

PRESS RELEASE

SoPHIA Final Conference **Social Platform for Holistic Heritage Impact Assessment**

December 16-17, 2021

Rome, 13 December 2021



On December 16 and 17, 2021, the European Union research and innovation project Social Platform for Holistic Heritage Impact Assessment – [SoPHIA](#) will host the **Final Conference**, that will gather European researchers, practitioners and policymakers to discuss the results produced by the project.

The way cultural heritage is preserved and enhanced is a major factor defining Europe's identity and its place in the world. The European Union has further strengthened its importance through policy provisions, such as the *European Landscape Convention* (2000) and the *Faro Convention* (2005), the *European Year of Cultural Heritage* (2018) or the *European Framework for Action on Cultural Heritage* (2019) as well as through funding programmes such as Horizon 2020 (Horizon Europe as of 2021), Interreg Europe and Creative Europe, among others.

In this framework, SoPHIA seeks to contribute to EU policies through targeted recommendations to set quality requirements and shared standards for impact evaluations but also to gear future funds deployed for cultural heritage interventions. Indeed, when such interventions produce positive impacts, they spur sustainable growth and foster social cohesion

as well as a sense of well-being by local communities; whereas, when they produce negative impacts, they not only generate unfavourable perceptions from both experts and citizens but also damage irreplaceable historical elements, their environment as well as related intangible heritage, identities and social practices.

Partners of the SoPHIA consortium along with its community of practice have designed a holistic heritage impact assessment model that covers all dimensions of sustainable development, namely the social, economic, cultural and environmental. The model has been finalized through the interaction with representatives and stakeholders of [twelve European case studies](#). A toolkit for practitioners has been put together, as well as a four policy briefs with recommendations for policymakers to ease and enhance the process of impact assessment, and guidelines for an action plan on EU operational programmes and a future needs and research agenda. All this material will be made public in the website soon.

The Final Conference will address new scenarios for cultural heritage, namely the Manifesto of Culture at COP 26 and the New European Bauhaus, whereas the results produced by the SoPHIA project will be presented and largely discussed in panels with key organizations and European networks, capable to reflect on the potential for future deployment and prospects for the uptake of cultural heritage impact assessment from a holistic perspective.

Conference speakers and panellists include highly renowned experts from the academia and civil society as well as policymakers: Silvia Costa, former member of the European Parliament, Erminia Sciacchitano, Officer of the Minister's Cabinet (Italian Ministry of Culture), Inês da Câmara, Culture Action Europe, Alessandra Gariboldi, Fitzcarraldo Foundation, Linda Mockton, Historic England, Beatriz García, University of Liverpool, Pierluigi Sacco, IULM University Milan, or Olov Amelin, Jamtli Foundation.

The SoPHIA Final Conference will be hosted in a hybrid format broadcast from Roma Tre University, on December 16, from 14:30 to 19:00 CET, and 17, from 9:00 to 15:30. Online participation is free of charge.

The SoPHIA project is led by [Roma Tre University](#), Italy, in partnership with [EDUCULT](#), Austria; [Interarts](#), Spain; the [European Museum Academy](#) (EMA), The Netherlands; the [National Technical University of Athens](#) (NTUA), Greece; the [Institute of Art Design and Technology](#) (IADT), Ireland; and the [Institute for Development and International Relations](#) (IRMO), Croatia. It is funded by the European Union Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under Grant Agreement No 870954.

[Online Registration](#).

[Click here](#) for **updated information** about the Conference.

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