

Unite for Syrian Heritage

Young Experts Forum on the Safeguarding of Syrian Cultural Heritage

1-2 June 2016, Berlin/Germany

Concept Note

As part of the international expert conference on Syrian cultural heritage (2 to 4 June 2016, Berlin), the German Commission for UNESCO as cooperation partner of the Federal Foreign Office organizes a Young Experts Forum to be held prior to the expert conference.

Objectives and Expected Results

The objective of the Young Experts Forum “Unite for Syrian Heritage” is to bring together young experts with proven expertise and competence in fields relevant to the reconstruction of Syrian cultural heritage. Through the Forum, Germany offers an opportunity to make young voices heard and a unique window for participation in the international efforts for Syrian cultural heritage.

The immediately expected outcome is a concise presentation of the Forum’s results and main theses coming from different perspectives during the opening of the expert conference on Syrian cultural heritage. Furthermore the Forum aims at setting up an informal network of young experts working on Syrian cultural heritage. Finally, the participants will be given the opportunity to participate as observers in the expert conference and use it as a platform for dialogue. In the medium-term young expertise will become more visible, thereby complementing the international efforts by a more diverse view of the next generation.

Methodology

Since the Forum has to be prepared in the short term the focus rather lies on bringing young people together and facilitating their exchange, also beyond the Forum, than on working thoroughly on detailed content-based results. The methodology will therefore be participatory and interactive (speed dating, Q&A, working groups). However, one central keynote should set the basis for the exchange and discussion of the presentation to be prepared for the opening of the expert conference.

Participants

The German Commission for UNESCO, in close cooperation with the Federal Foreign Office, will invite up to 20 young experts aged from 20 to 30 who are involved in Syrian cultural heritage related fields such as World Heritage Studies, (Landscape) Architecture, Urban Planning, Archaeology, Art History, Museology, Cultural Studies, Anthropology, International Politics, Geography, Tourism. They can be students, researchers, activists, young professionals working in NGOs, associations, cultural and natural organizations, museums. It is crucial that they are committed to bringing in their own expertise, motivated to be engaged in a network of young experts and eager to implement the outcomes of the forum in their future work.

Participants must be available for the full period (1 to 4 June 2016) of the encounter and be fluent in English. Please note that interpretation will only be provided during the expert conference, not during the Young Experts Forum. Travel costs, boarding and accommodation will be covered by the organizers.

Programme

1st June

- Arrival
- 18:00hrs Get together at Archäologisches Zentrum Berlin
Introduction to the purpose and goal of the workshop
Getting to know each other: Expectation, Expertise, Emotions
- ~20:00hrs Dinner

2nd June

- 09:30hrs Welcome & Opening at the Federal Foreign Office
- 09:45hrs Keynote on Syrian Cultural Heritage: State of the Art
Prof. Dr. Markus Hilgert, Director, Museum of the Ancient Near East,
Staatliche Museen zu Berlin
Followed by Q&A
- 10:30hrs Perspectives and Contributions from and by Young Experts on
reconstructing Syrian cultural heritage
Group work on a future Action Plan
- 13:00hrs Lunch
- 14:00hrs Perspectives and Contributions from and by Young Experts on
reconstructing Syrian cultural heritage
Group work on a future Action Plan – continued
- 16:30hrs Next Generation is Now
Wrap up and preparation of the final presentation
- 17:30hrs Closing of the Young Experts Forum
- 18:00hrs Official Opening of the Expert Conference
Presentation of the workshop results

The young experts are invited to attend the following conference on Syrian cultural heritage as observers and benefit from their participation by integrating themselves into a broader network of experts. See separate programme draft.

Background Information

<http://www.unesco.org/new/en/safeguarding-syrian-cultural-heritage/>

The Young Experts Forum is organized by the German Commission for UNESCO and financed by the Gerda Henkel Stiftung.