European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards (2025)
1280-Citizens' Engagement & Awareness-raising 4. Citizens' Engagement & Awareness-raising

lMWEMXbG

Notre-Dame de Paris : an exceptional lever for promoting heritage know-how and trades involved in the restoration project.

Entry details

General information

Main country of application	France

In case there are other official partners involved in the project, please list the country(ies) they come from

> Ministère de la Culture (France), CNRS (France), Institut pour les savoir-faire français (France)

Brief description of the project

> In response to the strong emotion generated by the 2019 fire and due to recruitment difficulties in heritage trades, the project led by the public institution in charge of the restoration of Notre-Dame de Paris took the form of an information and promotion policy about the work site and the professions involved, through communication, programming and cultural mediation actions, as well as initiatives in favor of training and apprenticeship in these professions.

Start date of the project	2020-01-01
Completion date of the project/initiative	2024-31-12
Website(s) of the project/nominee	https://rebatirnotredamedeparis.fr/
Facebook page of the project, if any	https://www.facebook.com/rebatirnotredamedeparis
Twitter page of the project, if any	https://x.com/rebatirndp?lang=en

Instagram page of the project, if any	https://www.instagram.com/rebatirnotredamedeparis/?hl=en
Does the site or heritage in question have national/regional/local cultural heritage designation or protection status in its country?	Yes

If yes, please specify:

> the cathedral is classified as historical building

Is the site or heritage in question included on the UNESCO World Heritage List, either as a single World Heritage Site or as part of one larger site?	Yes

If yes, please specify:

> The cathédral is a part of the propertie "Banks of the Seine" inscribed on the UNESCO list in 1991

Contact details

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Entrant's position	Chairman
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Website of the entrant	https://rebatirnotredamedeparis.fr/
Organisation of the owner	Public institution Rebâtir Notre-Dame de Paris
Name of the project leader	Jonathan Truillet
Project leader's position	Deputy to the director général, in charge of science and heritage

Organisation of the project leader	Public institution Rebâtir Notre-Dame de Paris
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Other relevant participants

> Marie Yannowitz-Durand, Director of communication, patronage and cultural programming, Public institution Rebâtir Notre-Dame de Paris

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Concise summary

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> From the start of the restoration of Notre-Dame de Paris, an obvious fact and a paradox appeared:
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> - an obvious fact: this exceptional project must serve as a showcase for exceptional know-how and skills in the often little-known art and heritage professions, and it must thus make it possible to encourage vocations;
> - a paradox: how can we promote a construction site and the know-how linked to it on a site that is completely inaccessible to the public?
>
> To achieve this, the public institution Rebâtir Notre-Dame de Paris has implemented an ambitious strategy of information and promotion of the site and the professions involved there through communication actions, cultural mediation, as well as actions in favor of training and apprenticeship, in France and internationally. These actions have been targeted and adapted in order to reach a broad and differentiated audience: donors, adults, young people, families, schools, apprentices, people removed from culture.

Objectives and work undertaken

Aims and objectives of the project/initiative

> In addition to leading the cathedral restoration project, the French government wanted to entrust the public institution Rebatir Notre-Dame de Paris with a mission to promote the construction site and the trades that were mobilized there with the wish to value of heritage professions which have difficulty generating vocations among young people.
>
> The main objective was to provide a very good understanding of the complexity of such an important project, without being able to access the area where the restoration work was being carried out, while promoting the knowledge and traditional and innovative know-how of the trades involved in restoring the cathedral and encouraging vocations.

Any historical and technical research undertaken for the project/initiative

> This work of valorization was based on the scientific and technical knowledge accumulated by the project management of the restoration site, the various design offices mobilized and the scientific support coordinated by the Ministry of Culture and the CNRS.
> These different actors gathered new knowledge that made it possible to implement restoration choices calling on know-how that it was possible to valorize within the framework of the mediation actions carried out by the public institution. Thus, the preliminary studies on the manual cutting of timber frame made it possible to demonstrate its feasibility and then to systematize its use on part of the restoration site and then to valorize this know-how among young people or future professionals of the frame.

