

Activity Report

2025



Cover picture: Kasteel Sterkenburg, Utrecht region, the Netherlands

Lobbying activity

EU Commission and Parliament

EHH strengthened its outreach to institutions through several high-level exchanges with EU institutions. This included multiple contacts with Directorates-General of the European Commission: DG EAC, DG ENVI, and DG MOVE, as well as meetings and exchanges with Members of the European Parliament from key committees: TRAN, CULT, and ECON. On this basis, three concrete follow-up actions are being prepared: the exhibition at the European Parliament, participation in the European Urban Forum, and a request for a dedicated study on the impact of heritage on rural development.



Representations

We ensured representation at key policy platforms, including the Cultural Heritage Expert Group of the DG EAC, the Tourism Manifesto Alliance, Heritage Alliance, and various civil society events.

NextGen

The 7th NextGen Cultural Weekend took place in Mallorca in February, with visits to private country houses like Pastorix and Son Rami, as well as the private city palace Can Vivot. Co-organised by esteemed Asociación de Propietarios de Casas Históricas y Singulares de España.

The 8th NextGen Cultural Weekend in September in Utrecht was a memorable event where 37 participants enjoyed visits to stunning privately owned castles and historic houses. Our big thanks to Vereniging Particuliere Historische Buitenplaatsen for co-organising.

The 9th NextGen Annual Conference, at Château de Cypierre in Villefranche-Sur-Saône last April, centred on the themes sustainability, biodiversity, and heritage.

It was a wonderful weekend organised with La Demeure Historique.

The NextGen Award

During the annual conference, our prize “European Young Heritage Entrepreneur of the Year” was awarded to Thibault Le Marié at Château de la Mazure (France), for his project “BLANC BLANC BLANC”, transforming a once-crumbling 18th-century bleachery into a combined training centre and upcycled textile workshop. Sponsored by Patrice Besse and Rothschild.



Inside NextGen Webinars

2025 saw the successful continuation of the NextGen webinar series. This year, three sessions were organised on the themes of filming locations, foraging, and music in historic houses.

Owner's Circle

3rd Owners' Circle Congress

In September 2025, our Owners' Circle travelled to sunny Barcelona and experienced the cultural heritage of Gaudí's architecture. They took part in the enlightening seminars on the theme "survival of heritage - from policy to action" given by Barcelona specialists on heritage management and internal experts from our own network.

In addition, it was a weekend filled to the brim with experiences, including visits to Cripta Gaudí, Colonia Güell, Círculo Ecuestre, and many more historic buildings and sites. The much-anticipated black tie gala dinner at the esteemed Círculo del Liceo proved an evening for the ages!

Our sincere thanks to our Catalan member association Monumenta for co-organising this spectacular weekend.

4th Owners' Circle Congress 2026

The 2026 Owner's Circle Congress will take place in beautiful Denmark! In collaboration with the Danish association Historiske Huse, the agenda will be packed with heritage to discover.



EU-funded projects

MetaHeritage

MetaHeritage (Metaverse and Heritage Routes as Innovative Approaches for Networking, Capacity Building and Interregional Investments) is a **two-year project** aimed at strengthening regional networks' capacity to **generate business opportunities in the cultural sector** through two innovative approaches: the Metaverse and heritage routes.

Funded by the European Innovation Council and the Executive Agency for Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (EISMEA), it combines **cutting-edge technologies with cultural heritage** to create new business models and strengthen regional innovation ecosystems.

