



# 5TH WORLD HERITAGE SITE MANAGERS' FORUM

*in conjunction with the extended 45th session of the World Heritage Committee*

## CALL FOR APPLICATIONS

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, UNESCO World Heritage Centre, ICCROM, and IUCN are delighted to announce that the 5th edition of the World Heritage Site Managers' Forum (WHSMF23) will be organized in conjunction with the extended 45th session of the World Heritage Committee, with the theme:

### **“Managing World Heritage for the Next 50 Years”**

The Forum will take place in a hybrid form with an online as well as an in-person component. World Heritage site managers, as well as members of World Heritage site management teams from across the globe are eligible to participate in this year's Forum, aimed at continuing to create opportunities for the empowerment of site managers in expanding their networks and exchanging knowledge and experiences at an international level.

**Host:** Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

**Organisers:** The Ministry of Culture of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, represented by the National Committee and the Heritage Commission, UNESCO World Heritage Centre, ICCROM-IUCN World Heritage Leadership Programme

**Venues:** Online (Zoom Meetings) and in-person (Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia)

**Dates:** *Online component:*  
First online session: **19 June 2023**, from 12:00-15:00, CET  
Second online session: **4 July 2023**, from 12:00-15:00, CET  
Third online session: **13 July 2023**, from 12:00-15:00, CET

*In-person component:*  
**10-16 September 2023** (including arrival and departure of participants)

Note: Participants will be required to attend both online and in-person components of the Forum.

**Language:** English (interpretation will be provided in Arabic and French during the plenary session only)

**Partner:** ICOMOS

### **Theme and topics**

Over the past five decades, the *World Heritage Convention* has protected and promoted humanity's treasures and transformed the way we value and safeguard heritage. The World Heritage sites today, currently 1157 in 167 countries, are serving as climate disruption observatories to gather and share information on applied and tested monitoring, mitigation, resilience, and adaptation practices and are raising awareness of the impacts on human societies

and cultural diversity, biodiversity, and ecosystem services. Therefore, the Forum will be an opportunity to review the achievements of the past 50 years and at the same time examine some of the growing challenges which site managers should contribute to tackling in the years to come. The Forum will therefore be an occasion to reflect on the past and the future through the theme “**Managing World Heritage for the Next 50 Years**” and the following topics:

- Understanding the achievements and challenges of the *World Heritage Convention*
- World Heritage management, enhancing resilience and sustainability
- How to manage change in the coming decades: impact assessment for World Heritage
- How to address the issue of climate change and its impact on World Heritage sites
- Digital technologies for monitoring and conservation of World Heritage sites

### Objectives of the Forum

The major objectives of the 2023 edition of the World Heritage Site Managers’ Forum are to:

- **To promote international cooperation** of World Heritage site managers and coordinate worldwide actions in favor of the protection and conservation of humankind’s historical heritage through activities and interventions aimed at raising the awareness of States Parties to this heritage.
- To reinforce and support the **international network** of site managers that defines, improves and promotes conservation principles, standards, research, responsible practice, and innovation about the protection of worldwide heritage.
- To assist site managers through **appropriate guidance** to harness the potential of World Heritage properties and heritage in general, to contribute to sustainable development, notably through the active involvement of local communities at all levels of protection and management of World Heritage and increase the **effectiveness and relevance of the *World Heritage Convention*** whilst respecting its primary purpose and mandate of protecting the Outstanding Universal value of World Heritage properties;
- **To strengthen the enabling environment** by advocating policies, strategies, frameworks and tools that support sustainable tourism as an important vehicle for protecting and managing cultural and natural heritage of Outstanding Universal Value.
- **To directly expose the site managers to the issues discussed during the World Heritage Committee sessions** on the state of conservation (SOC) reports.

### Who can attend?

- World Heritage site managers as well as persons working within the World Heritage site management from all natural, cultural and mixed World Heritage properties may apply;
- There will be only **one (1) participant per World Heritage property**. An exception will be made for transboundary or transnational properties, for which only one (1) person per State Party involved may be accepted;
- Priority will be given to participants whose properties have **state of conservation reports** for discussion at the extended 45th session of the World Heritage Committee;
- Site managers who have not yet had the opportunity to attend previous editions of the World Heritage Site Managers’ Forum will be given preference;

- Selection will also be guided in view of **balancing regional and gender** distribution of participants as well as typologies of World Heritage properties represented;
- The working language of the Forum will be **English**. English knowledge needs to be demonstrated in the application process. Interpretation will be provided in Arabic and French during the plenary sessions of the Forum only.

### Conditions: travel, accommodation, living expenses, and attendance

- The selected participants should commit themselves to attend both online and in-person components of the Forum.
- For the in-person component, **selected participants will be responsible for their round-trip travel costs to and from Riyadh as well as their accommodation and living expenses**. Information on specific hotels close to either the venue of the WHSMF23 or the location of the extended 45th session of the World Heritage Committee will be provided to Forum participants for their individual reservations.
- Selected participants are strongly encouraged to seek financial support from sources such as governmental institutions, employers, and other funding agencies.
- The Host Country has secured **limited funds to enable representatives from Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) as well as participants of States Parties in conflict/post-conflict situation<sup>1</sup>**, to participate in the in-person component of the Forum. Participants selected to receive a travel grant are required to attend both online and in-person components of the Forum. Failure to attend the online component will lead to a withdrawal of the travel grant.

### Application process

Please note, that the following information will be requested as part of the application process:

- All answers and documents must be presented in **English only**
- Description of duty performed by the applicant at the World Heritage property in max. 200 words
- A professional Curriculum vitae (max. 2 pages) in PDF format
- A scan of your passport in JPG format

**Site Managers are invited to submit their application through the online application form of the 5th World Heritage Site Manager's Forum, which is available at:**

<https://whc.unesco.org/en/whsmf23/>

**The deadline to apply to the 5th World Heritage Site Managers Forum is 7 May 2023 at 23.59 CET.** Participants will be informed directly of the selection process result at the latest on the 18 May 2023, i.e., 4 weeks prior to the opening of the Forum.

For more information, please contact the Forum organisers by email at [whsmf23@moc.gov.sa](mailto:whsmf23@moc.gov.sa)

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<sup>1</sup> *Least Developed Countries (as defined in the 1st bullet of Paragraph 239 point b. of the Operational Guidelines), Small Island Developing States (as defined in the 3rd bullet of Paragraph 239 point b of the Operational Guidelines) as well as participants of States Parties in conflict/post-conflict situation (as defined in the 4th bullet of Paragraph 239 point b. of the Operational Guidelines)*