



ORGANIZATION OF
WORLD HERITAGE CITIES

OWHC Regional Conference Northwest Europe and North America 2025 – Luxembourg

Luxembourg, September 22nd – 24th 2025



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DEAR ALL,

the City of Luxembourg and its Mayor, in cooperation with the Regional Secretariat Northwest Europe and North America in Regensburg, has the honour to invite you to the 2025 Regional Conference of the Organisation of World Heritage Cities (OWHC) with the central theme: "Living Heritage: Designing Human-Centred Cities for the Future".

Cordial greetings

Le Bourgmestre

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lydie Polfer".

Lydie Polfer

Ville de Luxembourg

Cultural Commissioner

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Wolfgang Dersch".

Wolfgang Dersch

City of Regensburg

"Living Heritage: Designing Human-Centred Cities for the Future"

- **Short term: Human Centred Design**
- **Long term: Heritage as a bearer of the future**
- **Medium term: Pop-up innovation labs**



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The regional meeting in Luxembourg in 2025 focuses on three key themes that serve as a foundation for a new urban planning approach in historic cities. The goal is to adapt current practices to meet future challenges and to prepare for the major conference in Marrakech 2026 and its "New Urban Project" (NUP).

The workshops are structured around these three themes, which follow a temporal sequence and align closely with the objectives of the NUP.

1. Short term: Human-Centred Design

Urban planning begins with the needs of citizens. In Luxembourg, we demonstrate how the city has implemented civic participation through a process of “urban listening.” In addition, national and international partners are invited to share perspectives on topics such as inclusion, accessibility, and residents’ sense of belonging to their neighbourhoods, especially in relation to Outstanding Universal Value (OUV).

2. Long term: Heritage as a bearer of the future

To meet the requirements of the OUV, Luxembourg must evolve its planning tools to view heritage as an opportunity for the future. Using the Clausen district as a case study, we explore key elements of an urban strategy. The challenge is to balance the preservation of the area’s unique character (cross-views, HUL, OUV, spatial programming, synergies between users and stakeholders) with efforts to enhance quality of life (renewable energy, accessibility, urban programming). The findings will support the adaptation of planning tools such as regulatory frameworks and management plans and will foster cooperation between the public and private sectors as well as among different administrative bodies.

3. Medium term: Pop-up innovation labs

Since adapting regulatory frameworks takes time, the City of Luxembourg proposes temporary urban labs as a way to experiment and innovate during this transition. One example is LUGA, an exhibition of experimental urban gardens, which offers valuable insights. These initiatives help clarify the level of administrative involvement needed and the frequency of cultural, sporting, and community events required to meet the needs identified in the first phase (HCD). These temporary spaces serve as “safe zones” for promoting urban health, cooperation, and social cohesion — both at the community level and for individuals.

1. The programme

Arrival Day – Monday 22nd of September 2025

14:00 – Visit of the Pétrusse Casemates

@ Place de la Constitution



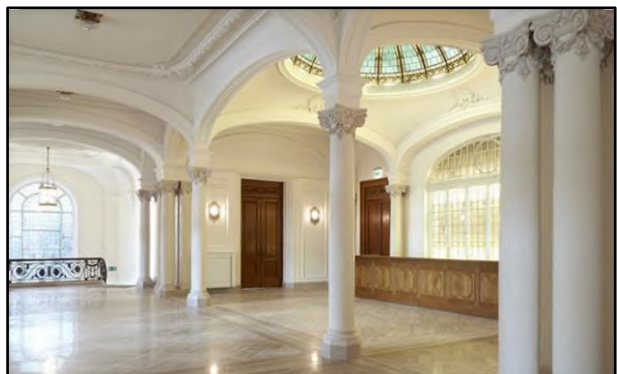
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15:00 - Meet and greet

