

# Annual Report 2025

## One Year of Training and Cultural Impact



THE PLACE  
OF WONDERS

# THE PLACE OF WONDERS

## Introduction

For The Place of Wonders Foundation, 2025 represented a year of consolidation and growth, during which our activities continued to support the safeguarding of Italy's artisanal heritage while creating new training opportunities for future generations of talent. Operating across the three territories in which the Foundation is active, we strengthened our role as a cultural and social platform capable of generating real and measurable impact: through the dissemination of local excellence, artisanal training, and the creation of a virtuous ecosystem connecting local communities, young apprentices, master artisans, and the guests of our hotels.

At the same time, the Foundation continued to serve as a distinctive element of The Hospitality Experience's vision, contributing in a discreet yet strategic way to the promotion of more conscious and respectful tourism. Our initiatives encourage guests and visitors to engage authentically with places, to discover the crafts that define them, and to become active participants in their continuity through cultural experiences and concrete forms of support.

This document provides a summary of the activities carried out throughout the year, outlining both the objectives achieved and future development perspectives:

### 1. **Outreach and Promotion of Artisanal Excellence**

Cultural activities, events, collaborations, exhibitions and public initiatives dedicated to promoting traditional crafts and sharing the stories of our Wonders.

### 2. **Training programmes and scholarships**

Results of the programmes implemented across the three territories, newly activated scholarships, partnerships with schools and institutions, and the impact generated on young talents.

### 3. **The Foundation as a lever for reputation and conscious tourism within The Hospitality Experience**

Activities that have contributed to differentiating the guest experience, promoting a model of responsible hospitality, and strengthening the cultural identity of the Collection.

## 1. Outreach and Promotion of Artisanal Excellence

In 2025, the Foundation intensified its commitment to the dissemination and promotion of artisanal excellence across the three territories in which it operates, fostering initiatives aimed at sharing their cultural and social value and making them accessible to a wider audience. These activities created opportunities for dialogue and exchange between master artisans, the public, travellers and local communities, encouraging new forms of participation and awareness.

With a direct investment of €17,600, net of operating costs, the Foundation supported cultural and outreach initiatives designed to strengthen visibility and rootedness within the territories.

Fondazione The Place of Wonders E.T.S.\*

fondazione@theplaceofwonders.org- [www.theplaceofwonders.org](http://www.theplaceofwonders.org)  
rep. n. 26928- C. F. 97918360153.- Via Giovanni Boccaccio 4- 20123 Milano

# THE PLACE OF WONDERS

## Venice

### **Capsule Collection “Mano a Mano” – Second Edition**

The second edition of the Mano a Mano Capsule Collection consolidated the collaboration between Venetian master artisans and the Foundation, resulting in a series of limited-edition objects crafted using traditional techniques reinterpreted through a contemporary lens.

The official presentation at Londra Palace Venezia engaged the public, press and international guests, reinforcing the project’s positioning as a symbol of the authentic, handmade Venetian craft tradition.

### **“Mani d’Oro” Talk Series**

The Mani d’Oro series, held on a monthly basis, provided a dedicated space for sharing the stories of Venetian crafts and the journeys of our Wonders. Through public conversations, live demonstrations and first-hand testimonies, the programme brought citizens and hotel guests closer to the city’s cultural heritage, fostering an open dialogue on tradition, sustainability and the future of craftsmanship.

### **Exhibition at Venice Glass Week**

On the occasion of Venice Glass Week, the Foundation curated an exhibition dedicated to the young talents supported through its training scholarships. The exhibition received strong attention from the local community, glass professionals and international visitors.

The presence of both students and master artisans involved in the training programmes made the exhibition an important moment of visibility and restitution for the work carried out in Murano.

## Florence

### **Foundation Participation at The Unique Show (Monte Carlo)**

In collaboration with LAO – Le Arti Orafe Firenze, the Foundation took part in The Unique Show in Monte Carlo, bringing the excellence of Florentine artisanal jewellery to an international stage. The event provided a valuable opportunity to share the historical and cultural significance of this tradition and to highlight the importance of its transmission.

