

Memory of the World, Cities of the Future

FOR LIVING, SUSTAINABLE
HERITAGE CITIES

MARRAKECH, MOROCCO



ORGANISATION
DES VILLES
DU PATRIMOINE
MONDIAL

ORGANIZATION
OF WORLD
HERITAGE
CITIES

ORGANIZACIÓN
DE LAS CIUDADES
DEL PATRIMONIO
MUNDIAL

ORGANIZAÇÃO
DAS CIDADES
DO PATRIMÓNIO
MUNDIAL

منظمة
مدن
التراث
العالمي

ABOUT THE OWHC

The OWHC, founded on September 8, 1993 in Fez, is a network of mayors, elected representatives, and heritage experts. The collective intelligence, both political and professional, is put to work to make historic cities livable, cohesive, inclusive, and resilient.

Operation of the Organization



«Cooperation with colleagues from the Board of Directors, the General Secretariat, or the Regional Secretariat is a daily exchange of experiences and joint development of the most effective programs to the benefit of the residents of OWHC member cities. With our membership in OWHC, we have gained new colleagues – not distant and anonymous, but friendly and interested: real supporters.»

Aleksander Miszalski, Mayor of Krakow
Member of the Board of Directors

The General Secretariat, based in Quebec City (Canada), implements, with the help of the Regional Secretariats, the programs and activities adopted by the General Assembly. The General Assembly elects the Organization's Board of Directors, made up of eight (8) mayors.

Regional Secretariats are located in the following member cities, elected by their regional network every four (4) years at Regional Meetings held during World Congresses:

- Northwest Europe and North America, Regensburg (Germany)
- Latin America, Morelia (Mexico)
- Southern Europe and the Mediterranean, Cordoba (Spain)
- Central and Eastern Europe, Warsaw (Poland)
- Asia-Pacific, Gyeongju (Republic of Korea)



KRAKOW, POLAND

Mission



«The mission of the OWHC is to collaborate in addressing the shared challenges that most World Heritage cities face in the future. Our key objectives include sustainability, the creation of green spaces, improved mobility, and fostering vibrant life within these historic areas. We strive to ensure that heritage sites are not only preserved but also remain lively and thriving every day.»

José María Bellido Roche, Mayor of Córdoba
Vice-President of the Board of Directors

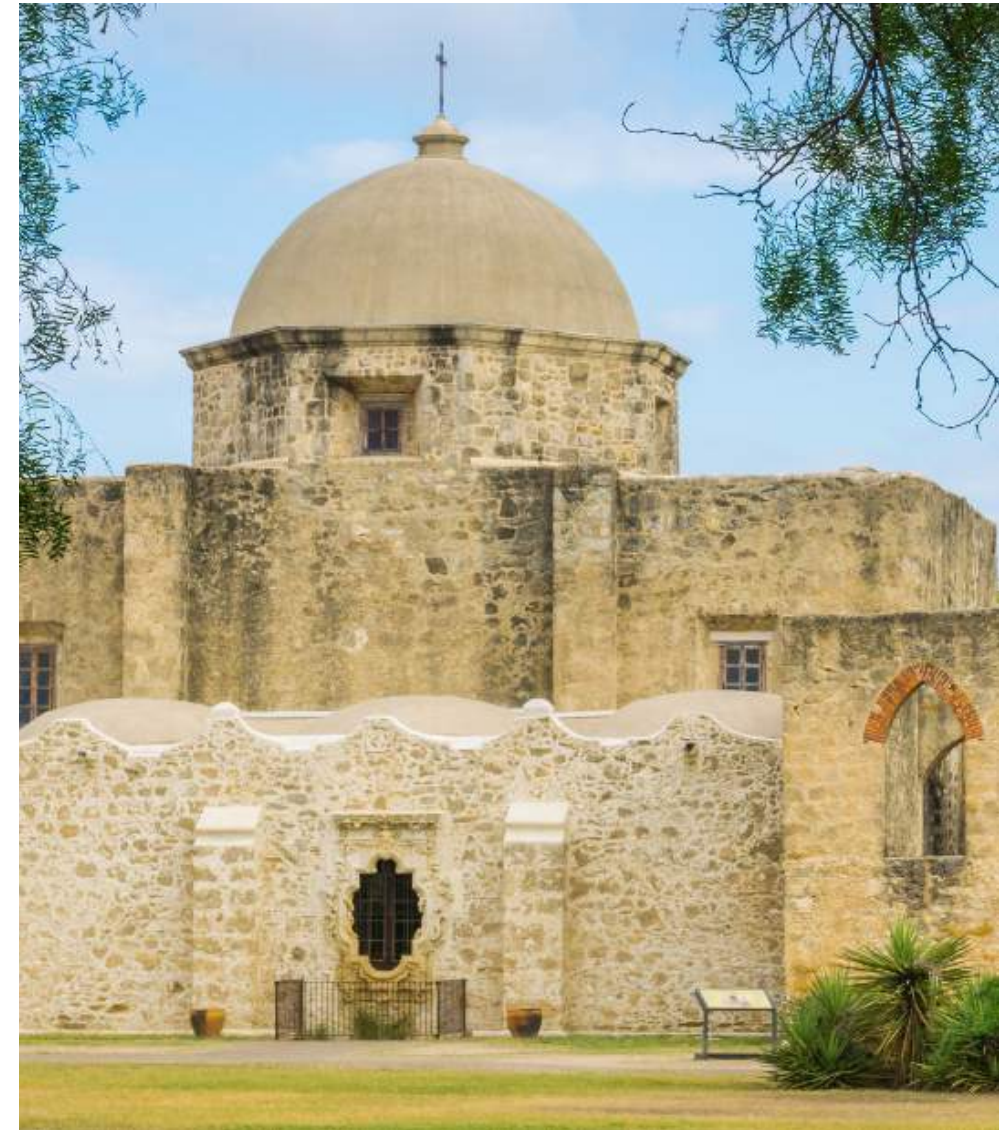
The OWHC contributes to the emergence of a new generation of urban development policies, strategies, and projects, nurtured by a heritage approach to sustainable development that reconciles the urban, the human, and the environmental. This mission is based on the observation shared by OWHC members: the conjunction of current crises and societal evolutions, exacerbated by climate change, is creating complex situations that impact World Heritage cities.



