The vulnerability of cultural heritage (Rome, 13-15 Jan 27)

Rome, Italy, Jan 13–15, 2027
Deadline: Sep 30, 2026

Raffaella Morselli

International Conference:
The vulnerability of cultural heritage. Strategies and technologies to address a structural condition
of the contemporary era.

Organized by the Center of Excellence of the Technological District for Cultural Heritage and Activities of Lazio, Changes Foundation, Sapienza University of Rome/Saras Department, National Research Council/Institute of Cultural Heritage Sciences, National Institute of Nuclear Physics, National Institute of Geology and Volcanology, Ministry of Culture/DGDC and DIVA, Capitoline Superintendency of Rome, University of Roma Tre, LazioInnova, MazziniLab, in collaboration with European and national scientific partners.

Call for abstracts:
Cultural Heritage Vulnerability: Social Innovation and Technological Resilience
Cultural heritage vulnerability is a multidimensional condition, shaping both the relationship between heritage and society and the material conditions of its preservation and transmission. International frameworks, the Council of Europe's Faro Convention, UNESCO conventions, and recent European policy agendas, increasingly treat cultural participation, cultural citizenship, and community engagement as pillars of sustainable heritage governance. Building resilience therefore demands integrated approaches that address social and cultural dynamics alongside environmental, technological, and physical risks. Vulnerability is not merely a matter of isolated emergencies or exceptional events, but a structural condition affecting tangible and intangible heritage and the territories and communities in which it is embedded. Responses, and the technologies, infrastructures, and governance models that enact them, must therefore be framed within a long-term perspective combining preservation, adaptation, innovation, and social inclusion.
In line with these international frameworks and policy priorities, the conference explores cultural heritage vulnerability through two complementary strategic perspectives.

Focus A – Social Innovation and Advanced Technologies for Human Resilience in Cultural Heritage

This focus examines how cultural heritage can remain meaningful, accessible, and resilient through participatory governance, cultural rights, community engagement, sustainable development, and digital innovation. It addresses processes of degradation, abandonment, disconnection,

and loss of cultural significance affecting both tangible and intangible heritage, with particular attention to the role of communities in the care, revitalisation, and regeneration of heritage and territories. Attention is devoted to situations in which cultural heritage has been displaced from, or lost by, its communities as a consequence of looting, illicit trafficking, armed conflict, environmental disasters, and other catastrophic events. How can heritage be restored, reconnected, or reconstituted within the social and cultural contexts to which it belongs?

In the digital age, these challenges require the integration of innovative models of participatory stewardship, reuse, and revitalisation with sustainable technological solutions that enable communities, institutions, organisations, and visitors to engage with heritage through informed and evidence-based approaches. Impact assessment, collaborative governance, and digital infrastructures are central components of this process.
The topic is inherently interdisciplinary and draws inspiration from major scholars who have analysed the processes of degradation and marginalisation affecting both post-metropolitan areas and inner territories, while identifying strategies capable of reactivating local communities and strengthening territorial resilience.

Sessions:
 A1 – Participatory Governance and Cultural Rights
 A2 – Urban Planning, Cultural Landscapes, and Global Heritage Policies
 A3 – Digital Technologies as Infrastructures for Heritage Resilience
 A4 – Sustainable Cultural Tourism
 A5 – Arts, Media, and Heritage for Territorial Revitalisation

Focus B – Infrastructures and Technologies Addressing Cultural Heritage Vulnerability

This focus investigates the factors that threaten the integrity, preservation, and transmission of cultural heritage, including climate change, natural hazards such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions and floods, material deterioration, and the vulnerabilities associated with digital preservation.
The vulnerability of cultural heritage has become particularly evident in the context of armed conflicts. Yet warfare represents only one of the most visible manifestations of a broader and persistent process of heritage destruction and erosion, affecting cultural assets, historical environments, and entire physical and anthropic landscapes. Heritage vulnerability must therefore be addressed within a wider framework that encompasses environmental, social, technological, and geopolitical pressures.
The focus explores advanced technologies, monitoring systems, mitigation strategies, conservation methodologies, and recovery frameworks aimed at protecting cultural heritage and ensuring its continuity across generations. Attention is given to interdisciplinary approaches that combine scientific research, technological innovation, preventive conservation, risk management, and post-disaster recovery.

Sessions:
 B1 – Climate Change and Mitigation Strategies for Cultural Heritage Preservation
 B2 – Advanced Technologies for Seismic Resilience in Cultural Heritage
 B3 – Physical and Structural Vulnerability of Cultural Heritage
 B4 – Geopolitics, Conflict, Heritage Loss, and Reconstitution

 B5 – Digital Technologies and Risk Factors

The following sections of the Call for Abstracts provide detailed descriptions of each session and outline the specific themes, methodological approaches, and research perspectives for which contributions are invited.

Submitting and Selecting Proposals:
Each abstract must consist of 900–1,200 words in English, with a brief bibliography included, accompanied by 5 keywords, author name(s), institutional affiliation(s), email contact, a short biographical note, and the preferred reference section (a1-a2-a3-a4-a5-b1-b2-b3-b4-b5).
Accepted contributions will be presented as 20-minute papers, as well as poster proposals.
Abstracts should be submitted to the call for abstracts on the relevant Google Form at link: https://www.dtclazio.it/eventi/vch-2027/

The deadline for submission is September 30, 2026.
The general conference program is available at: https://www.dtclazio.it/eventi/vch-2027/
For any information or clarification regarding the call for abstracts, please write to conferenceVCH@dtclazio.it.
Contributions will undergo peer review and be assessed for relevance to the chosen section, originality, methodological clarity, engagement with standards and best practices, awareness of ethical and legal implications, and potential to generate transferable insights for research, policy, and professional practice.
Accepted contributions will be published in the conference's open access book of abstracts.

Reference:

CFP: The vulnerability of cultural heritage (Rome, 13-15 Jan 27). In: ArtHist.net, Sep 12, 2026 (accessed Nov 24, 2026), <https://arthist.net/archive/54202>.