
- Incomplete entries will not be considered.
- Entries must be submitted in English.
- By submitting an entry, the entrant agrees to the processing and sharing of data in accordance with Europa Nostra's [Privacy Policy](#).
- Receipt of an entry dossier will be acknowledged by an automatic system.

Overarching Selection Criteria

The following are the overarching criteria for the selection of submitted entries in all award categories.

1. Quality

The selected entries should represent the highest quality of best practice in the heritage sector and be fully in line with professional European and International standards, among which the [Faro Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society](#), adopted under the auspices of the Council of Europe, the [European quality principles for EU-funded interventions](#) prepared by ICOMOS, the [Davos Baukultur Quality Principles](#) and the principles of the [New European Bauhaus](#).

2. European significance

The selected entries should create a sense of belonging to a European community and help shape a common European identity; exemplify how cultural heritage is a driver for international cooperation; have significance and relevance for Europe's integration and social cohesion; and/or be exemplary of European shared values. This includes embracing the value of "unity in diversity" in Europe as well as championing the value of peace and mutual trust and understanding between culture and communities.

3. Community engagement

The selected entries should demonstrate how communities interact with the heritage, the urban or landscape context and its contribution to the improvement of this context. The selected entries should show how heritage relies on communities to give meaning and preserve authenticity - this is especially relevant in terms of sustainable tourism and residents' well-being. Community engagement also entails providing access to heritage (including marginalised areas of heritage) and activities which promote social inclusion and belonging (for instance, the active engagement of communities of people or members of society who are not usually engaged in heritage activities).

4. Results/impact

The selected entries should demonstrate that they have achieved outstanding qualitative and quantitative results within the available resources. The results achieved must have generated an improvement for heritage sites/assets, as well as for their users and other stakeholders in the given context.

5. Knowledge transfer and dissemination

The selected entries should demonstrate that knowledge about heritage has been enlarged and/or deepened and subsequently shared and disseminated. The selected entries should be exemplary in nature and transferable or applicable to different contexts, based on clear documentation and communication of the methodology and principles.

Criteria for the Selection of the Grand Prix Winners

Up to five Grand Prix are awarded to the most outstanding projects among the winners of the Awards, according to the general criteria for the selection of award winners (above), and the specific criteria for the selection of the winners of the Grand Prix.

The following are the transversal themes which are considered to be key priorities for the selection of the Grand Prix winners and the criteria by which projects exhibiting these qualities are defined.

Innovation

Projects or initiatives which implement new ideas, knowledge or methods and generate an improvement for heritage, its users and stakeholders in the current or previous context, also in terms of well-being. They should be highly innovative (innovation being conceived in one or more different areas, such as cultural, political, economic, social, technological, legal and/or environmental) and feasible to implement in other locations and with high potential for transferability.

Digital Transformation

Projects or initiatives which use digital technology to deliver value to users, audiences and communities and/or contribute to the transformation of the heritage sector powered by digital means. They should be Interdisciplinary in nature, with high potential for transferability and should make heritage accessible through the digitalisation or digitisation of heritage collections or tools.

These projects/initiatives should be innovative and create solutions for contemporary issues facing cultural heritage with the help of digital technologies (these tools can be newly created or newly applied to heritage settings/assets).

Sustainability & Climate Action

Projects or initiatives which demonstrate the capacities of cultural heritage to assess and/or mitigate the effects of climate change and contribute to key areas of the European Green Deal, including Clean Energy, Circular Economy, the Renovation Wave, Smart Mobility, Farm to Fork, Green Finance and a Just Transition, Research and Innovation, Education and Training, as well as Green Deal Diplomacy.

These projects/initiatives should be interdisciplinary in nature, with high potential for transferability and demonstrate the special relevance of heritage to climate action. They should be innovative and create solutions for the multiple effects and challenges caused by the climate crisis and raise awareness and empower the communities most affected by the climate crisis.

Social Cohesion & Well-being

Projects and initiatives which show the relevance of heritage for the positive integration and exchange between different age groups or communities as well as the significance of heritage to the health (physical and mental) and well-being of individuals and their communities.

They include and empower marginalised or underrepresented people in heritage activities and/or are activities that are created and led by marginalised or underrepresented people in heritage activities.