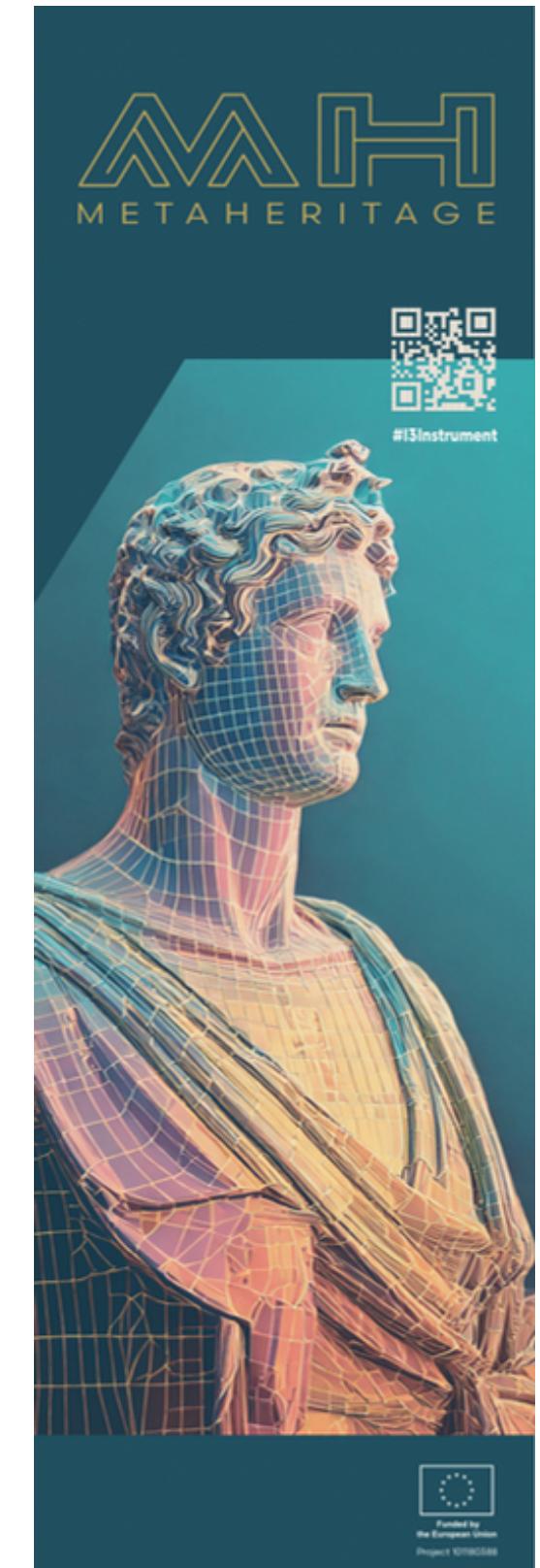
EHH's role is crafting said business cases for interregional innovation projects in tourism, developing replicable models, and identifying potential investors.

Clip-ComE

This project, bringing sustainability training to heritage managers, came to a close at the end of November 2025.

MERITA

The extremely successful MERITA project closed its first iteration in September 2025, having hosted 50 residencies in 28 historic houses. Additionally, three publications remain accessible, among them the **“Managing Historic Houses”** article authored by Martina Gueli of our Brussels office.



EU-funded projects

MERITAcubed is the second edition of the European platform MERITA, selected among the winners of the Creative Europe European Call 2024.

Aiming to promote emerging European chamber music artists, improve their visibility and circulation, and strengthen their sustainable relations with cultural heritage and audiences, **MERITAcubed will support 56 ensembles across Europe until 2029**, offering residencies, concerts, and opportunities for artistic and professional growth.

EHH is the partner in this project, led by Le Dimore del Quartetto, providing the historic locations for these residencies to be carried out.



General Assembly

From the 24th to the 25th of June, members and historic house owners from across Europe met in Brussels for our annual General Assembly. Participants enjoyed exclusive guided tours of private historic houses, including the enchanting Château de Grand-Bigard, where we gathered for a cocktail and a memorable networking dinner in a truly unique setting.

The following day, the General Assembly took place at the Representation of the Veneto Region in Brussels, where we had the opportunity to look back on last year's achievements and to discuss the goals ahead. Our big thanks to the Director of DG Culture, Creativity and Sports for his opening words.

Among the highlights of what was decided, associations in both Malta and Hungary became adherent members of EHH.

Special Thanks to the Pelgrims family for hosting our dinner at Château Grand Bigard, the Representation of the Veneto Region in Brussels, and our sponsors for the event: Retrace Agency, Vignoble du Château Fumal, Maison Loreril, Kotax, and Dorotheum.



Policy Dinner

Evening on the Future of Rural Tourism

On October 14th, together with our long-time partner Airbnb, we organised a dinner to share with relevant stakeholders and parties the role of travel and cultural heritage in strengthening rural communities.

The dinner conversation took place in a private historic house in the heart of Brussels and was attended by the leading figures in the field, including MEPs, members of Commissioners' cabinets and the European Council, Secretaries-General and representatives from key industry associations.

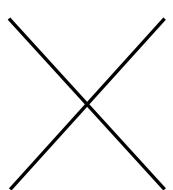
Quote from the evening

“Platforms like Airbnb have shown that technology can reconnect people with authentic heritage — helping visitors discover the hidden beauty of Europe’s villages, historic houses, and rural landscapes. Imagine if more tech companies used their innovation to support preservation, education, and responsible tourism — because **technology and heritage aren’t opposites, but expressions of the same human drive: to create, to endure, and to connect across time.**”

Carlos Romero Duplá
EHH Vice President



European
Historic
Houses



Communication Activities

40 years, 40 stories

2025 marked the 40th anniversary of our organisation! To celebrate this, we launched an ambitious interview campaign to showcase our members on our social media outlets. Almost **every week** since the end of February, a **new interview** was published on our website with testaments of how historic house custodians preserve heritage, embrace sustainability, and keep their estates vibrant for future generations. Find them all in full on our website under 'projects'!

The Christmas Card Collection

In December 2025, to spread the holiday cheer we made virtual holiday cards with submissions of festive pictures and handwritten greetings from owners in our community. Find them all on our Instagram highlight-reel or our website under projects!