Activities carried out and stages of implementation of the project/initiative

> The project was divided into several areas of work:
> 1° The definition and implementation of a communication plan for all audiences
> 2° The design and implementation of a cultural program
> 3° An action plan for training and apprenticeship
>
> These different areas were deployed gradually.2020 and 2021 allowed the first tools to be tested. An important milestone was reached with the opening of the construction site house in March 2023 and all areas of work took off in full swing from mid-2023 to the end of 2024 to meet the growing public demand as the reopening of the cathedral approached.

Challenges or problems encountered and solutions found to overcome them

> The main problems encountered were linked on the one hand to the inaccessibility of the construction site and on the other hand to the complexity of certain subjects related to the management of the construction site and the professional expertise mobilized.
> To respond to this, the public institutionRebâtir Notre-Dame de Paris made a huge effort to develop digital and audiovisual communication tools overcoming the impossibility of accessing to the construction site, as well as constant work to popularize and explain the construction site with the development of a speech adapted to each kind of public

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Results and impact

Summary of the main results achieved and knowledge that has been gained. List the ways that the project/initiative contributes to the preservation and/or enhancement of the historical, cultural, environmental, educational and/or social values of the heritage in question. Mention the project's impact on conservation policy and practice, if any.

> As Notre-Dame Cathedral is now reopened to the public, it is very clear that the cultural and educational dimension of this project has lived up to expectations. In November 2021, the public institution Rebâtir Notre-Dame de Paris presented its scientific and cultural project to its board. This framework document identified 28 priority actions, 13 of which are directly linked to the challenges of promoting the work site and the know-how associated with it. In most of these areas, the results are excellent and often go beyond the objectives formulated. Between 2020 and 2024, the dissemination of historical, technical and scientific knowledge about Notre-Dame de Paris has progressed significantly among a wide audience made up of both specialists and neophytes. The general public, and in particular young people, including those far removed from culture, has been greatly made aware of the professions of heritage restoration, thus boosting a sector of activity that can sometimes face recruitment difficulties.

Aspects of the project that can be considered innovative within its area or field.

> Two aspects of the project carried out since 2020 are innovative and unprecedented in the field of monumental heritage restoration:
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> - On the one hand, the unprecedented resources devoted to the effort to promote the restoration project and the know-how associated with it, which made it possible to make a very wide audience understand the challenges of safeguarding a historic monument and to highlight little-known professions and skills.
> - On the other hand, this promotion effort was based on an equally unprecedented work of developing scientific and technical knowledge gathered by architects, design offices and researchers. For instance, an intense scanning work og the monument thus made it possible to create a digital environment developed by the CNRS (AIOLI) which makes it possible to interconnect all the information gathered on the cathedral over the past 5 years.

Measures to ensure the sustainability/future viability of the project (in terms of future plans and funding).

> Since the reopening of the cathedral in December 2024, the dynamic has been different, but this promotion effort will continue in the coming years, in connection with a new step in the restoration work on the monument. We can highlight the joint initiative of the public institution and the public institution of La Villette for the creation of a Micro Folie dedicated to Notre-Dame de Paris which will be offered throughout France from 2025.

Dissemination of the project's results and knowledge gained and any outreach or educational activities.

> In order to monitoring the effectiveness of the measures implemented, the public establishment regularly produced activity reports presented to its control bodies. The results are very satisfactory, with growing demand from the public in recent years to which the public establishment has sought to respond with innovative actions.
> The numerical results are detailed in the questions below.

Participation in the initiative (number of participants/audience/users per year and/or, in the case of websites and digital platforms, information regarding visitor numbers and online interaction).

> Since 2020, the public establishment has offered a visit to places dedicated to promoting the construction site and related know-how.
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> The attendance figures are as follows :
>
> 2020 : 10 000 visitors
> 2021 : 20000 visitors
> 2022 : 22 200 visitors
> 2023 : 190 146 visitors
> 2024 : 273 546 visitors
>
> Some results are really incredible. For example in 2024, we welcomed more than 40 000 visitors during the European Heritage Days.
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> An educational and cultural offer was also designed in the form of a paper publication, with a total of 244,000 copies of our various media distributed since 2020.
> Finally, these tools were supplemented by the distribution of content on our various digital channels (Facebook, Instagram, Youtube, Linkedin) with a total to date of 284 220 subscribers at the end of 2024 and more than 60 million views of our differents publications, all networks combined.

Involvement of youth, community, non-traditional audiences and/or people with disabilities.