CORDOBA, SPAIN

The member cities want to act quickly and find effective solutions, by addressing the following issues:

- Adapting cities to climate change and reducing its impact;
- Capitalizing on the ability of historic districts to reinvent themselves;
- Enhancing the features that underpin the habitability of the heritage city;
- Promoting heritage as an irreplaceable resource for sustainable development.



SAN ANTONIO, UNITED STATES

What the OWHC offers its members

A PERSPECTIVE



« The OWHC is a big family! It helps each member city better understand current issues and express its aspirations. To be a member of the OWHC is to be part of a project that is essential to the future of our cities, for the benefit of the citizens of today and tomorrow. »

Bruno Marchand, Mayor of Quebec City
President of the Board of Directors

The OWHC supports member cities in designing and implementing programs and projects to regenerate the “habitability of historic centers,” which involve :

- A cultural shift to consider heritage as a resource;
- Structural change to be more efficient and responsive in a context of profound urban transformations;
- A broader scope for action in the city;
- Decompartmentalizing approaches to unleash potential.



QUÉBEC, CANADA

RESOURCES



« Through the OWHC, the mayors of World Heritage cities gain access to the essential tools needed to enhance our capacity for transformation—ensuring that change happens sustainably while preserving the legacy that makes each of our cities unique. »

Cristian Eduardo Zamora Matute, Mayor of Cuenca (EC)
Member of the Board of Directors

The OWHC provides its members with a method, tools, and resources:

- A sharing of knowledge and experience;
- A permanent forum for dialogue between learning cities;
- Participative collaboration to create original synergies and mechanisms capable of offering cities greater guarantees of success in realizing their vision for the future.



CUENCA, ECUADOR

A NETWORK



« We greatly value the knowledge we can gain and share within the vast OWHC network. At different levels and on many topics, collaborators are connected to share best practices, discuss pitfalls, and advise each other. The OWHC's vision helps to guide urban heritage policy in our city. »

Dirk De fauw, Mayor of Brugge
Treasurer of the Board of Directors

The OWHC offers a network of learning cities focused on collective and participative action. It builds on the unique features of each city, bringing them together in a quest for excellence. World Heritage cities draw on their collective intelligence to solve their specific problems.



BRUGGE, BELGIUM

PROGRAMS



« OWHC programs enable historic cities to develop new preservation strategies, train experts, and promote sustainable tourism. By participating in these programs, Dubrovnik has strengthened its position as an example of excellence in heritage protection. »

Mato Frankovic, Mayor of Dubrovnik
Member of the Board of Directors

The OWHC marshals the expertise of its cities through technical assistance and cooperation missions and workshops to facilitate the exchange of knowledge. Regional meetings regularly bring together cities sharing cultural, linguistic, or geographical affinities to discuss common themes. Every two years, members gather at World Congresses to develop their strategic ambitions and reaffirm what unites them.



DUBROVNIK, CROATIA

Action Plan 2025-2026



«As a city proud of its UNESCO heritage, Angra do Heroísmo embraces the OWHC 2025-2026 Action Plan as a pathway to strengthen our cultural identity and global connections.»

————— José Gabriel do Álamo Meneses, Mayor of Angra do Heroísmo
Member of the Board of Directors —————

**NEW URBAN PROJECT:
QUÉBEC ROADMAP AND CORDOBA PATH**

CITY2CITY

MISSION4CITY

CASE STUDIES

ASSISTANCE PROGRAM IN CASE OF EMERGENCIES

OWHC HOTLINE

OWHC DAY

JEAN-PAUL-L'ALLIER PRIZE FOR HERITAGE



ANGRA DO HEROISMO, PORTUGAL

The members

As compiled on January 1, 2025 and based on the membership figures of 2024, the OWHC has 113 member cities in 50 countries.



Any city may become a Member of the OWHC if, on the one hand, a site is located within its territory which represents a living urban ensemble or a property within an urban context inscribed on the World Heritage List whose Outstanding Universal Value (OUV) is recognized by UNESCO's World Heritage Committee and which meets at least one of the criteria (i) (ii) (iii) (iv) (v) or (vi) of the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage and which, on the other hand, adheres to the values of the OWHC as they appear in the Charter of the OWHC, in addition to having been a Member in good standing for at least 1 year.

For more information, visit the OWHC website (<https://www.ovpm.org/members/how-to-become-a-member/>) or contact the General Secretariat directly (secretariat@ovpm.org)



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ORGANIZATION OF WORLD
HERITAGE CITIES

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