

# International Network Forum UNESCO-University and Heritage



## Why this Network?

- To support UNESCO's action in favor of cultural and natural heritage protection, enhancement and conservation, universities, as permanent and independent members of the civil society, teach the values of peace, dialogue and respect among the cultures to future generations, in accordance with UNESCO's ideals;
- To be informed or to disseminate information widely about activities implemented by universities through the use of the network database freely accessible online;
- To teamwork with other universities in a domain related to cultural or natural heritage chosen in concertation with UNESCO;
- To link heritage conservation professionals to academics;
- To exchange students and professors and to share programmes or activities (publications, research, projects, etc.);
- To create synergies between universities and other stakeholders of the civil society such as the media, locally-elected representatives and teachers, to ensure together the protection of heritage;
- To encourage the creation of university programmes and/or UNESCO UNITWYN Chairs in the fields of cultural or natural heritage conservation.

## The Network's Objectives

- To mobilise universities with cultural or natural heritage disciplines or disciplines that are linked to it;
- To share knowledge, know-how and competences;
- To reinforce cooperation between universities, disciplines, heritage professionals;
- To encourage professors' and students' participation in heritage safeguarding projects;
- To promote inter-cultural dialogue through heritage;
- To set up synergies with existing networks (Agence universitaire de la francophonie, ICCROM, ICOM, ICOMOS, etc.).

## Functioning of the Network

The network of Forum UNESCO – University and Heritage is a programme of UNESCO in favour of cultural and natural heritage conservation. It is placed under the common responsibility of the World Heritage Centre of UNESCO and the Polytechnic University of Valencia (UPV, Spain).

International Seminars are held in various universities, alternatively in different regions of the world. Each Seminar is dedicated to a given theme, chosen in concertation between UNESCO, the inviting university and the UPV. International Seminars are supported by an *ad hoc* Scientific Committee composed of university professors from the organizing University or of academics specialized in the selected theme. UNESCO and the UPV are also represented in this Committee.

## The Network History

Created by UNESCO in 1995, it is jointly managed by UNESCO (World Heritage Centre) and the Polytechnic University of Valencia (UPV, Spain). To this date, International Seminars have been organised, in Valencia, Spain (1996 & 2001), Quebec, Canada (1997), Melbourne, Australia (1998), Al Akhawayn, Morocco (1999), Byblos and Beirut, Lebanon (2000), Amman, Petra and Irbid, Jordan (2002), San Cristobal de La Laguna, Spain (2003); Buenos Aires, Argentina (2004); Newcastle, United Kingdom (2005); Florence, Italy (2006) and Hanoi, Vietnam (2009).

Numerous publications have been brought out, and dozens of safeguarding projects, summer universities and regional or national workshops have been accomplished. Currently the network counts over 400 universities worldwide.

## Thematic Structure

The network is structured in thematic sub-networks consisting of international academic teams in the following areas:

- The legal framework of heritage protection
- Heritage and sustainable development
- Heritage and tourism
- Heritage and ICTs (Information and Communication Technologies)
- Promotion, awareness-raising and communication on heritage
- Heritage and the media
- Cities and historic centres: urban management and planning, habitats
- Archaeological sites
- Museums and site interpretation centres
- Inter-disciplinary research investigations on materials (stone, earth, brick, wood, ceramics, bamboo, zellidj, etc.)
- Youth and heritage, heritage education (Educational sciences, educational policies, youth summer camps and summer universities, heritage volunteers, school manuals, etc.)
- Heritage for dialogue, reconciliation and peace, heritage and social and human sciences
- Natural heritage/Environmental sciences
- Intangible heritage and methodology for its protection and promotion
- Sacred, military, maritime, colonial, industrial, modern, contemporary, vernacular and rock-painting heritage
- Trans-boundary heritage (Barocco /Art Nouveau /Pilgrimage Routes, etc.) and itineraries or roads
- Heritage and indicators (Measuring tourism and/or World Heritage inscription's impact(s))
- Integrated management of heritage

N.B. This list is non exhaustive.

## **The Declaration of Valencia (Spain, 1996)**

“The representatives of universities ... decide to create an international *Forum UNESCO – University and Heritage* network, based on ethics, sharing and solidarity, recognizing ... the important role played by universities to facilitate heritage safeguarding and protection, ... together with ICCROM, ICOM, ICOMOS, IFLA and IUA (International Union of Architects) ... and taking into account the immense necessity of this field and the universities’ responsibility to participate in the protection, safeguarding and enhancement of this common heritage”.

