

OWHC MAYORS' MANIFESTO

1. At the 16th World Congress of the Organization of World Heritage Cities (OWHC), held in Quebec City in September 2022, we Mayors emphasized the extent to which the combined effects of climate, economic, and social crises are exerting considerable pressure on urban environments, which are particularly vulnerable due to their historical and heritage dimensions.
2. Faced with the scale of the changes underway, but also with the consequences of the increasingly frequent natural disasters and armed conflicts to which our cities are also subjected, compromising the integrity of their heritage and leaving deep scars within communities, we need to consider other ways of acting and new urban practices.
3. We are convinced that the city is first and foremost a place to live, work, socialize, cultivate, build community, and open up to others. The city, as a living entity in constant transformation, is the bearer of a future that must guarantee a quality living environment as well as the sustainability of the cohesive and inclusive societies to which we aspire.
4. We have therefore committed the OWHC to an innovative process, known as the "Roadmap," which will enable us to collectively build a strategy for joint action. In the long term, it will consolidate the leading role that our cities can and must play in the search for solutions that we are determined to implement concretely, rapidly, and effectively.
5. Our aim is to take action to create more sustainable, resilient, and liveable cities. Ultimately, we want World Heritage Cities to help reduce carbon emissions, preserve biodiversity, and create healthy, peaceful urban environments by promoting a new generation of holistic, integrated projects. These projects should focus on the efficient use of local resources, the renovation of existing infrastructures, the retention of existing populations, the reduction of car use in cities, the creation of attractive public spaces, the promotion of social diversity, the stimulation of economic activity, and the revitalization of existing urban areas.
6. We are therefore calling for our cities to make a bold, original contribution to reconciling the human, the urban, and the environmental. From this perspective, heritage, in the broad sense of the tangible and intangible assets accumulated over the course of history, is an irreplaceable resource. It enables the city to reinvent itself within a framework of "regenerative development," in a historical continuity and logic that guarantees its identity and potential.
7. Convinced that the preservation of heritage, its integrity and authenticity, is inseparable from our vision of modernity, we are determined to move forward, together, and apply an original heritage approach to the urban developments to come. The elected representatives of OWHC member cities are committed to preserving and safeguarding their heritage, and are attentive to the application of heritage regulations, which must evolve in line with the need to adapt to climate change. The "Roadmap" will enable us to learn from each other, share our experiences, and support each other within the unique political network that is the OWHC. The future implementation of innovative urban projects will have to take place within the framework of renewed partnerships with key international players, which will enable our projects to achieve their goals and reach their full magnitude.