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## PRESS RELEASE

### World Heritage LAB: “#Managing - Site Managers and World Heritage”

Italy is the country in the world that boasts the highest number of sites registered in the UNESCO World Heritage List: a certification of the cultural wealth of the Country but also an important responsibility that falls on different subjects, from the Government to local administrations, each of which has a specific role in the activities of protection, enhancement and promotion of the sites themselves.

Proper management of World Heritage is a very debated topic among operators, in Italy and abroad. To open an in-depth comparison on the critical issues and opportunities that arise from the need for a conscious management of World Heritage, the Association of Italian World Heritage organizes and promotes the workshop “#Managing - Site Manager and World Heritage”, which will be held in Florence, at the Istituto degli Innocenti, Friday, January 25th.

“When you have to deal with with goods of such great value as UNESCO World Heritage Sites, places, works of Art and priceless contexts, the training of professionals is a fundamental asset - explains Giacomo Bassi, mayor of San Gimignano and president of the Association - The framework of knowledge, intervention planning, new technologies and the most innovative restoration techniques, the complexity of managing the properties of modern enhancement and communication formulas impose excellent training courses, in a permanent updating framework that, both the ministerial and the local level, must guarantee. Our Association strives to achieve those goals and stimulate the institutions so that these paths are not occasional but continuous.”.

The conference “#Management - Site Managers and World Heritage” will involve international experts in Management of Cultural Heritage, representatives of the UNESCO World Heritage Center and of the MiBAC, Site Managers from different European countries as well as managers and administrators of Italian World Heritage properties.

“In the general debate related to the management of World Heritage sites, the subject of the technician who has to deal with the management plan remains the same: the site manager. In the Anglo-Saxon area and more generally in the European scene, this is a well defined professional, both from an administrative and operational and from the operational point of view, while in Italy - although we have the largest number of sites recognized as World Heritage - this remains a confused figure, not outlined by any point of view. In fact, to date, in most cases as a reference to the management of the site we find a political subject and not a technician. - explains Carlo Francini, Site Manager of the Florence World Heritage site and scientific coordinator of the Association - This situation creates several critical issues in the management system of Italian Properties and for this reason the Association of Italian World Heritage has decided to focus a meeting to this topic. This workshop should therefore be useful to define the profession of the site manager and to support, at the persons responsible for the World Heritage

sites and at the Government, the decision to give a clear and unambiguous body to a technical figure, who will have the task to coordinate, through the management plan, the management of the property itself. "

The Florentine conference takes place in the activities of the "World Heritage LAB", created with the contribution of the Ministry for Cultural Heritage and Activities and sponsored by the Italian National Commission for UNESCO, by the Tuscany Region, the City of Florence and Federculture. Funded with the funds of Law 77/06, the W.H.LAB is configured as a path of updating and comparison, dedicated to operators and specialists who deal with the Italian Cultural Heritage, with particular reference to the managing bodies of World Heritage sites.

"The figure of the Site Manager is by definition complex but becomes indispensable if we want to project the principles of the Convention for World Heritage towards the future in a coherent and concrete way - comments Enrico Vicenti, Head of General Secretary of the Italian National Commission for UNESCO - This is a good day for discussion and updating organized and promoted by the Association of Italian World Heritage: my hope is that it is the start of a necessary reflection on the professionalization and recognition of this task within the institutional framework".

The World Heritage LAB, which as a whole will end in the autumn of 2019, is divided into three themes: "Communicating - the new words for World Heritage", the subject of the meeting held in Ferrara last May; "#Managing - Site Managers and World Heritage" that will be tackled next Friday in Florence and "Valorizing- the territories and properties of the World Heritage", which will be held in Venice next spring. Next summer, the results, the reports and outputs of the LAB will be shown in Rome: they will be available on the Association website for downloading and consultation.

Florence workshop will be available in live streaming from the YouTube channel of the Association of Italian World Heritage.

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