

Call for Papers

Aberta University in Lisbon

*together with Heritage International Institute
and CompaRes – International Society for Iberian-Slavonic Studies*

as well as partners

*Center for Air and Space Law at the University of Mississippi, School of Law, University of Strathclyde,
For All Moonkind, and Universities Network for Children in Armed Conflict (UNETCHAC)*

Invite submissions for

HERITAGE IN WAR AND PEACE VI

Between Local and Global Heritage

to be held in Lisbon, Portugal | 3 - 4 December 2026

WHAT IS HERITAGE IN WAR AND PEACE?

Since its inception in 2021, the conference cycle *Heritage in War and Peace* has established itself as an international and interdisciplinary forum dedicated to advancing critical scholarship on the protection, governance and interpretation of cultural and natural heritage in contexts of conflict, crisis, transition and peacebuilding. By bringing together scholars, practitioners, policymakers, museum professionals, archaeologists, architects, legal experts and representatives of international organisations, the conference fosters dialogue across disciplines and geographical contexts, encouraging innovative perspectives on the evolving role of heritage in contemporary societies.

Building on the success of its previous editions—hosted by Sapienza University of Rome (2021), McGill University (2022), the University of Bologna (2024), the University of Strathclyde (2024), and the Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas—the sixth edition seeks to consolidate this international network while expanding the debate around one of the most pressing questions in contemporary heritage studies: how can heritage remain locally meaningful while responding to increasingly global challenges and responsibilities?

HOW TO SUBMIT A PROPOSAL?

Prospective participants are invited to submit their papers via official form:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScGf3F270msuVCgWbiHUGMJJWl0_Pea9zDNZt93ePBZdi8qoA/viewform?usp=header

Submission deadline:

13 September 2026

Notification of acceptance:

28 September 2026

Conference dates:

3 - 4 December 2026

Conference format:

In person, with limited hybrid participation only where duly justified. Full or working papers are not expected to be submitted before the conference.

Conference fee:

Early bird (until 1 November): **60€** for students and PhD candidates and **80€** for academics

Normal fee (until 22 November): **80€** for students and PhD candidates and **100€** for academics

Conference dinner (paid together with the conference fee): **40€**

Registration details will be communicated together with paper acceptance.

Publication details:

Selected papers will be published in a special issue of the Journal of Global Studies.

WHAT IS THE THEME OF THIS YEAR'S EDITION?

The sixth edition of Heritage in War and Peace is organised around the theme Between Local and Global Heritage.

Heritage is simultaneously rooted in places, communities, memories and cultural practices, while increasingly shaped by international legal frameworks, global governance, digital technologies, tourism, transnational markets and environmental change. Today, heritage is no longer understood solely within local or national boundaries; rather, it is continuously negotiated across multiple scales, involving a growing diversity of actors, institutions and interests.

This dual dimension raises fundamental questions. Who defines the value of heritage? How can local communities actively participate in decisions that are increasingly influenced by international institutions and global processes? Can universal standards of protection coexist with cultural diversity, community autonomy and local knowledge?

The conference invites participants to explore these questions through interdisciplinary dialogue, examining the tensions, complementarities and opportunities that emerge between the local and the global dimensions of heritage. It particularly encourages contributions examining how international legal frameworks, multilateral institutions and geopolitical transformations are reshaping the governance, protection and interpretation of cultural and natural heritage across different regions of the world.

WHY DOES THIS THEME MATTER TODAY?

Heritage has never been more interconnected than it is today. Armed conflicts, climate change, forced displacement, illicit trafficking, rapid urbanisation, mass tourism and digital transformation demonstrate that heritage is increasingly influenced by processes extending far beyond local and national boundaries. At the same time, communities across the world continue to reaffirm their role as custodians of places, traditions, memories and identities that give heritage its cultural and social significance.

The challenge is therefore not to choose between local and global perspectives, but to develop more inclusive, sustainable and collaborative approaches capable of reconciling:

- community participation and international standards;
- cultural diversity and universal values;
- conservation and sustainable development;
- memory and innovation;

- identity and openness;
- sovereignty and shared stewardship.