> A specific offer has been designed for young audiences, thanks to workshops and dedicated publications.
> This is how 11 651 children were able to take part in our guided tours adapted to young audiences. Around a third of our distributed paper publications have been specifically designed to meet the needs of young audiences.
> In addition, the establishment designed and made available to schools an educational kit distributed in 1 800 copies and which reached more than 240,000 young people, including in environments far from culture.

Contribution to intercultural dialogue and to the protection of cultural diversity.

> The demand for a better understanding of Notre-Dame de Paris and its restoration project has been worldwide. This is why the public establishment has developed an international dimension in its development strategy.
> Among the most notable initiatives, we can highlight the "Notre-Dame de Paris: towards the reopening" season, developed by the public establishment, which brings together around fifteen cultural programs in France and abroad to promote the monument and the construction site.
> For instance, it is within this framework that the immersive digital exhibition carried by the company Histovery fits in partnership with the public establishment. Since 2022, "Notre-Dame de Paris : the augmented exhibition" has been hosted in 19 cities in 15 different countries. It reached 1 million visitors, particularly in Asia and the United States where it was a great success.

Transferability of the initiative to other contexts and its scalability potential.

> All cultural and educational projects developed by the public establishment are by nature provisional. Their success shows that it would be legitimate to perpetuate them. This is the meaning of the initiative launched in 2023 by the French Minister of Culture who requested the completion of a mission to prefigure a museum dedicated to Notre-Dame de Paris which could be installed in Paris in the coming years.

Any related work that still needs to be completed, if applicable.

> To make the Notre-Dame de Paris restoration project a real place for transmitting know-how, the public establishment has decided to include in the contracts signed with companies a clause for the professionalization and valorization of trades, encouraging the apprenticeship. By mid-2024, there were already 49,000 hours of learning declared by construction site companies, including 30,000 carried out as part of integration contracts for people far from employment

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European and international dimension

European significance of the project/initiative/nominee.

> The development work carried out since 2020 during the restoration project of Notre-Dame de Paris is part of the European dynamic observed around the continent's great cathedrals.
> The major cathedral projects in Europe have always been connected to each other, in terms of the exchange of know-how and personnel. This dynamic was revitalized by the recognition in 2020 by UNESCO of the intangible heritage value of 18 cathedral workshops spread across 5 European countries.
> These collaborative workshops also carry out educational missions to a wide audience. It would be interesting and useful to be able to compare the educational project carried out at Notre-Dame de Paris with their own initiatives in order to learn lessons and collectively improve our practices.

Costs of the project/initiative

Costs of the project (in euro), financial and management arrangements, funding partners and/or the type of funding.

> Actions to promote the Notre-Dame de Paris restoration project and its know-how have benefited on the one hand from operating budgets enabling projects to be set up and on the other hand from financial means enabling the recruitment of a team which has counted up to 5 people at the end of 2024.
> The dedicated budget gradually increased over the period, varying from 500 000 Euros to 3 200,000 Eur/year, all expenses combined. These resources were ensured on the one hand by national subscription and on the other hand thanks to the decisive support of 4.8 million Eur granted in 2021 by the Institute for French know-how.

Funding provided by the European Union or the EEA/Norway Grants (including programme, year and amount of the Grant), if any.

> RAS

Additional information

How would winning the European Heritage Award / Europa Nostra Award benefit you, your project and/or your organisation?

> The European Heritage award coul be an interesting way to improve of relationships with others heritage site in Europe ans to share with our colleages best practices and goods ideas.

In case this submission is the winner of the Grand Prix, what will the monetary award be used for?

> The grant could be use to develop new educational programs linked with the next step of the restoration project which will aim to restore external walls of the cathédrale from 2025 to 2028.

In case this submission is the winner of the Grand Prix, who will be the recipient of the monetary award?

> Philippe Jost, chairman of the Public institution Rebâtir Notre-Dame de Paris

How did you find out about the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards?	Europa Nostra website
Is this the first time that this entry has been submitted to the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards?	Yes
On a scale of 1-10, how satisfied are you with this online submission form?	✓ 10
By submitting your data, photographs and other material to the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards you agree to the processing and sharing of your data in accordance with Europa Nostra's Privacy Policy. Please check the box to indicate you agree with the Privacy Policy.	✓

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