PRESS RELEASE

iHERITAGE: ICT Mediterranean platform for UNESCO cultural heritage

UNESCO SITES AS NEVER SEEN BEFORE.

THE COURSES FOR THE CREATION OF AUGMENTED AND IMMERSIVE CONTENTS AND INNOVATIVE STARTUPS IN THE CULTURAL FIELD GET UNDERWAY

SIGN UP FOR FREE ONLINE TRAINING COURSES

From Friday May 28th, researchers, start uppers, entrepreneurs, young creatives will be able to register for free to join the Living Lab (https://forms.gle/wHXZbUNy6jMf272R6), enriched with online training courses so participants can create innovative products in virtual, augmented and mixed reality (such as, the creation of virtual museums, holograms, 3D reconstructions, audio-visual guides), applied to the UNESCO sites of Sicily.

The 40-hour courses (to be held on the Microsoft Teams platform), are organised in the framework of *iHERITAGE: ICT Mediterranean platform for UNESCO cultural heritage*. The project (created by Lucio Tambuzzo, director of the Network of Castles and Medieval Towns, and led by the Department of Tourism of the Sicilian Region) aims at enhancing the UNESCO heritage of Sicily together with the one of the other five Mediterranean countries (Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Portugal and Spain) participating in the project, developing their potential, thanks to the support of multimedia contents.

At the end of each module, a certificate of attendance will be delivered following a verification test.

Training courses are delivered through 4 training modules of 40 hours each (20 hours in synchronous mode: live video sessions on Microsoft Teams, and 20 hours in asynchronous mode: insights / slides / videos that will be available anytime):

1. **ARCHAEOLOGY, TOURISM AND IMMERSIVE MEDIA**, Dr. Gualtiero Carraro

Introduction: history, archaeology and virtual reality
Presentation of iHeritage immersive product formats, with examples
Description of the activities planned for iHeritage, roles and technologies, for online products
Description of the activities planned for iHeritage, roles and technologies, for off-line products (set-ups, installations)
Immersive tourism
Immersive marketing
Content curation and social media
Cognitive aspects of virtual reality

2. **TECHNOLOGIES AND INNOVATION FOR VIRTUAL ARCHEOLOGY**, Dr. Gualtiero Carraro

Presentation of iHeritage platform (backend)
Introduction to iHeritage content preparation – immersive settings
Introduction to iHeritage content preparation – archaeological reconstructions
Introduction to iHeritage content preparation – augmented reality
Introduction to iHeritage content preparation – 360° videos and photos
Presentation of iHeritage platform (frontend)
iHeritage immersive museums and exhibitions

3. **TOURISM AND CULTURAL HERITAGE**, Dr. Manuela Trovato

Intangible cultural heritage: registers and examples
The UNESCO tangible and intangible heritage in Sicily: enhancement strategies and socio-economic impacts
Cataloguing and use of multimedia data, Big data and Open data for the knowledge and enhancement of cultural heritage
Innovative elements for the use and enhancement of cultural heritage and the improvement of the tourist experience
Accessible and sustainable tourism: virtual experiences and digital solutions
The protection of the ecosystem and the natural heritage
Strategies and actions for territorial, cultural and tourism marketing
Internationalization and development processes for tourism and access to markets
Final workshop: the design of tourist and cultural products

4. **BUSINESS MODEL, MARKETING AND FUNDRAISING STRATEGIES**, Dr. Emanuele Messina

Introduction to start-ups and creative, innovative and digital companies: requirements, characteristics, advantages and impacts for the territory
Entrepreneurship and business model design
Innovative marketing strategies
Workshop: from the idea to the business project: the business model canvas and the definition of business models
Workshop: elements for defining the communication and marketing plan
Business management elements: performance, impacts and sustainability
Workshop: elements for the definition of the business plan
Fundraising: public funding sources, crowdfunding and private financial supports
Workshop: elements for defining the presentation pitch for start-ups

"We are currently facing a new horizon – **Lucio Tambuzzo (creator of the project) said,** *- that will foster the realization of new technologies using "spatial computing" to enable unprecedented experiences of cultural heritage and reality as a whole. Thanks to artificial intelligence, Internet of things, augmented and virtual reality, we will soon have the opportunity to directly interact with objects, monuments and sites, as well as with 3D reconstructions, AR tourist guides and many other immersive experiences. Analysing the applications and the potential of these tools is essential to build the new digital cultural enterprises of the near future, a solid asset for future European Programmes (2021-2027) and related funds, as well as the PNRR (Piano Nazionale di Ripresa e Resilienza – a strategic planning of investments and reforms aimed at a sustainable and enduring economic growth at national level). iHERITAGE courses will give the opportunity to focus on all these issues and train participants to create innovative start-ups, which will also benefit from the funding addressed by the project to the most innovative ideas"*.

iHERITAGE ICT Mediterranean platform for UNESCO cultural heritage is a strategic project 90% co-financed by the ENI CBC Mediterranean Sea Basin Programme of the European Union . The total budget of the project is € 3.874.287,06. The project will last 30 months (started in September 15th, 2020). *iHERITAGE* involves 10 partners from 6 Mediterranean countries: Egypt, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Portugal and Spain.

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