**Statement on the strategic direction of heritage-related research
within the future Horizon Europe Programme**

by EUROPA NOSTRA,
the Voice of Cultural Heritage in Europe

Europa Nostra, as the leading pan-European federation of heritage NGO's, issues this Statement with the aim of contributing to, and feeding into the discussions on the drafting of the future Horizon Europe Programme for Research and Innovation (2021-2027), in particular with regards to cultural heritage-related research.

On February 2019, Europa Nostra was invited by the European Commission (Directorate General for Research and Innovation) to an informal brainstorming meeting on the future European research agenda in the field of cultural heritage. On March 2019, Europa Nostra presented its position, priorities and expectations on this topic at the "Horizon for Heritage Research Symposium" in Brussels.

This Statement and the key principles here outlined are the outcome of the work carried out by Europa Nostra prior, during and after the aforementioned meetings. Europa Nostra has also consulted relevant stakeholders and members of its networks in the preparation of this Statement, with the aim of better capturing and reflecting the needs and expectations of the research and heritage communities.

As the result, Europa Nostra calls for future EU-funded heritage-related research under the Horizon Europe programme to:

1) Acknowledge the policy context and build upon the policy momentum

Heritage-related research in the upcoming Horizon Europe programme **should be situated in a wider policy framework**, notably with regards to 1) the outcomes and results of the **European Year of Cultural Heritage (EYCH) 2018,** 2) the first-ever **European Framework for Action on Cultural Heritage** and 3) the **Berlin Call to Action "Cultural Heritage for the Future of Europe**". The future Horizon Europe programme shall capitalise on these results, achieved jointly by a variety of heritage stakeholders, notably EU institutions and civil society actors.

- During the EYCH, the Horizon 2020 programme invested circa **EUR 66 million** in heritage-related research and innovation projects (through seven calls for proposals). **There is a social, political and scientific demand to continue and indeed increase EU funding in this area. Still more, analysing and properly disseminating the results and conclusions of these large investments is essential.**

- During the EYCH, the European Commission (Directorate General for Research and Innovation) assessed the potential and challenges of EU-funded cultural heritage research, which resulted in the publication of a policy review including suggestions for an appropriate European heritage research framework after 2020. **The future Horizon Europe programme shall take into account and build upon this work to ensure continuity.**
- One of the five pillars of the European Framework for Action on Cultural Heritage focuses on knowledge and research, namely "*Cultural heritage for an innovative Europe: mobilising knowledge and research*". **This shall ensure the policy coherence and relevance of future heritage-related research actions within Horizon Europe.**
- **Heritage-related research funded within Horizon Europe shall contribute to implement the principles outlined in the** Berlin Call to Action "Cultural Heritage for the Future of Europe"[1]**,** notably: 1) Recognising cultural heritage as a strategic and cross-cutting priority for European policies and funding; 2) Bridging local, national and European policies and actions; 3)Preserving and transmitting cultural heritage; 4) Investing in quality heritage-led regeneration, and 5) Promoting better knowledge and deeper understanding of cultural heritage.

2) **Locate EU-funded heritage-related research in the wider global context**

- **Cultural heritage – related research within Horizon Europe shall contribute to the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development** and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted on 25 September 2015.
- Heritage-related research funded by Horizon Europe shall be complementary to, and shall **acknowledge the role of international institutions working on this realm,** such as UNESCO, ICCROM, ICOM, ICOMOS, and the network of academies represented by the Inter-Academic Group for Development (GID). In this context, it is of particular importance the Paris Declaration 'HERITAGE, SCIENCES AND TECHNOLOGIES: AN OPPORTUNITY FOR OUR SOCIETIES AND THE GLOBAL ECONOMY' issued on February 2019 as an outcome of the meeting on "Heritage, Sciences and Technologies" organized by the French Academy of Sciences and IPANEMA under the aegis of the GID.

3) **Acknowledge the role of and engage with civil society as beneficiaries and contributors**

- Considering the diversity of society and of cultural heritage, research projects in Horizon Europe **should acknowledge the role of civil society as beneficiaries and as contributors**. Being part of their communities, civil society organisations (CSOs) are best placed to know the population's needs and concerns. **Thus, CSOs play a key role in making research relevant for Europe and its citizens.**

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[1] The "Berlin Call to Action" was launched at the European Cultural Heritage Summit in June 2018 by the three co-organizing organisations: Europa Nostra, the German Cultural Heritage Committee and the Prussian Cultural Heritage Foundation.

- **CSOs have wide expertise and knowledge in evidence-based advocacy** (see [Cultural Heritage Counts for Europe](), a landmark study co-authored by Europa Nostra in collaboration with key partners[2]). CSOs can also enrich research projects with **practice-led and experience-led knowledge**. For example, schemes such as the [European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards]() constitute a unique source of practice-led knowledge, which is geographically and thematically diverse.