It also represented a meaningful milestone for the young artisans trained through our programmes, who had the opportunity to present their work within a prestigious international context.

### **“Friends of The Place of Wonders” Evening**

In Florence, the consolidation of the Foundation’s community of supporters continued. The Friends of The Place of Wonders evening was one of the most significant moments of the year, bringing together local representatives, patrons, international guests and several of our Wonders.

The event strengthened the sense of shared purpose around the Foundation’s mission and contributed to

# THE PLACE OF WONDERS

fundraising efforts dedicated to the 2026 training programmes.

## **Photography Exhibition “Materia: Origin and Becoming”**

The exhibition, created in collaboration with photographer Dario Garofalo and hosted at THE PLACE Firenze, offered a visual narrative exploring the relationship between material, gesture and savoir-faire.

Accompanied by a series of numbered prints available through donation, the exhibition amplified the visibility of the master artisans involved and served as an additional tool for sharing the cultural value of the crafts.

## **Umbria**

### **Demonstration Evenings with the Foundation’s Artisan Partners**

In Umbria, a series of demonstration evenings were organised at Borgo dei Conti Resort, involving selected artisans representing the excellence of the region.

Live demonstrations—from traditional weaving to wax and ceramic craftsmanship—allowed guests to engage directly with the making process, fostering a deeper understanding of techniques and the stories of local masters.

These events contributed to positioning Umbria as the third artisanal focus of the Foundation’s activities, highlighting a deeply authentic heritage that is often less widely known.

## **2. Training Programmes and Scholarships**

In 2025, the Foundation strengthened its commitment to supporting the training of new generations of artisans, reaffirming the central role of scholarships and training programmes as tools for knowledge transmission, craft continuity and tangible support for young talents pursuing a professional path within Italy’s artisanal tradition.

The year saw the renewal and expansion of partnerships with schools and master artisans in Florence and Venice, alongside the introduction of a new partnership in Umbria. Training activities stood out for the quality of their programmes and the meaningful impact generated on participants.

With a total of 16 scholarships and training pathways delivered in 2025, and a direct investment of €76,100 fully allocated to training activities (net of operating costs), we are particularly proud of the dedication and talent of our students. We accompany them at every stage of their journey—from education to hands-on practice—facilitating internships, apprenticeships and professional opportunities that support a more effective and conscious entry into the world of work.

*“After art high school I had to leave university to help at home, but my ambition to become a lace-maker in Burano or Venice never left me. I couldn’t miss this opportunity.”*

Emma Passarella, Lace-making Scholarship Recipient

# THE PLACE OF WONDERS

*"Winning the scholarship was an immense joy—it was a true springboard. The programme was thorough and comprehensive. I immediately opened my VAT position and established important collaborations."*

Veronica Paier, Lampworked Glass Scholarship Recipient

*"The experience in Murano was fundamental. I grew and understood what I want to do. It's not easy to imagine establishing myself as an artisan in Venice, but even selling my creations in a shared space would be wonderful."*

- Emma Calce, Lampworked Glass Scholarship Recipient

*"The Place of Wonders Foundation, which funded my scholarship, allowed me to participate in one of the most important jewellery exhibitions in the world, The Unique Show in Monte Carlo—an experience I would describe as incredible. The connection with Fondazione Cologni and the opportunity to join their programme Una scuola. Un lavoro. is something I am deeply grateful for."*

- Iheb Hajmabrouk, LAO Goldsmith School Scholarship Recipient

### **3. The Foundation as a Lever for Reputation and Conscious Tourism within The Hospitality Experience**

In 2025, The Place of Wonders Foundation consolidated its role as an active cultural actor within the territories in which it operates, developing an approach that connects artisanal heritage, local communities and high-end tourism. Through training programmes, long-term collaborations with master artisans and a curated calendar of cultural activities, the Foundation fostered a direct dialogue between knowledge, places and people, contributing to the conscious transmission of Italian craftsmanship.