These projects/initiatives should contribute to the improvement of individual and collective well-being and quality of life, including in terms of physical and mental health, happiness and life

satisfaction. They should help in allowing individuals and their communities realise their full potential and engage in society to their fullest capacity and on an equitable footing.

International Relations

Projects and initiatives which build relations and cooperation between countries and/or communities through, among others, sharing expertise, capacity building, joining resources or community engagement activities.

They should uncover, demonstrate and promote the shared cultural heritage-related knowledge and values of two or more countries and/or communities and generate an improvement for heritage, its users and stakeholders in the present or past context (that may include one or more among the cultural, political, economic, social, technological, legal, environmental dimensions or axes).

These projects/initiatives should foster international cultural relations, peace and trust building, reconciliation and mutual respect and understanding across nations and communities.

The Selection Process

1. Preliminary screening of the entries against the eligibility criteria by the staff of Europa Nostra.

2. Examination of the eligible entries and selection of a shortlist of up to 60 projects by the five Selection Committees.

Five Selection Committees (one for each category) will thoroughly examine, evaluate and discuss all eligible submitted dossiers in a series of online and/or in-person meetings and will shortlist up to 60 projects across the categories, in proportion to the number of entries per category.

3. Assessment of up to 60 shortlisted projects *in situ* by local experts with written reports.

The assessors will submit a written report in accordance with the assessment guidelines and a standard report form provided by Europa Nostra. These reports may be based on the study of the submitted entry, visiting the site/project (if relevant and if conditions allow) or interviewing the applicant/nominated individual or organisation via a video call or a phone call. The assessors may also write the assessment based on their knowledge of the local/national context of the submitted entry. The reports have an advisory value and will be made available to the Jury/Board of Europa Nostra prior to and during their meeting to select the Award and Grand Prix Winners. The assessment reports are confidential and are not shared with the entrant/nominator.

4. Evaluation and final selection of up to 30 winners of the Awards and recommendations of up to 15 Grand Prix candidates by the Heritage Awards Jury.

The Jury will evaluate the shortlisted projects across categories ensuring a balanced spread of the Awards in geographical terms and in terms of types of heritage and heritage achievements.

The Heritage Awards Jury, appointed by the Board of Europa Nostra, will be composed of members from different European countries who will cover various fields of expertise.

Entrants will be informed of the decision of the Jury via email. The decisions of the Jury are final, and correspondence may not be entered into regarding the decisions of the Selection Committees/Jury.

5. Selection of the (up to) five Grand Prix winners by the Board of Europa Nostra.

Up to five Grand Prix winners will be selected from among the awarded initiatives. The winners will be announced at the European Heritage Awards Ceremony and will receive a monetary award of €10.000 each.

Only winners of the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards from countries participating in the Cultural Strand of the Creative Europe Programme, as stated on page 3, are eligible for the Grand Prix.

6. Selection of the Public Choice Award through online voting.

Through an online voting system via the Europa Nostra website, citizens from around the world will have the chance to vote for their favourite projects from among the annual laureates.

Only winners of the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards that are submitted from countries participating in the Cultural Strand of the Creative Europe Programme, as stated on page 3, are eligible for the Public Choice Award.

The winner will be announced at the European Heritage Awards Ceremony and will receive a monetary award of €10.000.

Awards & Publicity

- Upon notification of the Jury's decision, Europa Nostra may ask for additional photo/video material. All photo/video material provided must be copyright-free for Europa Nostra and the European Commission's use for publicity and other aims; any photo/video credits will be duly acknowledged.
- The Europe-wide public announcement of the awarded achievements will be coordinated by Europa Nostra's Secretariat.
- After this announcement, the award winners are expected to organise a (hybrid) event *in situ* to celebrate their award with, among others, those involved in the implementation of their project and with the local community and to promote their achievement in various other ways at local, regional, national and/or European/international level.
- The winners of the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards 2026 will be celebrated in May 2026 during the European Heritage Awards Ceremony.
- All award-winning entries will receive an award certificate as well as a bronze wall plaque which has to be placed *in situ*, in a visible location accessible to the public.
- In addition, the winners of a Grand Prix and the Public Choice Award, chosen from among the laureates of the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards, will receive a monetary award of €10.000.