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European Heritage Award / Europa Nostra Award 2025 for Baltic Sea 3D Wrecksite Ontology (Finland)

Brussels / The Hague, 12 June 2025

Today, the [European Commission](#) and [Europa Nostra](#) have announced the **2025 winners of the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards**, which are co-funded by the [Creative Europe](#) Programme of the European Union. This year, Europe's most prestigious awards for heritage go to **30 outstanding winners from 24 countries** across the continent (*see the full list below*).

Among this year's winners is the **Baltic Sea 3D Wrecksite Ontology** project from Finland, which has created the world's largest public collection of photogrammetric 3D models representing historic shipwrecks. Driven entirely by volunteers of the Maritime Archaeological Society of Finland, it provides open digital access, promoting heritage awareness, scientific research, and sustainable diving in Finland and beyond.

Heritage supporters and enthusiasts are now encouraged to **discover the winners and [vote online](#) to decide who will win the Public Choice Award 2025**, which is entitled to receive a monetary award of €10,000. Votes can be cast until 12 September.

The winners were selected by the [Awards' Jury](#), composed of 11 heritage experts from across Europe, upon evaluation of the applications by the [Selection Committees](#). A total of 251 eligible applications to this year's Awards were submitted by organisations and individuals from 41 European countries.

Glenn Micallef, European Commissioner for Intergenerational Fairness, Youth, Culture and Sport, said: *"The European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards give us the opportunity to appreciate how cultural heritage is deeply valued in Europe. This year's winners showcase the ongoing efforts to safeguard and promote our rich cultural heritage for generations to come. Congratulations to the winners for their outstanding achievements and for their valuable contribution."*

Cecilia Bartoli, the world-renowned mezzo-soprano and President of Europa Nostra, stated: *"I warmly congratulate this year's winners of the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards on their well-deserved recognition. These inspiring initiatives demonstrate how cultural heritage can be a powerful force for positive change in Europe – strengthening communities, supporting well-being, fuelling creativity, and contributing to economic resilience. Cultural heritage connects people across generations and borders. It brings Europe's citizens closer together, united in our rich diversity. It brings beauty and meaning to our daily lives, and shows how it can help shape a more sustainable and inclusive future."*

The winners will be celebrated at the **European Heritage Awards Ceremony 2025** on **13 October** at Flagey, an iconic Art Deco building, in **Brussels**, Belgium. This high-profile event will feature the participation of European Commissioner **Glenn Micallef** and Europa Nostra's Executive President **Hermann Parzinger**. During the ceremony, the Grand Prix laureates and the Public Choice Award winner will be announced, chosen from among this year's winners of the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards and entitled to receive €10,000 each. The ceremony will be a highlight of the [European Cultural Heritage Summit 2025](#), which will take place from 12 to 14 October in Brussels. In a complex geopolitical context, the Summit will also provide a timely opportunity to give visibility and resonance to the upcoming Cultural Compass of the European Union, and to advocate for the political, societal, environmental and economic value of cultural heritage for the future of Europe. The Summit is organised by Europa Nostra and co-funded by the European Union.

Baltic Sea 3D Wrecksite Ontology, Finland

Initiated by the Maritime Archaeological Society of Finland ([MAS.Fi](https://www.mas.fi/)), the Baltic Sea 3D Wrecksite Ontology has created the world's largest public collection of photogrammetric 3D models representing historic shipwrecks. With nearly 200 fully documented and radiocarbon-dated wreck sites, the project offers new insights into the trade, economy and mobility that shaped Europe – with the Baltic Sea functioning as a shared economic space.

MAS.Fi, a UNESCO-accredited NGO dedicated to the protection of underwater cultural heritage, adheres strictly to the principles of Open Science and Open Data. All survey data, laboratory analyses, and resulting findings have been made freely available for non-commercial use through the society's dedicated online research portal. Furthermore, the society actively encourages public interaction with these models, offering the possibility to print 3D replicas or creatively modify them under open licensing conditions.

