

Closing Conference

**Preserving
the Past —
— Securing
the Future.**

Keynote and panel speaker



Mike Haynes - International Development Specialist

With 20+ years of experience in sustainable economic development, heritage management, destination planning and responsible tourism, Mike specialises in using tourism, cultural heritage and local economies to support inclusive, sustainable development. Working with governments, international organisations and the private sector across Europe and South East Asia, Mike has led international development and tourism projects across these regions, including work supported by organisations such as UNWTO, WWF and the European Union. His work focuses on bridging policy and practice to create environmentally sustainable, socially inclusive and economically resilient heritage destinations.

Panel Speakers



An Lavens, Director, BELvue Museum & Head of Programme Democracy, King Baudouin Foundation

An's work sits at the intersection of museums, citizenship and democracy, with a particular interest in how cultural institutions can connect history with the questions shaping society today. Under An's direction, BELvue (Belgium's museum of history and a Centre for Democracy), has placed particular emphasis on citizenship education for young people, participatory approaches to history, accessibility and more sustainable museum practice. She is particularly interested in how museums can translate sustainability from operational choices into a broader institutional approach, encompassing buildings, visitor experience, education and social responsibility.



Bruno Castro, Policy Officer (Tourism), Directorate-General for Mobility & Transport, European Commission

Bruno Castro is a Tourism Policy Officer in the European Commission's Directorate General for Transport and Mobility (DG.MOVE), based in Brussels. Born in Spain, Bruno obtained degrees in Philosophy, Anthropology and Political Sciences, plus a Master in European Studies. He has worked in EU institutions for 15 years, including diplomatic positions, international relations with the Americas, research programmes and Erasmus+. He joined the Tourism Unit in October 2024.



Nathalie Worthington, Director, Juno Beach Centre

Following 12 years at Caen Memorial, Nathalie has been Director of Canadian-owned Juno Beach Centre in Normandy since its creation in 2003. Since 2019, she has led the site's sustainable development strategy, coordinating stakeholders across sectors to implement an action plan for responsible tourism. She is currently overseeing a project to expand the museum and renature the site by 2028. Juno Beach Centre is a Case Study and partner of the Preserving the Past, Securing the Future project.

Moderators & Presenters



Emme Johnson, Project Manager, LRE Foundation

Having worked at the LRE Foundation since 2022, Emme works on projects connecting World War II history with sustainable tourism. A key initiative is the Liberation Route Europe hiking and cycling trails, a certified Cultural Route of the Council of Europe. She also manages the Foundation's project Preserving the Past, Securing the Future: A Sustainable Approach to Cultural and Remembrance Heritage. Emme holds a Master in Responsible Tourism Management.



Matthias Beyer, Managing Director, Mascontour

Matthias has worked for 20+ years as an international consultant, trainer and coach on sustainable and resilient solutions for the tourism industry. Under his leadership, Mascontour, partner of the 'Preserving the Past, Securing the Future' project, has successfully implemented over 200 projects on 5 continents in around 70 countries. He is also a lecturer at Bremen University of Applied Sciences for sustainable tourism development in emerging countries.



María Cruz, Tourism Consultant

María holds a Master's degree in Integral Development of Tourism Destinations and in World Heritage Studies. She has 8+ years of professional experience in Central America as a project coordinator for various rural tourism projects, university lecturer and administrator and sustainability officer. She has been part of the mascontour team since 2019 and is responsible for internal management, communication and sustainability. She also supports the team as a consultant for tourism projects in Europe and Latin America.

Partners & Initiators



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