Addressing these challenges requires dialogue across disciplines, institutions and communities. Heritage in War and Peace VI aims to provide a platform for this dialogue, encouraging critical reflection on the future of heritage in an increasingly interconnected world.

SUGGESTED THEMES AND PANELS

The conference welcomes proposals from law, political science, archaeology, anthropology, architecture, geography, museum studies, digital humanities, philosophy, history, cultural studies, and related fields.

The thematic areas presented below are intended to guide submissions rather than define rigid disciplinary boundaries. Interdisciplinary contributions and proposals addressing emerging issues relevant to the conference theme are equally welcome.

Suggested areas include, but are not limited to:

1. Heritage Governance: Local Communities and Global Institutions

Objectives

Heritage governance is increasingly shaped by the interaction of local communities, national authorities, international organisations and transnational actors. As cultural and natural heritage becomes the object of shared global concern, governance models are required to reconcile local interests with international legal frameworks, multilevel decision-making and sustainable management practices. International conventions and policy instruments have progressively redefined the roles of States, communities and global institutions, raising new questions concerning participation, sovereignty, accountability and shared responsibility. This thematic area welcomes interdisciplinary contributions examining governance models, legal and policy frameworks, institutional cooperation and innovative approaches that address the complex relationship between local ownership, global governance and the geopolitical dimensions of heritage protection. Particular attention will be devoted to the role of international legal instruments, multilateral organisations and evolving geopolitical dynamics in shaping contemporary heritage governance.

Suggested topics include (but are not limited to):

- International and multi-level heritage governance
- Implementation of the 1972 UNESCO World Heritage Convention
- International legal and policy frameworks for heritage governance
- Governance of World Heritage properties and UNESCO processes
- Participatory governance and community engagement
- Heritage governance in transboundary and contested territories
- Heritage diplomacy, cultural diplomacy and international cooperation
- International organisations and global heritage governance (UNESCO, ICCROM, ICOMOS, Blue Shield, Council of Europe)
- Heritage governance and geopolitical dynamics
- National heritage policies in a global context

2. Heritage in War, Crisis and Reconstruction

Objectives

Armed conflicts, humanitarian emergencies, natural disasters and political instability continue to threaten cultural and natural heritage across the world. Beyond the physical destruction of sites and collections, crises undermine cultural identities, social cohesion and the continuity of collective memory. Contemporary responses increasingly require the interaction of international humanitarian law, heritage protection mechanisms, multilateral cooperation and locally driven recovery initiatives. This thematic area welcomes interdisciplinary contributions addressing the prevention of heritage loss, emergency response, post-conflict reconstruction and the role of heritage in peacebuilding, resilience and sustainable recovery. Particular attention will be devoted to the implementation of international legal instruments—including the 1954 Hague Convention and its Protocols—and to the role of UNESCO, the United Nations and other international organisations in addressing the geopolitical challenges of heritage protection during armed conflicts and humanitarian crises.

Suggested topics include (but are not limited to):

- Protection of cultural heritage under international humanitarian law
- Implementation of the 1954 Hague Convention and its Protocols
- International cooperation through UNESCO emergency mechanisms

- The role of the United Nations in the protection of cultural heritage during armed conflicts
- Emergency preparedness, disaster risk management and rapid response
- Post-conflict recovery, reconstruction and resilience
- Ethics, authenticity and integrity in reconstruction processes
- Illicit trafficking of cultural property during armed conflicts
- Heritage, peacebuilding and post-conflict reconciliation
- Heritage protection in occupied, contested and geopolitically sensitive territories

3. Indigenous, Minority and Community Heritage

Objectives

Heritage plays a fundamental role in expressing cultural identities, sustaining collective memory and strengthening the relationship between communities and the places they inhabit. Indigenous peoples, minority groups and local communities are increasingly recognised not only as custodians of heritage but also as active actors in its identification, interpretation, transmission and safeguarding. International instruments such as the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), the UNESCO 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage and the Council of Europe Faro Convention have reinforced the recognition of community participation, cultural diversity and heritage rights as fundamental principles of contemporary heritage governance. This thematic area welcomes interdisciplinary contributions exploring community-based approaches to heritage, traditional knowledge systems and the role of heritage in strengthening cultural continuity, resilience and social cohesion in an increasingly interconnected and geopolitically complex world at a time when Indigenous and minority heritage is increasingly affected by migration, border transformations, armed conflicts and global governance processes.

