

## PRESS RELEASE

### Stewards of Cultural Heritage among the winners of the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards 2019

**The Hague, 21 May 2019** – The winners of the **European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards 2019**, Europe's most prestigious honour in the field, funded by the Creative Europe programme, were announced today by the European Commission and Europa Nostra, the leading European heritage network. The **25 laureates from 16 countries** have been recognised for their impressive accomplishments in conservation, research, dedicated service, and education, training and awareness-raising. **Among the winners in the category Education, Training and Awareness-raising is Stewards of Cultural Heritage, run by a German institute in Istanbul.** The winners will be honoured at the **high-profile European Heritage Awards Ceremony on 29 October in Paris**, during the European Heritage Congress.

**Europa Nostra Awards** will also be given to two remarkable heritage achievements from European countries not taking part in the EU Creative Europe programme, namely Switzerland and Turkey.

Citizens from around Europe and the rest of the world can now [vote online](#) for the **Public Choice Award** and mobilise support for the winning achievement(s) from their own or another European country.

Among those dedicated individuals and exemplary European heritage initiatives that were awarded in 2019 are: the sensitive restoration of the Chapel of the Holy Shroud in Turin, an iconic site of religious heritage which was destroyed by fire in 1997 and which has now been reopened to the public; the development of a digital archive of the Roma, an internationally accessible space that would make Romani cultures and histories visible as well as respond to stereotypes with a counter-history told by Roma themselves; the dedication of one of the oldest heritage NGOs in Europe which has committed itself to heritage protection in Norway for over 175 years; and the above mentioned training programme for displaced, skilled heritage specialists from Syria, which serves as a powerful example for countries in Europe and beyond.

The European Commission and Europa Nostra have also announced a **Special European Heritage Award** to honour the Paris Fire Brigade. Together with the police forces and conservation experts, the city's firefighters bravely and skilfully battled the flames which ravaged the Notre Dame cathedral on the night of 15 April and successfully protected the main structure of the monument from complete destruction, as well as the priceless artefacts within. Read the separate press release on this Special Prize [here](#).

"I am immensely proud to congratulate all winners of the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards 2019. These heritage heroes - professionals and volunteers from across Europe – have accomplished something truly amazing. Their work to restore, preserve, support or promote Europe's heritage monuments and sites, as well as the intangible heritage of Europe, is of the highest quality imaginable. The Awards are proof of the tremendous impact that heritage projects have on our economy, our environment, our culture and our quality of life. Europe's heritage is a key asset for Europe's future and our prosperity. This is an important message for all EU citizens and all future leaders of EU Institutions ahead of the forthcoming European elections", stated **Plácido Domingo**, the renowned opera singer and President of Europa Nostra.

"Our cultural heritage is our joint resource, a legacy from the past on which to build our future. It has its place in people's hearts and in their daily lives – and is crucial in fostering a sense of belonging. The European Year of Cultural Heritage that we celebrated in 2018 highlighted this important role. Now it is our task to keep promoting it in the years to come. This year's winners of the European Heritage Awards/Europa Nostra Awards are playing their part in these efforts with their engagement and the quality of their work, and I warmly congratulate them," said **Tibor Navracsics**, European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport.

Independent [Juries](#) of heritage experts from across Europe examined a total of 149 applications, submitted by organisations and individuals from 34 European countries, and selected the winners.

The laureates will be celebrated at the [European Heritage Awards Ceremony](#), co-hosted by European Commissioner **Tibor Navracsics** and Maestro **Plácido Domingo**, and organised under the high patronage of the President of the French Republic, **Emmanuel Macron**, on the evening of 29 October in Paris.

Seven Grand Prix laureates (each of whom will receive €10,000) and the Public Choice Award winner, chosen from among this year's winning projects, will be announced during the Ceremony.

The Ceremony will be attended by an audience of high-level officials from EU Institutions and Member States, leading representatives of heritage organisations and dedicated professionals and supporters from all over Europe.

The winners will present their heritage accomplishments at the Excellence Fair on 28 October. They will also contribute to various other events of the European Heritage Congress, to take place from 27-30 October 2019.