4) <u>**Need to overcome thematic fragmentation of the research policy for cultural heritage**</u>

- The best way to make cultural heritage–related research relevant is by **adopting a holistic and integrated approach**, abolishing various "silos" based on types of heritage (tangible, intangible, movable, immovable, digital), or the divide between nature and culture, between professionals, volunteers and owners, and on disciplines as well as on the field of expertise or policy is thus crucial.
- Horizon Europe should **adopt an "Upstream Approach**[3]**,"** acknowledging the interaction of cultural heritage with diverse sectors, therefore **recognizing the contribution of cultural heritage as a strategic resource (social, economic, cultural and environmental) for sustainable development.**
- The **connection between digital and cultural heritage-related research is not only obvious but unavoidable** and should thus be reflected in the upcoming Horizon Europe programme. More co-ordination between EU policies on this realm, notably at Directorate General level, is needed (e.g. Directorates for Education and Culture, for Research and Innovation, and for Communications Networks, Content and Technology).

5) <u>**Apply people-centred approaches with a special focus on heritage communities**</u>

- In the spirit of the [Council of Europe's Faro Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society (](2005), **cultural heritage should be understood first and foremost in relation to communities and society as a whole.**
- Research should build evidence and knowledge of how cultural heritage contributes to the **well-being and quality of life of Europe's citizens[4],** including by fostering a sense of belonging, contributing to happiness, improving life-quality and increasing local, regional and European attractiveness for investment of international capital. This requires inter-disciplinary collaboration, evidence-based and blue-sky research that demonstrates the essence of the relationship between cultural heritage and well-being of communities and people.

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[2] *"[Cultural Heritage Counts for Europe]"* (2015) Report by Europa Nostra, ENCATC, Heritage Europe, the Heritage Alliance and The International Cultural Centre in Krakow, The Raymond Lemaire International Centre for Conservation at the University of Leuven.

[3] *"[Cultural Heritage Counts for Europe]"* (2015) Report

[4] Available literature shows that heritage contributes to forming a sense of belonging and identity, which at the same time improves the awareness of citizens of the vulnerability of their heritage and contributes to increasing their involvement in its protection. See Report '[Places that makes us]' by the National Trust.

- **Local communities should be the main beneficiaries**. The social and public enjoyment of cultural assets necessarily has to produce material benefits and a return in those local communities, with a special focus on the younger generations. All four aspects of sustainable development should be considered, and we should not allow economy to prevail over social, cultural and environmental considerations. This should also be the case when addressing the impact of cultural tourism as stressed in the ["Declaration "Better places to live, better places to visit"](link)[5], bearing in mind that cultural heritage is fragile and vulnerable to the pressure of cultural tourism, whose overcrowding and lack of control can cause irreparable damage.

6) **Support "multiperspectiveness" and "multilayerdness" to enhance social cohesion**

- Horizon Europe shall promote European cooperation with regard to research into **understanding and interpreting of our shared history, memory and heritage** in a wider European context, with a special emphasis on multiperspectiveness in history research and education and on the multilayerdness of our identity. Research activities should support and make visible different **perspectives and authentic interpretations** regarding the past to allow an inclusive heritage discourse.
- The **power of diversity should be recognised**, reflecting the complexity of society and nature in Europe and in the world. Cultural heritage as an embodiment of this diversity is an invaluable source for research. While recognising this diversity, relevant research shall in particular investigate which elements of cultural heritage contribute to enhancing **a sense of togetherness** in Europe.

7) **Highlight the contribution of cultural heritage research to cultural diplomacy**

- European know-how in preservation, conservation, management, interpretation and education related to cultural heritage is recognised internationally. This expertise is a **key element in fostering stronger and closer relations between the EU and the rest of the world**. The [EU strategy for international cultural relations](link) (2016) recognises *'cooperation in cultural heritage'* as a priority in this area. Cultural heritage research shall contribute to achieving this vital goal.
- Europe's expertise is worthy of being shared, but Europe can also learn from experiences and practices in other regions and continents. When using cultural heritage as a tool for cultural diplomacy, this should be done in a **mutual learning and equal partnership perspective**, avoiding Euro-centric or even neo-colonialist approaches.

8) **Simplify procedures to allow more numerous and more diverse actors to participate and benefit from the programme**

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[5] Declaration issued by the Network of European Regions for Competitive and Sustainable Tourism, (NECSTouR) in cooperation with Europa Nostra, the European Travel Commission and the European Cultural Tourism Network, with the support of the European Heritage Alliance 3.3.

- The future Horizon Europe shall build on the intelligence and knowledge gathered from its predecessor Horizon 2020 (including applicants' and beneficiaries' feedback) to improve its operational procedures. **Simpler and clearer rules for participating in the programme are needed**, with the aim of allowing small and medium-sized organisations to participate, as these are often penalized by time-consuming and complicated procedures.

9) **Establish a sustainable platform, open to different stakeholders, to co-create and co-ordinate the European agenda of heritage- related research**

- Manifold and diverse actors and networks operate in the realm of heritage-related research, in an uncoordinated and fragmented way. These should be brought together through a **platform or structure able to ensure cooperation, coordination and dialogue.**
- Such platform shall gather **different stakeholders** and knowledge producers, such as researchers, heritage professionals and civil society actors.