Suggested topics include (but are not limited to):

- Indigenous knowledge systems and cultural heritage
- Minority heritage and cultural diversity
- Community-based approaches to heritage safeguarding
- Heritage communities and participatory practices
- Sacred places, traditional custodianship and cultural landscapes
- Language preservation and intergenerational transmission of cultural knowledge

- Traditional knowledge, environmental stewardship and biocultural heritage
- Community resilience, identity and belonging
- Indigenous and minority heritage within international legal frameworks
- Local communities, global heritage policies and geopolitical transformations

4. Urban Heritage, Sustainable Development and Tourism

Objectives

Historic cities are dynamic environments where cultural heritage, urban development, tourism and social change continuously interact. Increasing urbanisation, demographic change, climate pressures and global tourism require new approaches capable of balancing heritage conservation with economic development, environmental sustainability and social inclusion. International policy frameworks—including the **UNESCO Recommendation on the Historic Urban Landscape (2011)**, the **United Nations New Urban Agenda** and the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**—have reinforced the need for integrated and people-centred approaches to urban heritage. This thematic area welcomes interdisciplinary contributions exploring how historic urban environments can promote resilient, inclusive and sustainable cities while responding to global urbanisation, geopolitical transformations, cross-border mobility and international tourism.

Suggested topics include (but are not limited to):

- Historic Urban Landscape (HUL) approaches and integrated urban conservation
- Urban heritage within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)
- Heritage-led urban regeneration and sustainable development
- Sustainable tourism and visitor management
- Overtourism, urban resilience and carrying capacity
- Adaptive reuse of historic buildings and urban heritage
- Public spaces, urban identity and sense of place
- Heritage, creative economies and cultural regeneration
- Urban heritage in border cities and geopolitically sensitive contexts
- Urban planning, governance and the future of historic cities

5. Climate Change, Environmental Sustainability and Cultural Landscapes

Objectives

Climate change has emerged as one of the most significant challenges facing cultural and natural heritage, threatening historic buildings, archaeological sites, cultural landscapes and traditional ways of life. At the same time, heritage is increasingly recognised as a strategic resource for climate adaptation, environmental sustainability and disaster resilience. International policy frameworks—including the **Paris Agreement**, the **UNESCO Policy Document on Climate Action for World Heritage**, the **Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction** and the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**—highlight the need for integrated approaches that connect cultural and natural heritage within broader environmental policies. This thematic area welcomes interdisciplinary contributions exploring the relationship between heritage, climate change, landscape governance and environmental security. Particular attention will be devoted to the interaction between international environmental governance, heritage conservation and the geopolitical dimensions of climate change, including resource competition, climate-induced displacement and environmental security.

Suggested topics include (but are not limited to):

- Climate change adaptation and resilience for cultural heritage
- Implementation of international climate and heritage policies
- Cultural landscapes and integrated landscape governance
- Nature-based solutions for heritage conservation
- Traditional ecological knowledge and sustainable resource management
- Coastal, maritime and underwater cultural heritage at risk
- Biodiversity, biocultural diversity and heritage conservation
- Disaster risk reduction and emergency preparedness for heritage
- Heritage, environmental security and climate geopolitics
- Heritage and the green transition

6. Ownership, Restitution and Shared Stewardship

Ownership, restitution and repatriation have become central issues in contemporary heritage debates, raising complex legal, ethical, political and diplomatic questions. Increasing attention to colonial legacies, provenance research and the rights of source communities has transformed the ways in which

museums, governments and international organisations approach the care, circulation and governance of cultural heritage. International legal instruments—including the 1970 UNESCO Convention, the 1995 UNIDROIT Convention, the ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums and evolving international restitution practices—provide an increasingly important framework for addressing these challenges. This thematic area welcomes interdisciplinary contributions exploring ownership disputes, restitution claims, shared stewardship and the geopolitical dimensions of cultural heritage, with particular attention to international cooperation, cultural diplomacy and new models of collaborative governance.