@ Cercle Cité – Place d’Armes



© Roger Wagner



© Cercle Cité

16:15 - Visit of the Lëtzebuerg City Museum / UNESCO Visitor Center

@ Lëtzebuerg City Museum – 14, rue du Saint-Esprit

Meeting Point 16:05 in front of Cercle Cité – Place d’Armes



© Lëtzebuerg City Museum / Christof Weber

17:00 - Guided UNESCO tour

Meeting Point: Lëtzebuerg City Museum – 14, rue du Saint-Esprit

18:30 - Dinner event

@ Brasserie Restaurant l’Hêtre Beim Musée – 24, rue du Saint-Esprit



© Brasserie Restaurant l’Hêtre Beim Musée



Conference Day 1 – Tuesday 23rd of September 2025

Optional - 07:15 – Running for Heritage / yoga session

Meeting Point: tbd

08:30 – Arrival at venue – coffee and registration

@ Cercle Cité – place d’Armes – Bar/Foyer

09:00 – Welcome

- Mayor/Aldermen – City of Luxembourg
- OWHC General Secretariat, Québec
- Wolfgang Dersch – Cultural Commissioner, City of Regensburg
- Shaaf Milani-Nia – City of Luxembourg - Introduction to the Agenda

@ Auditoire Cité – rue Genistre

09:30 – Setting the scene

Key Speakers and themes

"Living Heritage: Designing Human-Centred Cities for the Future"

- Short term: Human Centred Design
- Long term: Heritage as a bearer of the future
- Medium term: Pop-up innovation labs

@ Auditoire Cité – rue Genistre

11:00 – Coffee Break

@ Bar Foyer

11:15 – Workshop session 1 (depending on number of attendees up to 4 parallel workshops)

- Short term: Human Centred Design

@ Rooms 501, 502, 503, Auditoire Henri Beck

12:50 – Group Photo

@ Cercle Cité – Place d’Armes or city hall – 42, place Guillaume II

13:00 – Lunch

@ Cercle Cité – Place d’Armes – Grande Salle

14:00 – Workshop session 2 (depending on number of attendees up to 4 parallel workshops)

- Long term: Heritage as a bearer of the future

@ Rooms 501, 502, 503, Auditoire Henri Beck

15:50 – Coffee Break

@ Bar Foyer

16:10 – Reflection session

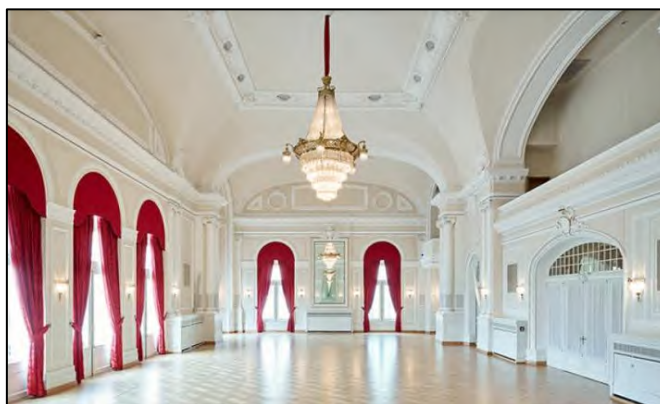
@ Auditoire Cité – rue Genistre

17:00 – End of thematic day

Leisure time – feel free to discover the City of Luxembourg

19:00 – Opening dinner – Official Dinner

@ Cercle Cité – Place d’Armes – Bar Foyer et Grande Salle



© Cercle Cité



Conference Day 2 – Wednesday 24th of September 2025

Optional - 07:30 – Running for Heritage / yoga session

Meeting Point: tbd

09:00 – Arrival at venue – coffee and registration

@ Cercle Cité – Place d’Armes

09:10 - Setting the scene

@ Auditoire Cité – rue Genistre

09:20 - Workshop session 3 (depending on number of attendees up to 4 parallel workshops)

- Medium term: Pop-up innovation labs

@ Rooms 501, 502, 503, Auditoire Henri Beck

10:30 – Coffee Break

@ Bar Foyer

10:45 - Workshop session 3 – continuation (depending on number of attendees up to 4 parallel workshops)

