

# CONCLUSIONS OF THE XIV ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF THE UNESCO CREATIVE CITIES NETWORK

JULY 2022

We, the Secretariat and the members of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN), assembled in Santos, Brazil, for the Network's XIV Annual Conference.

We reiterate our appreciation to the Host City of Santos for its generosity and hospitality, as well as Brazil for its strong support and assistance in the preparation and organization of the event.

We thank each of the involved international, national and local staff for their tremendous work dedicated to the Annual Conference, as well as all the mayors, delegates and other stakeholders for their active participation in the event.

We reaffirm our strong commitment to serving UNESCO's mandate and principles, notably in fostering international cooperation and solidarity to achieve the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Goals.

We further align our actions with UNESCO's priorities to support and implement the Decade of Action in the framework of the 2030 Agenda, through reinforced international cooperation.

We actively promote the sharing of knowledge and good practices amongst Creative Cities and beyond, in response to global and local challenges and opportunities.

We champion a broader recognition of culture's contribution to the post-COVID-19 recovery, and the full integration of the cultural and creative industries in the future development of cities.

The XIV UCCN Annual Conference has thus agreed to the following:

In its capacity as a UNESCO flagship international platform for cooperation and innovation amongst cities, the UNESCO Creative Cities Network:

1. **Upholds** UNESCO's fundamental values of diversity, solidarity and multilateralism, all of which are fundamental for achieving sustainable development;
2. **Reaffirms** the paramount importance of culture and thus the necessity of protecting and promoting cultural heritage, cultural diversity and creative assets, notably in times of crisis, and of enabling cultural and creative sectors to contribute to recovery and revitalization processes;
3. **Affirms** the economic, social, and environmental potential of culture and creativity and their role as catalysts of inclusive and sustainable urban development;
4. **Highlights** cities' vital role as a global network in achieving sustainable development at the local, national, and international levels;
5. **Mobilizes** local decision-makers, notably mayors, who serve as key advocates and actors in urban development, to nurture their cities' membership as UNESCO Creative Cities through culture and creativity-driven local policies and action plans, as well as to strengthen Creative Cities' local, regional, and international outreach and impact;
6. **Strengthens** the alignment of its activities with UNESCO priority areas, namely Africa and Small Island Developing States (SIDS), technology and innovation (especially Artificial Intelligence), gender equality and youth engagement, climate resilience and action, international collaboration, and post-COVID-19 recovery;

7. **Develops** thematic initiatives and content in the areas where the Network and its member cities have a clear comparative advantage and unique role, including but not limited to UNESCO's priority areas, to accelerate UCCN's contribution to the international development agendas and forums;

8. **Reinforces** its endeavor to seek opportunities for intersectoral and crosscutting collaboration through events, exchange projects and joint initiatives across different creative fields;

9. **Underscores** the value of the Membership Monitoring Reports as an important source of knowledge, information and good practices, as well as a testimony to member cities' steadfast commitment to the UCCN Mission Statement, and noting that these reports should be further harnessed and promoted;

10. **Endorses** the rotation mechanism for the Coordination Group (CG), through which the CG members are eligible to serve for a maximum of two consecutive mandates of two years, starting as the Deputy Coordinator who then takes over the role of the Coordinator after the first two-year mandate. Echoing UNESCO's values and principles, this mechanism aims to strengthen geographical representativeness, increase cultural diversity, and ensure the continuity of the CG. For this purpose, an implementation plan will be developed through consultations within the Network, with a view to organizing a renewal of the CG during the 2023 Annual Conference;

11. **Commits** to contributing to building climate resilience and sustainability by further integrating environmental factors and considerations into the Network's main activities, such as the organization of its Annual Conference, as well as member cities' activities and initiatives;

12. **Advocates for** a more meaningful and insightful integration of culture and creativity in post-COVID-19 recovery policies and plans, through the increased sharing of experiences, knowledge and good practices;

13. **Recommends** the use of Voluntary Local Reviews and other international reporting and monitoring tools to demonstrate, monitor and improve work and

progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals at the local level, notably by demonstrating the essential contribution of culture and creativity;

14. **Recommends** active in-person participation in the Network's main events, in particular the Annual Conference; meanwhile encouraging a stronger digital engagement to further strengthen the inclusiveness and participation within the Network;

15. **Promotes** UNESCO's transversal approach to sustainable development at the city level, through enhanced synergies with the Organization's city centered or related programmes and networks, notably through the UNESCO Cities Platform (UCP);

16. **Encourages** the development of projects and initiatives within the Network, such as scholarships, residency programmes and collaborative creation projects, to provide more opportunities for all concerned, and explore the possibility of establishing a selection of the most outstanding UCCN initiatives; and

17. **Welcomes** the holding of the XV Annual Conference in the city of Istanbul in 2023 on the theme "Future-Proof Cities".