



Rolli Lab

A bottom-up approach to urban regeneration

Rolli Lab
call for ideas



GENOA



559,374



Cultural heritage
for sustainable development;
governance and financing



Challenge

Dating back to the 16th and 17th centuries, Rolli are Renaissance and Baroque palaces in the city centre that used to host state visits to the Republic of Genoa. Together with the adjacent streets called Strade Nuove (new streets), they form an ensemble listed UNESCO World Heritage site since 2006. As part of the 2020-2024 management plan of this UNESCO site, the municipality wanted to actively involve inhabitants in the conservation, enhancement and enjoyment of the Rolli and the historical centre.



Solution

The city of Genoa adopted an inclusive and sustainable approach to managing its urban heritage in a period still marked by sanitary restrictions linked to the Covid-19 pandemic. In February 2022, the municipality launched Rolli Lab, an open call for innovative ideas to enhance the value and public use of urban heritage in Genoa and improve the city's cultural life. The objective was to create a dynamic relationship between heritage and innovation as well as between the historic centre and the rest of the city by involving designers, entrepreneurs, start-ups, SMEs, residents and associations in the management, access and use of urban heritage.



How ?

1

An open call was published in February 2022 with four themes: Genoa Protection, about heritage conservation and monitoring; Genoa Promotes, about the promotion of the old city; Genoa Involves, to stimulate greater community involvement; and Genoa Welcomes, about visitor management and accessibility of cultural heritage.

2

54 applicants presented innovative ideas. In May 2022, ten finalists presented their projects in a public debate.

3

In October 2022, the evaluation board composed by the Ministry of Culture, the Italian National Commission for UNESCO, the Genoa City Council's Councilor for Cultural Policies, and the University of Genoa selected the best four proposals to receive funding (€5,000 each).

4

The selected projects propose:

- immersive audio experiences with the city and its palaces as main protagonists;
- a 3D printed replica of the city centre and the Rolli for educational, audience engagement and marketing purposes;
- a scratch cards treasure hunt taking visitors through heritage trails in the city;
- an innovative service to improve the conservation of the Rolli palaces, to facilitate monitoring of their condition and to raise awareness about the effects of climate change on historical buildings.

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Budget/Financing

€ 65,000

- The total cost of the Rolli Lab project was €65,000.
- €20,000 divided between the winning projects.
- €45,000 for design and development of the project.
- 61% of the funding came from the Italian Ministry of Culture (L.77/2006); 31% came from the Municipality of Genoa; 8% came from the Fondazione Santagata.



Management

- Rolli Lab is an initiative designed by the Municipality of Genoa - Economic Development Innovation Project Department, in partnership with the Fondazione Santagata for the Economy of Culture.
- The Fondazione Santagata had a prominent role in implementing the project.
- Other stakeholders are: Genoa Blue District; the UNESCO site "Genoa, le Strade Nuove and the system of the Palazzi Rolli"; and the Ministry of Culture.



Transferability

- Provide space for the next generation of professionals to put forward their ideas and give them a stage where they have opportunities to develop.
- Redirect the approach to heritage management by putting communities at the centre of strategies through creative tools that are straightforward in their conception and implementation. Community engagement should be a key aspect of heritage management.
- Evaluate the successes and failures of the participatory methods you have used to make the whole process more efficient.



Impact

- The initiative has raised awareness on the value of heritage for the cultural and socio-economic wellness of the city and will be repeated on an annual basis.
- The awarded start-ups and projects put forward innovative ideas that enhance the impact of the UNESCO designation on the cultural, social, and economic aspects of the city.
- The initiative has promoted theories, policies and practices for the protection and conservation of cultural and natural heritage in the context of sustainable development.
- Rolli Lab shows how the bottom-up management of cultural heritage can respond to a growing need for sustainability demanded by institutions, practitioners, and the public.



Links

- [Rolli Lab digital book](#) (in Italian)
- [Website](#)
- [Shortlisted projects and winners](#)
- [Text of the call](#) (in Italian)
- [Le Strade Nuove and the system of the Palazzi dei Rolli](#) on the UNESCO website



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