@ Rooms 501, 502, 503, Auditoire Henri Beck

12:30 – Lunch

@ Cercle Cité – place d’Armes

14:00 - Reflection session

@ Auditoire Cité – rue Genistre

15:45 – Coffee Break

@ Bar Foyer

16:00 – Regional Meeting for OWHC Member Cities in good standing

@ Cercle Cité – Place d’Armes – Salon Bleu

Status Report, finances, new projects, international projects of the General Secretariat

16:00 – Alternative program – Luxembourg Urban Garden (LUGA) Tour for all participants who do not attend the Regional Delegates Meeting

Meeting Point: in front of Cercle Cité – Place d’Armes



© Luxembourg Urban Garden (LUGA)

19:00 – Closing dinner

@ Servior Op der Rhum



© splus

Optional Day – Thursday 25th of September 2025

09:00 – Discover the fortress and the suburbs of Luxembourg City

- Bock Casemates - Montée de Clausen
- Mansfeld + Tour Mansfeld – as discussed during the international workshop of the Marrakesh network 2024
- Museum “Draï Eechelen” - 5, Park Dräi Eechelen



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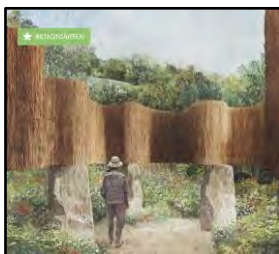
© Luxembourg for Tourism – Gauvin Lapetoule

12:30 – Lunch

@ tbd

14:00 – Discover the suburbs of Luxembourg City

- LUGA Pfaffenthal
- Muerbelsmillen – 69, rue Mohrfels – as discussed during the international workshop “Protecting and strengthening the residential function of the city’s historic centers” of the Brussel network 2024
- Panorama Elevator in Pfaffenthal
- LUGA Pescatore/park