The Call for Entries for the 2020 edition of the Awards will be published in June 2019 on the dedicated [website](#).

## CONTACTS

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## TO FIND OUT MORE

### About each winning project:

[Information and jury's comments](#),  
[Photos](#) and [Videos](#) (in high resolution)

[Press release in various languages](#)

[Creative Europe website](#)  
[Commissioner Navracsics website](#)

## 2019 Award Winners

*(listed alphabetically by country)*

### Category Conservation

Castle of Montreuil Bonnin, FRANCE  
Fortified Settlement of Mutso, GEORGIA  
Chapel of the Holy Shroud, Turin, ITALY  
Cathedral of Saint Bavo, Haarlem, THE NETHERLANDS  
The Queen Louise Adit Complex, Zabrze, POLAND  
Pavilion for the Presentation of Archaeological Remains, Celje, SLOVENIA  
Lithica Quarry of s'Hostal, Menorca, SPAIN  
Oratory of the Partial Palace in the Alhambra, Granada, SPAIN  
The Portal of Glory, Santiago de Compostela, SPAIN  
Medieval Tithe Barn, Ingatorp, SWEDEN  
Yr Ysgwrn, Trawsfynydd, Wales, UNITED KINGDOM

### Category Research

Solak 1: a Model of Predictive Archaeology, ARMENIA/ITALY  
VERONA: Van Eyck Research in Open Access, BELGIUM  
RomArchive - Digital Archive of the Roma, GERMANY

### Category Dedicated Service

VVIA - Flemish Association for Industrial Archaeology, BELGIUM  
Fortidsminneforeningen – National Trust of Norway, NORWAY

### Category Education, Training and Awareness Raising

TUMO Center for Creative Technologies, Yerevan, ARMENIA  
History Radar 1938, Vienna, AUSTRIA  
Betina Museum of Wooden Shipbuilding, CROATIA  
Monument Europe, Berlin, GERMANY  
**Stewards of Cultural Heritage, GERMANY**  
Greek Paths of Culture, Athens, GREECE  
Commonlands: Cultural Community Mapping in Alpine Areas, Parco Nazionale Val Grande, ITALY  
Le Dimore del Quartetto, Milan, ITALY  
A Place at the Royal Table, Warsaw, POLAND

A **Europa Nostra Award** will also be presented to two remarkable heritage achievements from European countries not taking part in the EU Creative Europe programme.

### Category Conservation

Boğaziçi University Gözlükule Excavation Research Center, Tarsus, TURKEY

### Category Dedicated Service

Mr. Léonard Gianadda, Martigny, SWITZERLAND

## Stewards of Cultural Heritage, GERMANY

Syria's ongoing Civil War has seen the loss of hundreds of thousands of lives and the displacement of some 5.6 million people to other countries, while others still remain missing or under siege in remote areas of the country. The conflict has also led to the destruction of invaluable cultural heritage. The project *Stewards of Cultural Heritage*, a part of the "Stunde Null" project of the Archaeological Heritage Network and supported by the Federal Foreign Office and the Gerda Henkel Foundation, was conceived to help safeguard Syrian cultural heritage through capacity building with Syrian heritage specialists who currently reside in Turkey. According to the UNHCR, Turkey hosts more refugees than any other country – approximately 3.62 million people, accounting for around 4.5 per cent of the population of Turkey.

Organised by the German Archaeological Institute in Istanbul and supported by several Turkish and German universities, the initiative selected five candidates to provide them with the resources and experience to prepare for reconstruction projects that would take place after reaching a political solution in Syria. In addition, the project also helps these stewards to build up an international heritage conservation career. *"This is an excellent, international and collaborative, training initiative, involving a variety of stakeholders and addressing an important current issue with pan-European relevance. The project addresses some of the complex issues raised in the hosting of a skilled, displaced, Syrian population in Europe and it attempts to enhance their ability to integrate into the existing mechanisms that promote the safeguarding and re-use of cultural heritage assets,"* the jury said.

