



European
Route
of Industrial
Heritage



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Cultural route
of the Council of Europe
Itinéraire culturel
du Conseil de l'Europe



ERIH Annual Conference 19 to 21 October 2022, Esch-sur-Alzette, Luxembourg and online:

Industrial Heritage in midst of the next Industrial Revolution – new challenges in storytelling

Cultural heritage is not just about preserving our past – it is about shaping our future

Call for Papers

The first steps are done: Industrial heritage owes its existence to the structural changes in industry in the last third of the 20th century. Abandoned factories were transformed into venues of culture, preserving the memory of the lives and achievements of engineers and entrepreneurs as well as, and especially, of the workers. These sites convey the legacy of industrial heritage that - despite its many crises - enabled large parts of Europe to experience an era of mass prosperity.

Today, industrial societies are facing another transformation that calls its very foundations into question. "Protecting, linking and promoting Europe's industrial heritage in a changing world" is the title for our new Creative Europe programme 2022-24. This "changing world" is the generic term for challenges and new developments such as climate change, digitalisation, pandemic, gender equality, inclusion and new values - the world is in a state of transformation and this naturally also has an impact on industrial heritage.

This transformation can be considered as the next "Industrial Revolution". With climate crisis, it has become obvious that the way we produce and use things has to change fundamentally. This transformation is not only aiming at a new industry. It changes the way we look back at the industrial age. Especially younger people value it much more critically, not only in terms of its ecological consequences, but also of the intertwining of the industrial age with colonialism.

Without an understanding of this history and legacies of industrial heritage, the upcoming transformation of industrial society won't be successful. But when the smoking chimney of the steam engine becomes a portent of the climate crisis and the miner in the coal mine is no longer a working hero but also a symbol of a "fossil" patriarchy, the image of industrial heritage is questioned, as well as the way we communicate with the public.

These are important, justified insights. They force us to play a more active role in this transformation, to rethink our own operations and make them more sustainable. And in order to reach people, we have to tell our stories differently. We need to address also critical issues inextricably linked to industry. **This requires new ways of storytelling at the venues of European industrial heritage.**

With the "European Green Deal" and the "New European Bauhaus" the European Commission has defined framework concepts which are important guard rails for our common European value system.

Invitation to Speakers

We are inviting speakers from a wide range of backgrounds, involved in site and infrastructure management, marketing and tourism as well as programming and education, practitioners as well as academics or volunteers. Presentation topics range from **new strategies of storytelling and visitor programmes** to **collaboration projects with "living" industry** or **best practice examples of how industrial heritage sites can be made fit for the changing world and its new demands**. We encourage speakers from outside the industrial heritage community to share their perspective on industrial heritage and the necessary transformations with us.



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Questions to be addressed:

- How can we tell the story of industrialisation in a less backward-looking and glorifying the past way? What are appropriate, sustainable new narratives (also for the young generation) for industrialisation and its significance for the present and future?
- How can we relate our "old stories" to current challenges such as climate change, migration, gender equality, inclusion, etc.? What are the stories untold up to know (and whose stories?) that we have to tell, i. e. those dealing with colonial aspects or forced labour of our sites?
- How can industrial heritage sites take their responsibility as an actor and part of the European Green Deal?
- How can industrial heritage sites make their operation more sustainable? How can we make site visits of our guests more climate friendly? Can and should we proceed in consuming fossil energies, having in mind that some of our most popular visitors' attractions are fuelled by them, but in using them we also risk losing credibility? Are there adequate substitutes?
- Which stories can be told so that industrial heritage will be seen not as part of the problem but as part of the solution? Which knowledge embodied in industrial heritage sites is valuable for a successful transformation into a post-fossil society? How can it become a more prominent part of our education and mediation programmes?
- Are there already good examples of cooperation with producing industry, research and educational institutions?
- Which partners do we need for that and are they prepared to cooperate?

Selection of speakers

Interested persons should submit a précis of their paper in English (not exceeding 2,000 characters) to the ERIH Secretariat (contact details below) **by 23rd June 2022**. A brief CV and note of relevant experience should be attached. The ERIH Board will consider submissions and those who submitted papers will be informed whether they have been selected by end of July/ early August. Please indicate whether you intend to present online or physically.

Arrangements for speakers

Speakers are required to submit a PowerPoint presentation to the ERIH Secretariat by Thursday 13th October 2022. The presentation must last no more than 20 minutes. The presentation will be delivered during the morning session of the conference on 20th October. The speaker should be available to answer any questions on their paper. It is intended that presentations will be uploaded to the ERIH website following the conference, so copyrights and photo rights should be secured.

Speakers' costs

ERIH will cover the following costs:

- Travel to and from the conference venue (according to EU regulations) and up to two nights' accommodation in selected conference hotels (booking done by ERIH).
 - Conference fee
- Speakers will be able to participate in the entire conference programme, except the ERIH General Assembly which is for ERIH members only.

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