

Climate change and cultural heritage – new ways for the long-term and sustainable preservation of our tangible heritage

Panel

The effects of climate change are already apparent in many different areas including cultural heritage. Not only the basic structure of a building can be damaged by heavy rainfalls, storms, or heating periods. Cultural heritage assets which are stored indoors, such as altarpieces in churches or rich furnishing in historic houses, which are not established with climate control units, are strongly affected. Damage which is cumulatively caused by unfavourable climatic conditions like high temperatures or unfavourable relative humidity is often underestimated as we do not see changes immediately. Many questions still need to be answered to find strategies for the long-term protection of our cultural heritage in a sustainable way. The first step is to gather more information on the material behaviour, the second step is to use them for the development of passive or energy-efficient ways for a responsible conservation strategy. Another aspect is the question of how we can preserve and prepare our historic buildings. Which mitigation strategies are most effective? The preservation of historic gardens and parks is included in these thoughts. Here the effects of climate change have already been studied for a long time and monitoring methods might be transferred. The proposed panel will provide the opportunity to discuss experiences of handling climate change effects on cultural heritage buildings and parks as well as cultural heritage items stored inside historic buildings, uncertainty in preservation and strategies for resilience in an interdisciplinary manner.

Motivation

The applicants have already organised two conferences on climate change and cultural heritage. One focused on the effects of a changing indoor climate and was internationally oriented (<https://www.uni-bamberg.de/restaurierungswissenschaft/conference-on-cultural-heritage-and-climate-change/>), the other one aimed to bring together all national organisations (ICOMOS, German National Committee for heritage preservation, the association of the monument preservation offices in the federal states of Germany as well as the German Federal Environmental Foundation) for a general discussion on how to proceed with the challenge of climate change. Now we are looking for discussion with a broader audience trying to combine both attempts.

Target Audience

People using new technologies to monitor the effects of climate change on cultural assets or who are in charge of cultural heritage items already affected by climate change as well as ideas for implementing mitigation strategies.

We are still looking for another person for the panel.

Keywords

#climate change #cultural heritage #sustainability #climate targets #energy efficiency