



Ministro per lo Sport e i Giovani



YOUTH4HERITAGE
Rising voices from Naples
June 5 2025

*Side event “**YOUTH4HERITAGE – Rising voices from Naples**”*
Naples, 5th June 2025

Concept note

Introduction

On the occasion of the *Second Edition of the Naples Conference on Cultural Heritage in the 21st Century*, which will be held from 4th to 6th June 2025, the Minister for Sport and Youth, with the support of the Department for Youth Policies and Universal Civic Service – Presidency of the Council of Ministers – is organising the side event ***YOUTH4HERITAGE – Rising Voices from Naples***.

The event is planned in continuity with the European Young Heritage Professionals Forum, organized by UNESCO and the European Union in Croatia in May 2019. The Forum offered a valuable platform for young heritage professionals from various Countries to exchange ideas on the diverse challenges and opportunities in the heritage sector at local, national, and international levels. It also promoted an integrated approach to the safeguarding of both tangible and intangible cultural heritage within the European context.

The Side Event

Building on these premises, ***YOUTH4HERITAGE - Rising voices from Naples*** aims to bring together, on 5 June 2025, at the Historic Library of Castel Capuano in Naples, young individuals – both professionals and non-professionals – who are actively engaged in cultural heritage safeguarding at various levels. The event will foster knowledge – sharing and the exchange of good practices, while encouraging critical discourse on the relevance and meaning of both tangible and intangible heritage. Moreover, it will also seek highlight the pivotal role of youth in the safeguarding, enhancement, and intergenerational transmission of cultural heritage.

A variety of interactive and participatory methods will be used, including presentations, group work, and roundtable discussions, in order to actively engage young participants in the promotion and safeguarding of cultural heritage.

For this purpose, four thematic working groups will be established, each aimed at exploring **key issues** concerning the relationship between youth and cultural heritage. These groups will serve as spaces for dialogue and co-creation, focusing on topics that have emerged as particularly significant in previous discussions with heritage professionals and young people.

YOUTH4HERITAGE - Key objectives

The event aims to analyse the relationship between younger generations and their cultural heritage from an international and multicultural perspective, fostering youth participation in heritage protection and promotion, also as a means of personal and professional development.

To this end, the initiative intends to highlight the innovative approaches and perspectives of international young heritage professionals, along with those of Italian and international participants, who will be invited to share their personal and professional experiences. The

objective is to foster a critical, inclusive, and participatory dialogue on the active role of youth in the safeguarding of both tangible and intangible cultural heritage.

This side event, thus, strives to actively include younger generations by giving space to their voices in discussions on cultural heritage and youth participation in its safeguarding. It also aims to serve as a key driver for a shift in perspective regarding the relationship between youth and heritage — from viewing young people as passive recipients to recognising them as conscious and committed protagonists.

Therefore, the initiative represents an opportunity to promote active, informed, and inclusive youth engagement in safeguarding and enhancement of tangible and intangible cultural heritage.

To achieve this goal, participants will be assigned to four thematic working groups, conceived as “**idea incubators**” that give voice to their perspectives. Drawing from personal and professional experiences, participants will develop proposals that address real needs and build on existing policies and practices. Each group, guided by specific framing questions, outlined in this document, will consider both tangible and intangible, as well as cultural and natural heritage, recognising them as two interconnected dimensions of the same reality.

The four thematic working groups

- **Working Group 1 – Digital Future.** This group will be dedicated to exploring the opportunities offered by digital technologies, social media, and innovative tools to enhance both the accessibility and appeal of cultural heritage for young people and to safeguard and valorise this heritage.
- **Working Group 2 – Education, Inclusivity, and Dialogue.** This group will focus on exploring the various methods and approaches for ensuring the transmission of knowledge related to both tangible and intangible cultural heritage, through both formal and informal education. Additionally, it will examine ways to foster constructive dialogue between young people and institutions.
- **Working Group 3 – Globalisation and Identity.** In a contemporary context marked by multiple external pressures, where individuals often conform to avoid exclusion, the risk of losing one’s cultural heritage — particularly intangible heritage— is significant. The group will discuss how to address the impacts of globalisation and cultural homogenisation in order to safeguard cultural heritage, ensuring that young people perceive it not as a constraint but as an opportunity for growth.
- **Working Group 4 – Cultural Heritage and Sustainable Development.** This group will address strategies and best practices to valorise cultural heritage within the framework of environmental, economic, and social sustainability. Topics to be addressed include sustainable tourism and overtourism, the circular economy applied to culture, and the role of younger generations in promoting virtuous models that generate a positive impact on local communities.

What is expected from the participants?

Participants will be expected to actively and constructively engage, drawing upon their own experiences, expertise, and personal perspectives to contribute to the elaboration of concrete proposals. It is important to emphasise that, while addressing cross-cutting themes common to all working groups, participants must consistently take into account the specificities and differences in approaches that distinguish tangible from intangible cultural heritage, recognising that responses and strategies may vary significantly depending on the nature of the cultural asset under discussion.

