



OFFICE OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

EXECUTIVE DIRECTIVE: Cultural Heritage Conservation Policy

Directive Number: TF-DIR-2026-002

Date of Issuance: May 18, 2026

Effective Date: June 1, 2026

1. PURPOSE & RATIONALE

In alignment with the Turathuna Foundation's commitment to institutional excellence, rigorous governance, and compliance with the standards required by our international partners and donors, the Board of Trustees has formally approved the **Cultural Heritage Conservation Policy**.

The implementation of this policy is essential to ensure that our operations remain transparent, ethically sound, and fully aligned with global best practices in cultural heritage preservation and humanitarian action.

2. MANDATORY COMPLIANCE

Pursuant to the authority vested in the Chairman of the Board of Trustees, and in accordance with the Foundation's bylaws, all personnel—including Board members, management, staff, volunteers, consultants, and implementing partners—are hereby directed to adhere strictly to the guidelines and procedures set forth in the attached policy.

3. IMPLEMENTATION & ENFORCEMENT

- **Effective Date:** This policy shall come into full force and effect starting **June 1, 2026**.
- **Responsibilities:** Department heads and Project Managers are responsible for the immediate dissemination of this policy to their respective teams and for conducting necessary training to ensure full understanding and operational alignment.
- **Compliance:** Failure to adhere to the provisions of this policy may result in disciplinary action, as outlined in the *Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct*.

4. REVIEW & UPDATES

This policy shall be subject to periodic review by the Board of Trustees to ensure its ongoing effectiveness in the face of evolving operational challenges. Any proposed amendments must be submitted to the Board for formal approval.

5. ATTACHMENTS

Attached to this directive is the full version of the **Cultural Heritage Conservation Policy**, which serves as the official operational guide for the Foundation.

BY ORDER OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES:



Lama Abboud

Chair of the Board of Trustees
Turathuna Foundation



Cc:

- Executive Director
- Finance Department
- HR Department
- Project Managers
- Central Policy Repository



EXECUTIVE DIRECTIVE: Cultural Heritage Conservation Policy

Directive Number: TF-DIR-2026-002

Date of Issuance: May 18, 2026

Effective Date: June 1, 2026

1. INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

The Turathuna Foundation recognizes that cultural heritage is a fundamental expression of human identity, memory, and resilience. Born from the urgent need to rescue the endangered heritage of Homs and Syria following years of conflict, the Foundation operates on the principle that preserving the past is essential for building a sustainable, peaceful future.

This Comprehensive Cultural Heritage Conservation Policy establishes the overarching principles, methodological standards, and ethical guidelines for all heritage interventions undertaken by the Turathuna Foundation. It ensures that all projects—from emergency first aid to long-term adaptive reuse—are scientifically rigorous, culturally sensitive, and internationally compliant.

2. ALIGNMENT WITH INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS

Our conservation methodology is strictly guided by recognized international frameworks, adapted to the local Syrian context. We adhere to the principles outlined in:

- **The Venice Charter (1964):** For the conservation and restoration of monuments and sites, emphasizing authenticity and the preservation of historical layering.
- **The Burra Charter (1999/2013):** Adopting a values-based approach that prioritizes understanding the cultural significance of a place before any intervention occurs.
- **UNESCO World Heritage Convention (1972):** Specifically regarding the protection of tangible cultural and natural heritage.
- **UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2003):** Ensuring that physical preservation is inextricably linked to the protection of associated living traditions, crafts, and memories.

3. CORE PRINCIPLES OF CONSERVATION

All Turathuna Foundation personnel, partners, and contractors must adhere strictly to the following core principles:

3.1. Do No Harm

The physical, historical, and cultural integrity of the heritage asset is paramount. No intervention should diminish the cultural significance of the site. We advocate for a cautious approach: doing as much as is necessary, but as little as possible.

3.2. Preservation of Authenticity

Restoration must not involve historical falsification or the creation of "fake" history. Any new additions required for structural stability or adaptive reuse must be distinguishable from the original fabric and bear a contemporary stamp, while remaining harmonious with the overall aesthetic.

3.3. Reversibility and Retrievability

Whenever technically feasible, modern interventions and materials applied to historic structures should be reversible, allowing them to be removed in the future without damaging the original historic fabric, should better conservation technologies become available.

4. TANGIBLE HERITAGE: METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

For physical interventions on built heritage, the Foundation mandates a rigorous, phased approach:

4.1. Assessment and Documentation

- No physical work shall commence without a comprehensive prior assessment.
- This includes historical research, architectural surveying, structural condition assessments, and photographic/photogrammetric documentation.
- All findings must be archived in the Foundation's digital and physical repositories to preserve the "memory of the place" before, during, and after intervention.

4.2. Emergency First Aid

- In post-disaster or post-conflict scenarios, immediate action will focus on stabilization, shoring, and protecting structures from further deterioration (e.g., weather damage or collapse), prioritizing public safety and the safeguarding of original materials (such as sorting and storing historical rubble for future reuse).

4.3. Traditional Materials and Techniques

- Restoration must utilize traditional, locally sourced materials (e.g., local basalt, limestone, traditional lime mortars) that are chemically and physically compatible with the original structure.
- The Foundation prioritizes the employment of local master craftsmen to ensure traditional building techniques are utilized and passed down to younger generations.

4.4. Adaptive Reuse

- We believe heritage must remain a living part of the city. We champion the sustainable, adaptive reuse of historic buildings.
- New uses must respect the cultural significance of the building, require minimal alteration to the historic fabric, and serve contemporary community.

5. INTEGRATION OF INTANGIBLE HERITAGE

The Turathuna Foundation recognizes that stones are silent without the people who give them meaning.

- **Oral Histories:** Physical conservation must be accompanied by the documentation of associated intangible heritage, such as memories, social practices, and historical narratives.
- **Craft Revival:** Conservation projects will act as training grounds to revive endangered traditional crafts (e.g., stonemasonry, traditional carpentry, glassblowing, and Aghabani embroidery), whenever it is feasible.

6. CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESILIENCE

Recognizing the escalating threat of climate change to global heritage:

- Conservation plans must include climate risk assessments to identify vulnerabilities to extreme weather, temperature fluctuations, and changing environmental conditions.
- Interventions should enhance the climate resilience of historic sites using traditional passive design principles and eco-friendly materials, minimizing the carbon footprint of the restoration process itself.

7. COMMUNITY-CENTRIC CONSERVATION

Heritage belongs to the community. The Foundation mandates a participatory approach:

- **Consultation:** Local residents, stakeholders, and traditional custodians must be consulted during the planning and decision-making phases of conservation projects.
- **Capacity Building:** Projects must include educational components to train local youth and women in heritage management and conservation skills, fostering local ownership and generating sustainable livelihoods.

8. IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING, AND REVIEW

- **Oversight:** The Board of Trustees and the Consulting Engineering Team are responsible for ensuring compliance with this policy on all field sites.
- **Quality Assurance:** Independent heritage experts may be invited to review major conservation methodologies prior to execution.
- **Review:** This policy is a living document and will be reviewed biennially by the Board of Trustees to ensure it remains aligned with evolving international standards and the specific needs of the Syrian recovery context.