Established in 2019, the initiative has rapidly become central to Finland's maritime archaeological training, research, and heritage engagement. MAS.Fi organises Finland's only underwater archaeology field schools and contributes significantly to the country's annual archaeological data collection. Volunteers carry out most of Finland's maritime archaeological fieldwork, including extensive underwater surveys and the reporting of essential conservation information to national heritage authorities.

The society's team has also contributed to methodological innovation. A new drilling technique was developed to enable underwater dendrochronological sampling – a procedure previously considered unfeasible – significantly enhancing the accuracy of dating submerged wooden wrecks. Two dedicated wreck parks further demonstrate the society's innovative approach. The Porkkala Wreck Park, opened in 2018, and the Saaristomeri Wreck Park, launched in 2024, feature guided dive trails that reduce human impact on sensitive underwater sites. These parks simultaneously enhance recreational divers' understanding and appreciation of maritime archaeology through on-site educational materials and accessible digital twins of the shipwrecks.

MAS.Fi also organises annual public exhibitions and events. Educational outreach, including hybrid public lectures and school-focused programmes, consistently reaches thousands annually.

Environmental responsibility is integral to the initiative's operations. Fieldwork is carefully planned to minimise ecological impact, employing slow-moving vessels, shoreline power sources, coordinated carpooling, and environmentally conscious food supplies. Additionally, the society regularly participates in marine biodiversity monitoring and coastal clean-up activities.

[The Baltic Sea 3D Wrecksite Ontology's](#) international relevance extends beyond Finland. Recognising the historical interconnectedness of European maritime trade, MAS.Fi has collaborated with UNESCO to adapt this project across other Baltic states. Through international seminars, conferences, and active dissemination, MAS.Fi has established itself as one of the leading voices in maritime archaeological research - all while being run entirely by volunteers.



"This project captures the transnational and intercultural history of the Baltic Sea. Developed with the involvement of experts, it has been executed entirely by volunteers, including members of the deaf community," the Awards' Jury commented.

"The Baltic Sea 3D Wrecksite Ontology project demonstrates a strong commitment to open science methodology, integrating a large number of digital twins into educational and scientific frameworks," the Jury emphasised.

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Winners of the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards 2025¹

Category Conservation & Adaptive Reuse

[Tower Roof of the Church of St. Mauritius, Spitz an der Donau, AUSTRIA](#)

[Antwerp City Hall, BELGIUM](#)

[Hôtel Solvay, Brussels, BELGIUM](#)

[Nicosia Old Municipal Market, CYPRUS](#)

[Kambones 1615 Historic House, Naxos, GREECE](#)

[EC1 Łódź - City of Culture Complex, POLAND](#)

[Peniche Fortress - National Museum of Resistance and Freedom, PORTUGAL](#)

[Puerta de Alcalá, Madrid, SPAIN](#)

Category Research

[The Heritage Trees Project, BELGIUM](#)

[Odeuropa, NETHERLANDS / FRANCE / GERMANY / ITALY / SLOVENIA / UNITED KINGDOM](#)

[Glacier Archaeology Programme - Secrets of the Ice, NORWAY](#)

[IS-LE: Islamic Legacy, pan-European project coordinated in SPAIN](#)

Category Education, Training & Skills

[European Heritage Volunteers' Programme, GERMANY](#)

["Saber Fazer" Programme, PORTUGAL](#)

[ASTRA Center for Activities and Regional Resources, Sibiu, ROMANIA](#)

[Pro Monumenta - Preventive Maintenance of Monuments, SLOVAKIA](#)

Category Citizens' Engagement & Awareness-raising

[The Art of Protecting Bedechka, Stara Zagora, BULGARIA](#)

[Baltic Sea 3D Wrecksite Ontology, FINLAND](#)

[Notre-Dame de Paris Restoration Outreach, FRANCE](#)

