

20 January 2025

Ref.: CL/4494

Subject: Call for nominations – 2025 UNESCO-Greece Melina Mercouri International Prize for the Safeguarding and Management of Cultural Landscapes

Dear Minister,

I am pleased to invite your Government to submit nominations for the 2025 edition of the UNESCO-Greece Melina Mercouri International Prize for the Safeguarding and Management of Cultural Landscapes.

Funded by the Government of Greece, this prize seeks to reward exemplary actions undertaken by individuals, institutions or organizations to safeguard and enhance the world's outstanding cultural landscapes.

The Prize was established in 1995 to pay tribute to Melina Mercouri, a remarkable artist and former Greek Minister of Culture, who was strongly committed to heritage conservation.

The laureate of the 2025 Prize will receive an award of \$30,000. Please find enclosed the statues of the Prize (Annex I), as well as the list of documents to be included in the nominations (Annex II).

Online nominations should be submitted to UNESCO in English or French by **30 April 2025** at the latest (midnight Paris time, UTC+1) using the following links:

<https://whc.unesco.org/en/culturallandscapesprize/> (English)

<https://whc.unesco.org/fr/prixpaysagesculturels/> (French)

Should you require any further information, please contact the Secretariat of the Prize at the UNESCO World Heritage Centre (email: melinamercuriprize@unesco.org).

Yours sincerely,



Audrey Azoulay
Director-General

Enclosures: 2

cc: National Commissions for UNESCO
Permanent Delegations to UNESCO

ANNEX I

STATUTES OF THE UNESCO-GREECE MELINA MERCOURI INTERNATIONAL PRIZE FOR THE SAFEGUARDING AND MANAGEMENT OF CULTURAL LANDSCAPES

Article 1 – Purpose

The purpose of the UNESCO-Greece Melina Mercouri International Prize for the Safeguarding and Management of Cultural Landscapes (“the Prize”) is to reward outstanding examples of action to safeguard and enhance the world’s major cultural landscapes. It bears the name of Melina Mercouri, a precursor of integrated conservation and sustainable development, former Minister of Culture of Greece. The objective of the Prize is in conformity with UNESCO’s policies and is related to the Programme of the Organization in the field of Culture, UNESCO’s Global Strategy for a representative, balanced and credible World Heritage List, and the priorities set out in the C/5 on the enhancement of management of World Heritage properties. The prize is in line with the categories for cultural landscapes as approved by the World Heritage Committee at its sixteenth session, held in Santa Fe, United States of America, in December 1992. This decision recognized the protection of cultural landscapes in the framework of the World Heritage Convention (1972). The prize enhances the linkages between culture and development, through capacity-building and sharing of knowledge.

Article 2 – Designation, Amount and Periodicity of the Prize

- 2.1 The Prize shall be entitled “UNESCO-Greece Melina Mercouri International Prize for the Safeguarding and Management of Cultural Landscapes”.
- 2.2 The Prize shall be funded by the Greek Government and shall consist of a recurrent payment of US \$75,000 every two years. The cash value of the Prize shall be US \$30,000, as determined by the Director-General in consultation with the donor on the basis of the contribution received, the interest on the sum deposited in the special account, in accordance with the Financial Regulations of UNESCO, and the charges to be borne by the account for the cost of administering the Prize. The contribution from the donor shall be received every first year by 15 September, in order to ensure that funds are available well in time before incurring expenditure for the administration of the Prize and for the Prize itself.
- 2.3 All funds received and the interest accrued thereon shall be kept in a special interest bearing account for the Prize.
- 2.4 The full staff support and operating/management costs of the Prize, including all costs related to the award ceremony, the meeting of the international jury, and public information activities, estimated at US \$45,000 shall be fully covered by the Permanent Delegation of Greece to UNESCO on behalf of the Greek Government. To this end, the Director-General will determine a mandatory management cost amount to be applied and charged against the funds in the special account, which is to be established under the financial regulations for the Prize.
- 2.5 The Prize shall be awarded every two years, on an initial basis for three biennia, to only one laureate. No honourable mentions shall be awarded.

Article 3 – Conditions/Qualifications of candidates

- 3.1 Candidates shall have made a significant contribution to the safeguarding, management and enhancement of the world’s major cultural landscapes. It is not necessary for a cultural landscape to be inscribed on the World Heritage List to be eligible for the Prize. The Prize may be conferred upon individuals, institutions, other entities or nongovernmental organizations.
- 3.2 Candidatures referring to sites scheduled for examination by the World Heritage Committee

for inscription on the World Heritage List may not be the subject of nominations for the Prize in the same year.

Article 4 – Designation/Selection of the prize-winner

The prize-winner shall be selected by the Director-General of UNESCO on the basis of the assessments and recommendations made to him/her by a jury.