© LUGA/Atelier Faber



© Lëtzebuerg City Museum



© Michel Peters

2. Conference venues

Cercle Cité



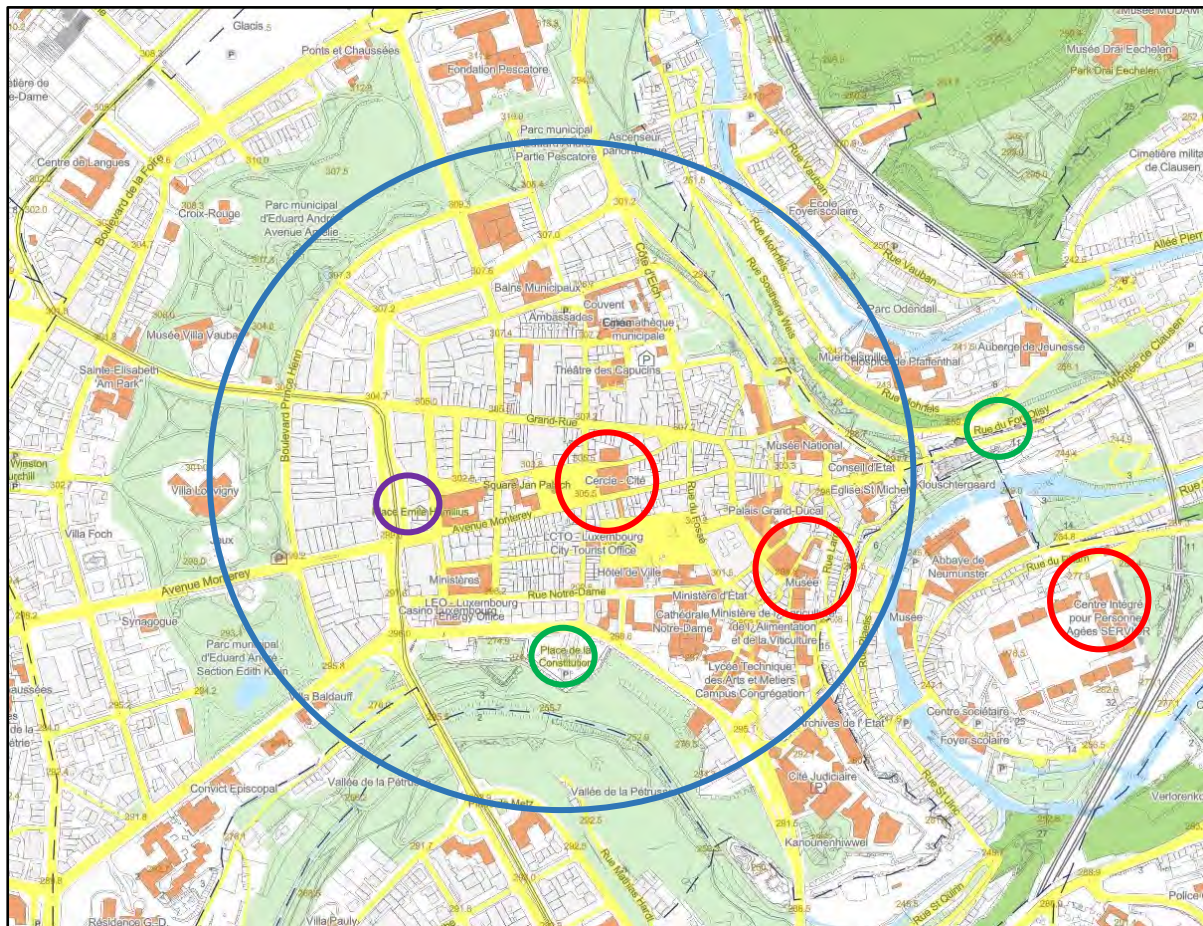
© citymag VdL

Lëtzebuerg City Museum



© citymag VdL

3. Map with the venues and radius for hotel choice



© Ville de Luxembourg

- Venues
- Suggested radius for the hotel choice – Cercle Cité (main venue) within 8 minutes
- Visits/starts
- Tram station – arriving from Airport or Train station the public transport is for free in Luxembourg

Link to the digital map:





https://maps.vdl.lu/maps_vdl/owhc_2025

4. Luxembourg City & UNESCO



© Ville de Luxembourg

-  Core zone (29,94 ha)
-  Buffer zone (108,73 ha)

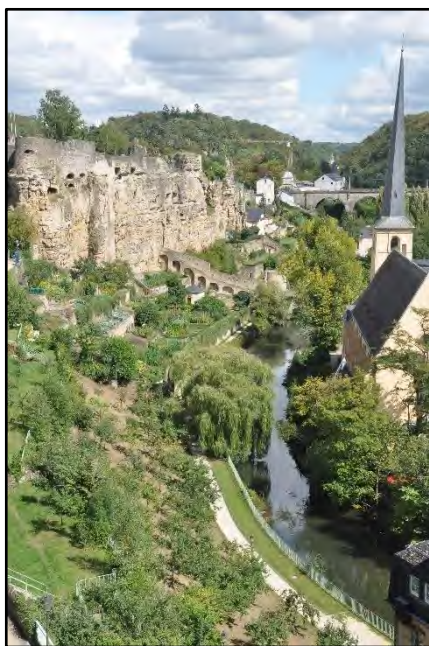
Outstanding universal value

Luxembourg City: Its Old Quarters and Fortifications

"Luxembourg City: its Old Quarters and Fortifications" was entered on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1994 under criterion (iv), as a site recognised by the 1972 Convention on World Cultural and Natural Heritage as having outstanding universal value. Due to its strategic position, Luxembourg was one of Europe's most important fortified cities from the 16th century until 1867, when its walls were dismantled. The fortress was reinforced several times as the Duchy of Luxembourg passed from one great European power to another: the emperors of the Holy Roman Empire, the House of Burgundy, the Habsburgs, the kings of France and Spain, and finally the Prussians. Until their partial demolition, the fortifications were a fine example of military architecture spanning several centuries.

