



ايسيسكو  
ICESCO



Ministry of Culture  
of the Republic of Azerbaijan



# Heritage Committee in the Islamic World

Shusha - Azerbaijan  
**October 8 - 9, 2024**

**Report on Partnerships and Cooperation  
with the Islamic World Heritage Center**



**Shusha-2024**  
CULTURE CAPITAL IN THE ISLAMIC WORLD



تراث العالم الإسلامي  
Heritage of the Islamic World  
Patrimoine du monde islamique



## Introduction

Partnerships and international cooperation are central to the mission of the Islamic World Heritage Center. Since its establishment, the Center has prioritized partnerships and international cooperation with international, regional, and national entities across all heritage-related fields. These efforts aim to ensure the highest level of protection for world heritage, which not only represents the identity of nations but has also emerged as a key driver of sustainable development and economy.

- ICESCO collaborated through its Heritage Center during its participation in the Sharm El-Sheikh Climate Change Conference with prestigious international organizations, including, but not limited to, the United Nations, ICOMOS, and several European universities, such as the University of Athens and Aix-en-Provence University in France.
- ICESCO also collaborated with the World Trade Organization, Interpol, the Carpinteria Cultural Foundation, The Blue Shield, the UNIDROIT 1995 Convention, the International Council of Museums, and the Egyptian Ministry of Antiquities to organize the International Conference on Combating the Illicit Trafficking in Cultural Property in 2020.
- In the field of heritage education, ICESCO signed an agreement to launch an international master's program on heritage preservation and digitization with Ain Shams University in Egypt and Philipps University in Marburg, Germany, in 2022.
- Additionally, ICESCO entered into a cooperation and partnership agreement with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia in 2024 to implement the project on Hajj routes and historical mosques.
- ICESCO collaborated with most national commissions of its Member States to organize numerous training courses and workshops on various topics related to tangible and intangible heritage, natural heritage, underwater heritage, documentation and inscription, and the use of modern technologies in documenting and protecting heritage, including artificial intelligence, the metaverse, virtual reality, and augmented reality, aiming to preserve, protect, and rehabilitate heritage while enhancing the scientific and technical capabilities of professionals in all areas of heritage.

### Key ICESCO Partnerships in the 2024-2025 Plan

- Partnership with the Arab Regional Center for World Heritage in Bahrain.
- ICCROM.
- Organization of Turkic States.

The goal of these partnerships is to collaborate on the protection, documentation, preservation, restoration, and rehabilitation of heritage in the Islamic world, while also building capacities and enhancing the skills of professionals across various heritage-related disciplines. Additionally, these partnerships seek to work with international universities that have agreements with ICESCO, enabling heritage professionals to pursue academic programs, such as master's and doctoral studies.

### **Time Frame for Agreements**

The agreements and memoranda of understanding take effect immediately upon signing and last for three years, renewable at the request of the parties involved..

### **Funding**

Programs are funded based on a prior agreement between the parties, whereby each party contributes equally or proportionally as outlined in the agreement. Each party reserves the right to seek partners and funders for activities implemented within the scope of the programs related to the agreements..

### **Challenges Facing Partnerships**

Partnerships and cooperation in the field of heritage preservation in the Islamic world face several challenges :

- **Funding:** Although many donors are available, funding is often allocated to less important projects, and donors may favor certain countries over others.
- **Internal disruptions and regional and international conflicts :** Many Member States in need of funding for their heritage projects face political issues, internal conflicts, and civil wars, hindering collaborative work with international, regional, and national entities.
- **Disparities in scientific and technical capacities:** The capabilities of countries and institutions in terms of technical and human resources vary, affecting their ability to use modern technologies to preserve heritage.

## Conclusion

Despite the active role of the Islamic World Heritage Center in enhancing partnerships and cooperation among countries and institutions to preserve the rich and diverse heritage of the Islamic world, there is an urgent need to further strengthen this cooperation and partnership with the help of ICESCO Member States and the Islamic World Heritage Committee, which plays a crucial role in optimizing these partnerships through international and regional collaborations.

## Attachments

### Memoranda of Understanding with :

- Arab Regional Center for World Heritage
- ICCROM
- Organization of Turkic States

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