Article 5 – Jury

- 5.1 The Jury shall consist of a number of five independent members, being personalities with a recognized reputation in the field covered while also taking into consideration the need for equitable geographical distribution, gender equality and the principle of non-payment of honoraria. They shall be appointed by the Director-General for a period of two years, for a maximum term of three consecutive two-year periods. Representatives and alternatives of Members of the Executive Board cannot be appointed as jury members. Jury members involved in a real or potential conflict of interest shall recuse themselves from further deliberations or be asked by the Director-General to do so. The Director-General may replace members of the jury for reason.
- 5.2 The Jury shall elect its own chair and deputy chair. Members shall receive no remuneration for their work, but will receive allowances for travel and accommodation, where required. A quorum of three jury members present will be required for jury deliberations to proceed. The working languages for deliberations by the Jury shall be English and French.
- 5.3 The Jury shall conduct its business and deliberations in conformity with these Statutes and shall be assisted in the performance of its task by a member of the UNESCO Secretariat designated by the Director-General. Decisions shall be taken by consensus to the extent possible and otherwise by secret ballot until a simple majority is obtained. A member shall not take part in a vote concerning a nomination from his or her country.
- 5.4 The Jury shall meet preferably in spring every second year.
- 5.5 The Jury shall send an assessment on nominations and accompanying recommendations to the Director-General of UNESCO no later than July every second year.

Article 6 – Nomination of candidates

- 6.1 When UNESCO has received the funding of the Prize, as indicated in Article 2 above, the Director-General of UNESCO shall officially invite the submission of nominations to the Secretariat of the Prize, by the last day of April of the year in which the Prize is awarded, from the governments of Member States, in consultation with their National Commissions, from non-governmental organizations maintaining official partnerships with the Organization and active in relevant fields covered by a prize, as well as from international, regional and national professional, academic and non-governmental organizations active in the field of cultural landscapes.
- 6.2 Nominations shall be submitted to the Director-General by the governments of Member States, in consultation with their National Commissions, and by nongovernmental organizations maintaining official partnerships with UNESCO and active in relevant fields covered by a prize, as well as by international, regional and national professional, academic and non-governmental organizations active in the field of cultural landscapes. A self-nomination cannot be considered.
- 6.3 Each nomination shall be accompanied by a written recommendation, which shall include, in English or French, *inter alia*:

- (a) a description of the candidate's background and achievements;
- (b) a summary of the work or the results of the work, including a clear description of the candidate's contributions of major importance in the field of cultural landscapes, as well as publications and other supporting documents of major importance, submitted for consideration;
- (c) a definition of the candidate's contribution to the Prize's objectives;
- (d) a high-resolution photo of the candidate exemplifying their actions to safeguard and enhance cultural landscapes.

Article 7 – Procedure for the awarding of the Prize

- 7.1 The Prize shall be awarded by the Director-General at an official ceremony held for that purpose in UNESCO Headquarters preferably on the occasion of the General Conference of UNESCO. UNESCO shall present to the prize-winner a check for the amount of the Prize as well as a diploma. UNESCO shall officially announce the name of the prize-winner.
- 7.2 If a work being rewarded has been produced by two or three persons, the Prize shall be awarded to them jointly. In no case may the Prize be awarded to more than one laureate.
- 7.3 The prize-winner, if possible, shall give a presentation on a subject relevant to the work for which the Prize has been awarded. Such a lecture shall be organized during or in connection with the Prize ceremony.
- 7.4 The work produced by a person since deceased shall not be considered for a prize. If, however, a prize-winner dies before he/she has received the prize, then the prize may be presented posthumously.
- 7.5 Should a prize-winner decline the Prize, the jury shall submit a new proposal to the Director-General.

Article 8 – Sunset clause – mandatory renewal of the Prize

- 8.1 After a period of six years, an external evaluation of all aspects of the Prize, to be fully covered by the donor, shall be undertaken to decide about the continuation or termination of the Prize. The Director-General will inform the Executive Board of UNESCO about the results of this review.
- 8.2 In case of termination of the Prize, the use of any unspent balance of funds shall be determined in consultation with the donor, in accordance with the Financial Regulations of the Special Account for the Prize.

Article 9 – Appeals

No appeals shall be allowed against the decision of UNESCO with regard to the awarding of the Prize. Proposals received for the awarding of a Prize may not be divulged.

Article 10 – Amendments to the Statutes of the Prize

Any amendment to the present Statutes shall be submitted to the Executive Board for approval.