Suggested topics include (but are not limited to):

- Ownership and contested cultural heritage
- Implementation of the 1970 UNESCO Convention and the 1995 UNIDROIT Convention
- Provenance research and collection histories
- Restitution, repatriation and shared stewardship
- Colonial collections and decolonising museum practices
- Ethical collecting, due diligence and museum governance
- Human remains, sacred objects and culturally sensitive collections
- Illicit trafficking of cultural property and international cooperation
- Cultural diplomacy, soft power and international relations
- Heritage restitution in contested and geopolitically sensitive contexts

7. Digital Heritage and Technological Innovation

Objectives

Digital technologies are profoundly transforming the ways in which cultural heritage is documented, protected, interpreted and shared. Artificial intelligence, digital twins, geospatial technologies and immersive environments are creating new opportunities for research, conservation and public engagement, while simultaneously raising significant ethical, legal and governance challenges. International initiatives—including the **UNESCO Charter on the Preservation of Digital Heritage**, the **UNESCO Recommendation on Open Science** and the **UNESCO Recommendation on the Ethics of Artificial Intelligence**—highlight the need for responsible, inclusive and sustainable digital transformation. This thematic area welcomes interdisciplinary contributions exploring the impact of emerging technologies on heritage management, digital

governance and international cooperation. Particular attention will be devoted to digital sovereignty, data governance and the geopolitical implications of technological innovation for cultural heritage.

Suggested topics include (but are not limited to):

- Artificial intelligence for heritage documentation, research and management
- Digital twins and advanced heritage monitoring
- Remote sensing, GIS and satellite technologies for heritage protection
- Virtual, augmented and immersive technologies for heritage interpretation
- Digital preservation and long-term accessibility of cultural heritage
- Digital governance, open data and heritage information systems
- Digital ethics, authenticity and trustworthy artificial intelligence
- Cybersecurity and the protection of digital cultural heritage
- Digital sovereignty and the geopolitics of heritage data
- International governance of digital heritage and cross-border data sharing
- International cooperation and digital innovation for cultural heritage

8. Heritage, Human Rights and Social Justice

Objectives

Cultural heritage is increasingly recognised as a fundamental dimension of human rights, democratic participation and social justice. International legal and policy instruments—including the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**, the **International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**, the **UNESCO Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity** and the **Council of Europe Faro Convention**—have reinforced the recognition of cultural heritage as a shared resource that contributes to human dignity, inclusion and sustainable development. This thematic area welcomes interdisciplinary contributions exploring the relationship between heritage, human rights and social justice, with particular attention to cultural rights, accessibility, equality and the participation of diverse communities in heritage processes. Particular attention will be devoted to the role of international human rights standards in addressing contemporary social inequalities, forced displacement, armed conflicts and the geopolitical challenges affecting access to and enjoyment of cultural heritage.

Suggested topics include (but are not limited to):

- Cultural rights and the right to participate in cultural life
- International human rights frameworks and cultural heritage
- Heritage, equality and social justice
- Accessibility, universal design and inclusive heritage
- Diversity, representation and cultural inclusion
- Heritage and the rights of Indigenous Peoples and minorities
- Cultural heritage, human rights and forced displacement
- Museums, participation and social inclusion
- Heritage, well-being and community resilience
- Human rights, cultural heritage and contemporary geopolitical challenges

2. Intangible Heritage in a Globalised World

Objectives

Intangible cultural heritage encompasses the living practices, knowledge, skills and expressions that communities, groups and individuals recognise as part of their cultural identity. In an increasingly interconnected world, migration, urbanisation, tourism, digitalisation and global cultural exchanges are continuously reshaping the ways in which living heritage is created, transmitted and safeguarded. The UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003) has established an international framework for recognising the central role of communities in safeguarding living heritage while promoting cultural diversity and sustainable development. This thematic area welcomes interdisciplinary contributions exploring the dynamic relationship between tradition and innovation, local identities and global exchanges, with particular attention to the role of intangible heritage in strengthening resilience, intercultural dialogue and international cooperation.