The jury commended the importance of the initiative for displaced people across the world: *"The project has the capacity to serve as a model for other countries attempting to engage displaced, yet skilled refugees, in cultural heritage activities, with a view to promoting their central role in future rebuilding programmes upon their, hoped for, return to their native countries. It is strengthening the capacity of the Syrian refugee community in Turkey to deal with cultural heritage today, and to develop the necessary skills to promote cultural and heritage regeneration in a future, peaceful Syria."*

The programme consisted of a number of seminars and workshops, in which Turkish, German and international experts taught theory and practice, in topics ranging from heritage site management and damage assessment to the use of digital tools in archaeology. In addition, the stewards joined a seven-week field project in the summer at the archeological site of Doliche. After finishing the programme, the stewards are encouraged to teach their obtained skills to other conservation specialists in Turkey, which will strengthen and expand the body of people capable of rehabilitating Syria's rich heritage when the time comes. *"The rehabilitation of war affected areas needs a careful approach and well-trained professionals to carry it out. In light of this, there is an immediate need to continuously upgrade and develop the skills and knowledge of displaced heritage professionals. Professional networking systems developed during the project have also contributed to the empowerment of these professionals,"* the jury stated.

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## Background

### European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards

The [European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards](#) were launched by the European Commission in 2002 and have been run by Europa Nostra ever since. They celebrate and promote best practices related to heritage conservation, research, management, voluntarism, education and communication. In this way, they contribute to a stronger public recognition of cultural heritage as a strategic resource for Europe's economy and society. The Awards are funded by the **Creative Europe** programme of the European Union.

In the past 17 years, organisations and individuals from **39 countries** have submitted a total of **3,032 applications** for the Awards. Concerning the number of entries by **country**, **Spain** is first in the ranking, with 527 projects, followed by **Italy**, with 308 entries, and the **United Kingdom**, with 299 applications. With regard to the **categories**, Conservation has had the most submissions (1,744). Next comes Education, Training and Awareness-Raising (555), then Research (381), and, finally, Dedicated Service to Heritage (352).

Since 2002, independent expert juries have selected **512 award-winning projects** from **34 countries**. In line with the number of entries, Spain tops the list with 67 awards received. The United Kingdom is in second place (61 awards) and Italy comes third (45 awards). Regarding the **categories**, Conservation has the most winners (291) followed by Education, Training and Awareness-Raising (82), Dedicated Service to Heritage (76) and, lastly, Research (63).

A total of **116 Grand Prix** of €10,000 have been presented to outstanding heritage initiatives, selected from among the award-winning projects.

The European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards highlight best practices, encourage the cross-border exchange of knowledge and connect various stakeholders in wider networks. The Awards bring major benefits to the winners, such as greater (inter)national exposure, follow-on funding and increased visitor numbers. In addition, the Awards foster a greater understanding of our shared heritage amongst the general public. The Awards are therefore a key tool to promote Europe's heritage.

## **Europa Nostra**

[Europa Nostra](#) is the pan-European federation of heritage NGOs which is also supported by a wide network of public bodies, private companies and individuals. Covering more than 40 countries in Europe, the organisation is the voice of civil society committed to safeguarding and promoting Europe's cultural and natural heritage. Founded in 1963, it is today recognised as the most representative heritage network in Europe. Plácido Domingo, the world-renowned opera singer, is the President of the organisation.

Europa Nostra campaigns to save Europe's endangered monuments, sites and landscapes, in particular through the [7 Most Endangered programme](#). It celebrates excellence through the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards. It also contributes to the formulation and implementation of European strategies and policies related to heritage, through a structured dialogue with European Institutions and the coordination of the European Heritage Alliance 3.3.

## **Creative Europe**

[Creative Europe](#) is the EU programme that supports the cultural and creative sectors, enabling them to increase their contribution to jobs and growth. With a budget of €1.46 billion for 2014-2020, it supports organisations in the fields of heritage, performing arts, fine arts, interdisciplinary arts, publishing, film, TV, music, and video games as well as tens of thousands of artists, cultural and audiovisual professionals. The funding allows them to operate across Europe, to reach new audiences and to develop the skills required in the digital age.