[Donation Campaign "The Culture of Ukraine has no Means of Defence", LITHUANIA / UKRAINE](#)

[Małopolska Culture Heritage Days, POLAND](#)

[Almalaguês - Weaving the Future from the Tapestry of Time, Coimbra, PORTUGAL](#)

[Hedgehog's Home - Inventing a Better World, SERBIA](#)

[Casa Batlló: Integrating Neurodiversity in World Heritage, Barcelona, SPAIN](#)

[All Together Festival, Kyiv, UKRAINE](#)

Category Heritage Champions

[Prof. em. Peter Latz, GERMANY](#)

[Inge Bisgaard, GREENLAND / DENMARK](#)

Winners of the Europa Nostra Awards 2025

Three of this year's winners come from countries that are not associated with the [Creative Europe](#) Programme of the European Union. These winners receive the Europa Nostra Awards, which reflect the organisation's commitment to recognising heritage excellence in all countries of the Council of Europe.

[The Camellia House, Wentworth Woodhouse, UNITED KINGDOM](#) (Category Conservation & Adaptive Reuse)

[School of Arts and Crafts of the Fabric of Saint Peter in the Vatican, HOLY SEE](#) (Category Education, Training & Skills)

[Varvara Buzilă, MOLDOVA](#) (Category Heritage Champions)

¹ The winners are listed alphabetically by country

Showcasing heritage-related excellence in Europe since 2002

The [European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards](#) were launched by the European Commission in 2002 and have been run by Europa Nostra ever since. For 23 years, the Awards have been a key tool to recognise and promote the multiple values of heritage for Europe's culture, society, economy, and environment.

The Awards have highlighted and disseminated heritage excellence and best practices in Europe, encouraged the cross-border exchange of knowledge and connected heritage stakeholders in wider networks. The Awards have brought major benefits to the winners, such as greater (inter)national exposure, additional funding and increased visitor numbers. In addition, the Awards have championed a greater care for our shared heritage among Europe's citizens. For additional facts and figures about the Awards, please visit the [Awards website](#).

The Call for Entries for the 2026 edition of the Awards is open. Visit www.europeanheritageawards.eu for more information and submit your application online by 9 September 2025.

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TO FIND OUT MORE

[Press release in various languages](#)

About each Award winner:

[Information and Jury's comments](#)

[Videos](#) (in high resolution)

[Photos & e-banners](#) (in high resolution)

[Creative Europe website](#)

Background

Europa Nostra

[Europa Nostra](#) is the European voice of civil society committed to safeguarding and promoting cultural and natural heritage. It is a pan-European federation of heritage NGOs, supported by a wide network of public bodies, private companies and individuals, covering over 40 countries. It is the largest and the most representative heritage network in Europe, maintaining close relations with the European Union, the Council of Europe, UNESCO and other international bodies. Founded in 1963, Europa Nostra celebrated its 60th anniversary in 2023.

Europa Nostra campaigns to save Europe's endangered monuments, sites and landscapes, in particular through the [7 Most Endangered Programme](#). It celebrates and disseminates excellence through the [European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards](#). Europa Nostra actively contributes to the definition and implementation of European strategies and policies related to heritage, through a participatory dialogue with European Institutions and the coordination of the [European Heritage Alliance](#).

Europa Nostra has led the European consortium selected by the European Commission to run the [European Heritage Hub](#) pilot project (2023-2025). It is also a partner of the [New European Bauhaus](#) initiative developed by the European Commission, and a leading European member and supporter of the [Climate Heritage Network](#).

Creative Europe

[Creative Europe](#) is the European Union's flagship programme to support all cultural and creative sectors, including cultural heritage, enabling them to increase their contribution to Europe's society, economy and living environment. With a budget of €2.4 billion for 2021-2027, it supports organisations in the fields of heritage, performing arts, fine arts, interdisciplinary arts, publishing, film, TV, music and video games as well as tens of thousands of artists, cultural and audiovisual professionals.