

# Strategy 2021-2025

UPDATED FOLLOWING THE 25<sup>TH</sup> OWHC GENERAL ASSEMBLY

QUÉBEC, 6-9 SEPTEMBER 2022

VERSION 12-10-2022



OVPM . OWHC . OCPM



## Strategy 2021-2025

### PERSPECTIVES

The OWHC has established itself as a world network thanks to the participation of an increasing number of cities inscribed on UNESCO's World Heritage List. The Organization has secured a sound financial position. The trust and respect enjoyed today constitute an invitation to pursue its development.

This development must address the pressing need for concrete results expressed by members and must be considered in the light of the challenges posed to them by the climate emergency, the pandemic and the economic, social and political upheavals that result from it. Generally speaking, heritage preservation is definitely part of a larger and more complex perspective. New practices must be implemented.

The Organization has a fundamental role to play : remind the cities of their responsibilities in relation to the World Heritage Convention; confirm heritage as a resource; defend historic cities as a source of inspiration for the development of the whole urban area and for the livability of communities. The Organization must provide the cities with concrete support and encourage a heritage approach to urban development.

As soon as he took office in October 2021, the new Secretary General adopted a firm position to increase concrete action in the field. He proposed a new way of approaching the challenges faced by the Organization and its members. The prerequisite to change here is assuring member cities that they will reap benefits proportional to their investment (membership fees). The Organization will have to be able to propose innovative and far-reaching international projects that will contribute to establishing new partnerships and sustaining new sources of funding. The roadmap proposed is as follows:

This evolution must be done gradually, but with energy and determination:

- Phase I (2021-2022): Consolidate the General Secretariat; rationalize activities; intensify cooperative activities; participative approach for the preparation of the 16<sup>th</sup> World Congress in Québec and adoption of a political vision and of a Roadmap.
- Phase II (2023-2024): Implement the Roadmap and of its Strategic axes / Operational objectives. Initiate pilot projects involving the participation of a maximum number of member cities; assess results; validate recommendations, methods and tools; as well as adopt the "New Urban Project" of the OWHC 17<sup>th</sup> World Congress in Cordoba;
- Phase III (2024-2025): Elaborate major projects; financial packages for international partnerships; search for complementary/outside funding; keep cooperative activities alive.



## PHASE I

Until 2021, the General Secretariat focused mainly on communication activities. These contribute to promoting the Organization and member cities, and of course strengthening the cities network<sup>1</sup>. The General Secretariat has since spearheaded cooperation between, and with, the cities<sup>2</sup>, particularly through specific activities as part of the Québec World Congresses. The Regional Secretariats have also developed activities corresponding more directly to the technical, scientific and professional needs of member cities (in addition to a plethora of communication projects).

Phase I will serve to establish the new approach proposed for the Organization (more action and projects). In order for cities to have a positive perception of the benefits to be reaped as members of the Organization, it is strategically important to complete the current activities by directing greater attention to cooperative activities covering all fields of expertise related to heritage protection and urban development. In order to strengthen the evolution preconized, the Secretary General recommends the following actions:

### *1. Consolidate the Secretariat (already in place)*

Pursuant to resolutions ratified by the Board of Directors regarding the creation of new positions within the Secretariat, the recruitment in 2021 of a urban heritage specialist in charge of projects, and in 2022 of a communications specialist helped rationalize agents' tasks and allow them to be more efficient.

Additional or freed human resources have mainly been invested in the organization of the Congress and the process "On the Road to Québec". They will then be invested in the new cooperation activities to be developed, including first the Québec Roadmap.

### *2. Develop new cooperative activities focusing mainly on providing technical assistance to member cities involved in heritage protection/rehabilitation projects*

2.1 Based on the experience acquired, make changes to the City2City concept: the new version of the project (based on the OWHC Grants) must contribute to supporting cities that help each other. The role of the General Secretariat will be to:

- Identify the expertise of cities in different domains (experts' pool);
- Handle requests for assistance;
- Match available expertise with the assistance requested;
- Financially support experts' missions – a few days maximum;
- Publish the results of missions to compile experience / best practices and make them available to city members at large.

---

<sup>1</sup> The Jean-Paul-L'Allier Prize; Solidarity Day; Video competition; Youth on the Trail of World Heritage; Promotional videos.

<sup>2</sup> City2City Platform; OWHC Grants. Professional capacity-building activities.



2.2 Propose the concept of a technical assistance program (name to be determined) to specifically help cities identify their needs and or outline/initiate certain projects within their territory. This complement to City2City will allow the General Secretariat to intervene directly with beneficiary cities. The role of the Secretariat will be to:

- Identify international expertise (including member cities) in different domains (experts' pool);
- Help clarify/express issues and problems related to project implementation;
- Organize brief experts' missions;
- Publish the results of missions to compile experience/best practices and make them available to city members at large.

### *3. Implement the Quebec Roadmap towards the "New Urban Project" of the OWHC*

The 16<sup>th</sup> World Congress offered an opportunity to commit the Organization to concrete and targeted onsite actions. It was conceived as a multi-step process, an evolving and participatory approach, which will offer an innovative framework of intervention to member cities for the years to come:

The "*Quebec Roadmap*" will be a phase of exploration and experimentation with new urban practices. It will be implemented through "pilot projects". This collective reflection, which will also be an unprecedented experience of cooperation between member cities, will draw the outlines of the "new urban project" for the OWHC which will be proposed for adoption at the 17<sup>th</sup> World Congress of the OWHC in 2024.

Once the Organization has demonstrated its ability to propose, innovate, provide scientific content, and practical and operational approaches, it must begin to negotiate with outside partners to find and sustain new sources of funding (Phase III).

### *4. Mobilize member cities' expertise*

The creation of a pluridisciplinary pool of experts from member cities of the OWHC is necessary to mobilize members, decompartmentalize municipal services and integrate them with heritage management. Showcasing practices and experience garnered over time will make a strong case towards convincing member cities that the OWHC is a network where it is important to remain active. The process involves:

- Consulting member cities to identify the "experts";
- Identifying international experts in cooperation with OWHC partners;
- Establishing a database;
- Proposing a method to validate concrete expertise and experience related to best practices to be disseminated widely within the members' network.

### *5. Increase complementarity with the Regional Secretariats*

Activities within the Regional Secretariats will be encouraged and supported so that participating member cities will gain access to more tools to exchange information, practices and experience.



The activities in question correspond to site manager and other technicians' requests on the basis of work in which they are involved/or oversee. In addition to communication activities, the Regional Secretariats develop workshops and targeted training sessions.

To complement this basic function, the Regional Secretariats will be invited to work on general interest themes proposed by the General Secretariat. This work will serve to identify and analyze major trends and develop tools and guidelines to be validated during General Assemblies/World Congresses.