Appendix

According to The Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention, cultural landscapes fall into three main categories, namely:

- (i) The most easily identifiable is the clearly defined landscape designed and created intentionally by people. This embraces garden and parkland landscapes constructed for aesthetic reasons, which are often (but not always) associated with religious or other monumental buildings and ensembles.
- (ii) The second category is the organically evolved landscape. This results from an initial social, economic, administrative, and/or religious imperative and has developed its present form by association with and in response to its natural environment. Such landscapes reflect that process of evolution in their form and component features. They fall into two sub-types:
 - a relic (or fossil) landscape is one in which an evolutionary process came to an end at some time in the past, either abruptly or over a period. Its significant distinguishing features are, however, still visible in material form;
 - a continuing landscape is one which retains an active social role in contemporary society closely associated with the traditional way of life, and in which the evolutionary process is still in progress. At the same time, it exhibits significant material evidence of its evolution over time.
- (iii) The final category is the associative cultural landscape. The inscription of such landscapes on the World Heritage List is justifiable by virtue of the powerful religious, artistic or cultural associations of the natural element rather than material cultural evidence, which may be insignificant or even absent.

ANNEX II

UNESCO-Greece Melina Mercouri International Prize for the Safeguarding and Management of Cultural Landscapes



Items and documents to be included in the nominations

The nomination process takes place online through the UNESCO website:

<https://whc.unesco.org/en/culturallandscapesprize/> (English)

<https://whc.unesco.org/fr/prixpaysagesculturels/> (French)

The online nominations should be received by UNESCO in **English or French** by **30 April 2025** at the latest (midnight Paris time, UTC+1).

I. Information about the nominator¹

- (1) Name of the nominator
- (2) Name and type of entity (Member State, NGOs in an official partnership with UNESCO, other organizations active in the field of cultural landscapes)
- (3) Contact details (postal address, legal representative, telephone number, and e-mail address)

II. Description of the candidate's background

- (1) Name of the candidate
- (2) Type of entity (individual, public service, NGO, academic institute etc.)²

III. Identification and description of the cultural landscape

- (1) Name of the cultural landscape³
- (2) Location (country, province, region etc.)
- (3) Surface of the property and of any buffer zone (if applicable)
- (4) Number of inhabitants (if applicable)

¹ The nominator should be different from the proposed candidate. Self-nomination is not acceptable, as per Article 6.2 of the Statutes of the Prize.

² The proposed candidate could be a responsible body or a stakeholder contributing to the conservation and management of the cultural landscape.

³ In accordance with Article 3.2 of the Statutes of the Prize, candidatures referring to sites scheduled for examination by the World Heritage Committee at its 47th session for inscription on the World Heritage List in 2025 may not be the subject of nominations for the Prize in the same year.

- (5) Legal status and institutions/organizations in charge of its management and conservation
- (6) Physical characteristics of the landscape (including natural environment and cultural/human elements)
- (7) Value of the property as a cultural landscape and key elements representing the interaction between people and their natural environment
- (8) History of the landscape (including its conservation, utilization and management)
- (9) Description and assessment of its present state of conservation, including aspects related to the authenticity and integrity of the cultural landscape
- (10) Factors affecting the landscape, conservation and management challenges
- (11) Current management measures (legal and/or traditional) and their implementation, including sustainable tourism approach (if applicable)
- (12) Sources and levels of funding for conservation

IV. Justification of the nomination

- (1) The candidate's achievements in safeguarding and managing the cultural landscape, including contribution to the Prize's objectives (Please highlight unique and innovative efforts.)
- (2) The candidate's contribution to the Prize's objectives, as framed by the specific goals set out in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

V. Documentation to be provided

- (1) High-resolution photos (300 DPI) of the candidate and of the cultural landscape with captions (at least 10-15 photos in jpeg format, including photos of the landscape and of the candidate's action). Candidates must ensure to hold the required rights for legally using the visual material submitted. In this regard, please bear in mind that the winner will have to provide a Grant of rights allowing UNESCO to use the submitted material for communication purposes
- (2) Any publication and other supporting document that showcases the candidate's contribution to the safeguarding of the landscape
- (3) Maps and/or plans indicating:
 - The geographical location of the landscape (scale between 1:500,000 and 1:2,000,000)
 - Topographical map(s) with clear indication of the boundary and, if applicable, of the buffer zone(s) (scale 1:5,000 to 1:25,000; for small properties, scale 1:500 up to 1:1,000)
 - A GIS layer for the landscape and a separate layer for its buffer zone, or similar protection areas surrounding the concerned site are strongly encouraged. Please indicate the Coordinate Reference System in the name of the files (files combined in a .zip or .rar file).

- (4) Documentation on existing legal protection (if applicable) in English and/or French
- (5) Conservation and management plans or mechanisms
- (6) Bibliographical references (if applicable) in English and/or French