- Criteria: (iv) to be an outstanding example of a type of building, architectural or technological ensemble or landscape which illustrates (a) significant stage(s) in human history.
- Listed property: 29.94 ha
- Buffer zone: 108.73 ha

The total area of the UNESCO protected site is 138.13 ha, which is 2.7% of the city. This area is subdivided into a central zone and a buffer zone. The central zone benefits from a high level of protection and is surrounded by the buffer zone, which must be used and developed in a way that provides additional protection to the heritage site.



© Cathy Giorgetti



© Christof Weber



© Cathy Giorgetti

5. Preview to the three key themes

1) « Quartierspläng » - the 24 districts of the City of Luxembourg

In 2024, as part of the “Year of the 24 Districts,” the City of Luxembourg launched an ambitious citizen engagement initiative to listen and gather local urban priorities for each neighbourhood. Guided by the “15-minute city” concept, the goal is to enhance quality of life through accessible services, green spaces, and vibrant public areas.

The first phase (2024) focused on listening and mobilizing residents: an online survey (4,000+ responses), 22 neighbourhood walks (“Apéri’tours” with 1,800+ participants), and an Ideation Lab (50 participants, 20 projects, 42 municipal experts).

More than 3,500 citizen ideas were collected, analysed, and prioritized with city departments for implementation across short-, mid-, and long-term horizons (by 2025, 2029, and beyond).

From May to October 2025, public feedback sessions, updated project fairs, and engaging visual tools (sound maps, urban sketches, data visualizations) will bring the results back to the community.

The approach is grounded in collective intelligence, participatory design, and data-informed decision-making. It reflects a shift toward more inclusive, transparent, and responsive urban governance.

The objective is to transform each district into a place of proximity, connection, and opportunity through meaningful local dialogue. This initiative stands as a replicable model for cities seeking to advance democratic innovation and rebuild citizen trust.



© Ville de Luxembourg



2) The "La Fontaine" estate of the former Mansfeld Castle in Clausen

Built by Count Pierre-Ernest de Mansfeld between 1563 and 1604, the estate and castle have left a lasting mark on the Clausen district. After Mansfeld's death, the site fell into ruins and underwent many changes, making the remains of the prestigious Renaissance castle almost invisible to those unfamiliar with the history.

Since 2015, the City has undertaken extensive heritage studies, including historical research, archaeological excavations, architectural archaeological studies, geometric, topographic, photogrammetric, and 3D laser surveys, as well as consolidation and conservation works to protect the remains and the excavations.

On February 28 and March 1, 2022, the City of Luxembourg, in collaboration with the University of Luxembourg, organized an international symposium.

In November 2022, the City of Luxembourg launched a European ideas competition aiming to highlight and reactivate the Mansfeld site located in Luxembourg-Clausen. The main goals of the competition include enhancing this unique historic site, optimizing the district overall along with its green and built spaces, and implementing a public and inclusive programming.



E. Werling, 1890: eine Gesamtansicht der Anlage „La Fontaine“ – une vue d'ensemble du site « La Fontaine » – overall view of “La Fontaine” © Collection du Musée national d'archéologie, d'histoire et d'art – Luxembourg

© Vidale-Gloesener, Édouard Mutelet



3) LUGA - Luxembourg Urban Garden

LUGA is an open-air exhibition that will be taking place from 7 May to 18 October 2025. The ephemeral LUGA exhibition will take over five emblematic sites in the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg: the Edouard André municipal park, the Alzette valley, the Pétrusse valley, the Kirchberg as well as the town of Ettelbruck in the Nordstad. LUGA will invite visitors to discover the city through a variety of scenic trails, offering moments of relaxation amidst vibrant gardens, enchanting agricultural landscapes, and a wealth of leisure and social spaces.

Over the course of six months, this unique and mostly free exhibition will become an open-air laboratory of ideas, providing a platform for interaction and experimentation. Visitors will be invited to contribute to collective reflections on the future of our cities and engage in a diverse programme of events focussed on the LUGA exhibition's key themes

→ <https://luga.lu/en/>



© LUGA