Suggested topics include (but are not limited to):

- Implementation of the UNESCO 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage
- Community-based safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage
- Traditional knowledge, oral traditions and cultural memory

- Rituals, festivals, performing arts and living traditions
- Traditional craftsmanship and knowledge transmission
- Intangible heritage, migration and diaspora communities
- Transnational nominations and international cooperation under the UNESCO 2003 Convention
- Digital technologies and the safeguarding of intangible heritage
- Intangible heritage, sustainable development and cultural diversity
- Intangible heritage, intercultural dialogue and international cooperation
- Living heritage in a globalised and geopolitically changing world

10. Critical and Theoretical Perspectives on Heritage

Objectives

Heritage is not a fixed category but a dynamic and contested process through which societies interpret, negotiate and transmit cultural values across time and space. Contemporary Heritage Studies increasingly challenge traditional understandings of heritage by examining the relationships between memory, identity, power, ethics and social change. International policy frameworks—such as the Council of Europe Faro Convention, together with the growing influence of Critical Heritage Studies, have contributed to redefining heritage as a participatory, socially constructed and future-oriented process. This thematic area welcomes interdisciplinary contributions offering theoretical, philosophical and methodological perspectives on heritage, with particular attention to the implications of global transformations, geopolitical dynamics and emerging paradigms for the future of heritage research and practice.

Suggested topics include (but are not limited to):

- Critical Heritage Studies and contemporary heritage theory
- Heritage values, significance and processes of heritagisation
- Heritage, memory, identity and belonging
- Difficult, contested and dissonant heritage
- Heritage ethics and social responsibility
- Decolonial, postcolonial and Indigenous perspectives on heritage
- Heritage, politics, power and geopolitical narratives

- International heritage governance as a theoretical paradigm
- Heritage futures and anticipatory approaches
- Participatory heritage and the Faro Convention
- Interdisciplinary methodologies and emerging approaches in Heritage Studies

HOW WILL THE CONFERENCE SUPPORT EARLY CAREER RESEARCHERS?

Heritage in War and Peace VI is committed to supporting the next generation of heritage scholars and professionals. Proposals from doctoral candidates, postdoctoral researchers and early career scholars are particularly encouraged. Beyond the presentation of research, the conference aims to provide opportunities for academic exchange, networking and interdisciplinary dialogue within an international scholarly community.

Selected papers may be considered for:

- The *Best Early Career Paper Award*
- Publication opportunities in edited volumes and peer-reviewed journals
- Mentoring and networking opportunities with senior scholars and practitioners

WHY PARTICIPATE?

Heritage in War and Peace VI aims to consolidate its role as an international forum for critical and interdisciplinary dialogue on the contemporary challenges of cultural and natural heritage. By bringing together scholars, practitioners, policymakers and heritage professionals from diverse disciplinary and geographical backgrounds, the conference seeks to foster new perspectives, strengthen international collaborations and encourage innovative approaches to heritage research and practice.

At a time when heritage is increasingly shaped by global challenges while remaining deeply rooted in local communities, meaningful dialogue across disciplines and cultures has never been more necessary. Heritage in War and Peace VI offers a unique opportunity to contribute to this debate and to engage with one of the defining questions of contemporary heritage studies:

HOW CAN HERITAGE REMAIN LOCALLY MEANINGFUL WHILE BEING GLOBALLY PROTECTED AND RESPONSIBLY GOVERNED?

We warmly invite scholars, practitioners, institutions and emerging researchers from around the world to join this conversation and contribute to shaping the future of heritage in an increasingly interconnected world.