Methodological guidelines

Participants will be expected to:

- **Critically analyse** the proposed topics, reflecting on the challenges characterising the relationship between Youth and both tangible and intangible Cultural Heritage, in relation to the primary focus of their working group.
- **Collaborate proactively** in developing a shared vision of potential solutions. This sharing will be understood as a genuine process of creative synthesis, benefiting from the exchange of perspectives and experiences, culminating in a broad and informed reflection.
- **Identify innovative and feasible approaches** that can be translated into concrete, sustainable project proposals, addressing the specific needs that emerge during the discussion.
- **Bring forward their personal and professional experiences** and insights in an effort to respond to the following research questions, while remaining open to the possibility that new questions and perspectives may arise through the exchange.

As a concluding step, each working group will produce a **summary document outlining the main challenges related to the assigned topic, along with a set of proposals for addressing them**, potentially supported by concrete case examples known to the participants.

The output may be presented as a **Word document, PowerPoint presentation, or other equivalent format**.

Framing Questions for Critical and Participatory Group Work

The following questions are provided as a starting point for a shared and structured reflection. It is expected that the discussion may naturally evolve to include new questions and perspectives:

Working Group 1 – Digital Future:

- *Which languages, formats and digital platforms are most effective in engaging younger generations?*
- *How can digital content (e.g. short videos, podcasts, reels, challenges, interactive storytelling) stimulate curiosity, foster a sense of belonging, and encourage active participation?*
- *In what ways can immersive technologies (such as AR or VR), mobile apps or virtual tours enhance accessibility, inclusion, and alignment with young people's communication habits?*
- *Is it possible to use social media not only as a promotional tool, but also as a space for co-creating cultural value, by engaging young people as narrators, interpreters, or “ambassadors” of heritage?*
- *How can technology support the monitoring of changing cultural behaviours among young people?*
- *In what ways can the spontaneous digital practices already adopted by young people be recognised and enhanced by cultural institutions, in order to build a more authentic and equitable dialogue?*

Working Group 2 – Education, Inclusivity, and Dialogue:

- *What tools and methodologies can facilitate ongoing dialogue between schools, cultural institutions, local authorities, and young people?*
- *How can a shared vision be cultivated between institutions and the education sector, recognising heritage as a means to develop transversal competences such as active citizenship, critical thinking, creativity?*
- *How can the creative and innovative potential of young people be channelled into the regeneration of cultural spaces, the reinterpretation of heritage, or the promotion of sustainable local events?*
- *What strategies can integrate young people into territorial and cultural planning processes, recognising them as active stakeholders in decisions about the future of heritage and local communities?*
- *Which forms of communication (e.g. school newsletters, digital platforms, participatory meetings) can support more transparent, consistent, and effective collaboration among all involved actors?*

Working Group 3 – Globalisation and Identity:

- *What challenges does globalisation pose to the safeguarding and transmission of intangible cultural heritage?*
- *How can the need of young people to feel a sense of belonging—often by conforming to dominant cultural models—be addressed without resulting in the loss of their own cultural background?*
- *How can cultural heritage – particularly intangible heritage – be reimagined not as a limiting tie to tradition but as a driver of personal growth, self-expression, and empowerment?*
- *What cultural policies or collaborative frameworks involving local authorities, schools, and civil society can help counteract youth disengagement and outmigration from smaller communities, while fostering a renewed sense of belonging and local development opportunities?*

Working Group 4 – Cultural Heritage and Sustainable Development:

- *How can the valorisation of cultural heritage contribute to the creation of sustainable, inclusive, and high-quality employment opportunities?*
- *In what ways can cultural initiatives be designed to redistribute tourist flows, promoting lesser-known areas while reducing the impact on already overcrowded sites?*
- *How can it contribute to building more resilient, inclusive, and sustainable cities and communities by enhancing local identities and traditional knowledge?*
- *How can responsible heritage management promote sustainable production and consumption models, for example, through reuse, slow tourism, or circular economy models?*

Allocation of Participants to Working Groups

Working Group 1 – Digital Future:

Rachele Boetti
Julieta Magalì Calarote
Adele Celardo
Majdulin Adel Elmansouri
Simone Esposito
Naomi Evelyn Hondrea
Jasmin Jalil
Federica Vennitti

Working Group 2 – Education, Inclusivity, and Dialogue:

Rawda Abdelhady
Francesco Agostini
Denise Augusti
Simona De Paola
Sara Di Luca
Mariasole Di Maio
Marina Elia
Esther Cirilla Rossi

Working Group 3 – Globalisation and Identity:

Tinhinane Bachir-Cherif
Giuseppe Cerchia
Federico Corcos
Marina Tsukimaro Ferrara
Desphina Kessels
Mette Lykkegård-Maes
Beatrice Mattoscio
Giada Tortora

Working Group 4 – Cultural Heritage and Sustainable Development:

Aliguma Ahabyona Akiiki
Thiago Rafael Burckhart
Giulio Del Giudice
Martina Giordano
Francesco Jayasinghe
Ritika Khanna
Giulia Piacere
William Richardson
Vittorio Soldovieri