## **The Declaration of Quebec (Canada, 1997)**

“The participants ... confirm their determination to have an ethical and benevolent engagement in favour of the national heritage as well as World Heritage, efficiency and respect concerning the historical, scientific and technical criteria linked to heritage, and solidarity based on the sharing of knowledge, expertise and resources in a spirit of mutual understanding”.

## **The Declaration of Melbourne (Australia, 1998)**

“The universities confirm their determination to intensify their interdisciplinary projects for the preservation, conservation and revitalization of intangible cultural heritage thus creating a dynamic for social, cultural and economic development. They are determined to strengthen training of university students in tangible or intangible cultural heritage conservation through the sharing and exchange of knowledge, skills and experience between the universities for mutual enrichment. Furthermore, they are determined to increase the awareness of the public at large to the importance of cultural heritage conservation. They invite the Chancellors or Presidents of universities to provide financial support to the network activities, to introduce or develop cultural heritage law in their programmes and to strengthen their international cooperation by training programmes and fellowships”.

## **The Declaration of Al Akhawayn (Morocco, 1999)**

“The participants decide on the adoption and signature by the Vice-Chancellors and Presidents of universities of a Forum UNESCO – University and Heritage Charter confirming their ethical commitment and objectives and defining the responsibilities and complementary roles of the various partners. They also decide the implementation of thematic workshops, the strengthening and development of students’ associations through national and international youth summer camps and the strengthening of cooperation between universities and heritage practitioners”.

## **The Charter of Vice-Chancellors (Paris, June 1999)**

“The 95 Vice-Chancellors and Presidents of universities gathered decide to ensure the ethical and voluntary commitment of their universities on behalf of their national heritage as well as the heritage of humanity, to activate the role of university in the protection and enhancement of heritage in conjunction with ICOMOS, ICOM, ICCROM, the Council of Europe, IFLA, the World Monuments Fund and the International Association of Universities, to plan teaching courses in heritage law, to give support through human, technical and financial resources to teachers and students in charge within their universities of the operating procedures and activities of Forum UNESCO – University and Heritage. They also decide to encourage the creation of UNESCO Chairs for heritage and to call for the international community to support this academic network in favour of heritage conservation and peace and give it priority in the programme and budget of UNESCO”.

# Who can affiliate ?

There are four categories of affiliation:

- one institutional for universities,
- three individual for university professors or researchers, heritage practitioners and students (graduate level) in heritage related disciplines.

## How to affiliate ?

Affiliation is free.

For individual affiliation, you just need to send a written request to [wh-info@unesco.org](mailto:wh-info@unesco.org) with a copy to [forum@fuuh.upv.es](mailto:forum@fuuh.upv.es)

The institutional affiliation is made through the signature of a bilateral Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between UNESCO and each university. This MoU describes the activities envisaged on a biennial basis, their agenda and the way they will be implemented, as well as their duration.

# Why affiliate ?

- To keep abreast of heritage news both at international level as well as university level, through free access to the network website and database pertaining to both UNESCO and UPV;
- To disseminate one's works or activities by publishing them in the database easily and freely accessible online;
- To set up thematic sub-networks allowing the exchange of views, techniques and experiences;
- To become part of thematic research team(s) (cf. the Thematic Structure). The thematic sub-networks select the topic of their research in concertation with UNESCO;
- To present and disseminate works on the occasion of international or regional seminars of the network. To better know about other universities' works in one's field(s) of interest;
- To gain better visibility and international scientific recognition at the institutional or individual level through the publication of the best papers by the World Heritage Centre of UNESCO, if so decided by the Centre;
- To become a partner of the World Heritage Centre of UNESCO at institutional level through the signature of a Memorandum of Understanding and a biennial plan of activities.

# Future Perspectives

The implementation of an Information System on the Web (ISW) for the network ForumUNESCO - University and Heritage is foreseen soon. This ISW, based on a spirit of participation and solidarity, aims at sharing university programmes, news and knowledge exchanging academic staff, heritage professionals and students and promoting dialogue and cooperation among universities worldwide.



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