These initiatives generated significant impact across the destinations involved, enhancing often under-represented crafts and strengthening the local social fabric. The encounter between artisans, young talents and an international audience attentive to quality and authenticity created new opportunities for exchange, recognition and cultural continuity, embedding artisanal practices within a contemporary and accessible narrative.

This approach has attracted growing attention from institutional, cultural and international media partners, who recognise the Foundation as an authoritative voice on craftsmanship, training and destination enhancement through conscious tourism. Media coverage throughout 2025 reflects this trajectory, reinforcing the Foundation's positioning as a point of reference for the safeguarding and transmission of Italy's artisanal heritage, in constant dialogue with territories, communities and the world of high-end hospitality.

Fondazione The Place of Wonders E.T.S.\*

[fondazione@theplaceofwonders.org](mailto:fondazione@theplaceofwonders.org) - [www.theplaceofwonders.org](http://www.theplaceofwonders.org)

rep. n. 26928- C. F. 97918360153.- Via Giovanni Boccaccio 4- 20123 Milano

# THE PLACE OF WONDERS

## Press Review 2025

[The Telegraph – 11.01.2025 – Kiki Deere – «The 30 Greatest Holidays in Italy for 2025»](#)

[Traveller – 17.01.2025 – Mary Cate McMillon – «How to spend 5 unforgettable days in Florence and Tuscan wine country»](#)

[Harper's Bazaar – 22.03.2025 – Micol Passariello – «I grandi hotel sorprendono con esperienze esclusive»](#)

[Centurion – The Craft Issue – 01.04.2025 – American Express – «Italie: The Place of Wonders»](#)

[Il Sole 24 Ore – 21.05.2025 – Andrea Bettini – «Michela Canzi Babini: La bellezza che si tramanda»](#)

[Corriere della Sera – 30.07.2025 – Florinda Cordella – «Con il sostegno dei privati, Venezia cerca di salvare il suo artigianato d'eccellenza, che rischia di affondare come la città»](#)

[Condé Nast Traveller – 04.08.2025 – Lucrezia Worthington – «The Best Things to Do in Italy»](#)

[Luxe Beat Magazine – 28.08.2025 – Kevin Pilley – «Italy: The Place of Wonders»](#)

[Natural Style – 28.08.2025 – Ilaria De Bartolomeis – «Diamo un nuovo futuro agli artigiani che hanno fatto la storia di borghi e città»](#)

[Robb Report – 09.09.2025 – Vera Cristiani – «Questa storica fonderia è l'ultima del suo genere rimasta a Venezia»](#)

[Galerie – 22.09.2025 – Caroline Roux – «At Venice Glass Week, A Near-Extinct Craft Is Celebrated»](#)

[Vanity Fair – 25.09.2025 – Laura Pacelli – «The Place of Wonders, Tour alla scoperta degli artigiani delle meraviglie»](#)

[Italo Magazine – 02.12.2025 – Paola Milli – «The Place of Wonders – Le Best Practices che migliorano il mondo»](#)

[La Nuova – 07.12.2025 – Costanza Francesconi – «Tre nuove custodi per merletto e perle: l'eredità di venezia nelle nostre mani»](#)

# THE PLACE OF WONDERS

## **Conclusions**

The activities and results achieved in 2025 were made possible thanks to the shared commitment of all the individuals and organisations who believe in the mission of The Place of Wonders Foundation. Our work is grounded in the concrete support of the founding partner, the ongoing contribution of the Collection's hotels, and the growing community of supporters who recognise themselves in the values represented by the Foundation.

A special thank you goes to all those who, through their expertise, operational support and daily dedication, contributed to the development of the Foundation's projects. Particular thanks to Simona Aiello, who officially joined the team in 2025 and quickly became a key presence in coordinating and managing activities.

The Foundation embodies the principles that have always guided The Hospitality Experience: care for the territory, respect for cultural heritage, responsibility towards communities and a distinctive model of hospitality. The Foundation's statute formalises values that the General Managers have practiced naturally and consistently for years.

We look to 2026 with a strong sense of responsibility, enthusiasm and the awareness that only together can we ensure continuity and a future for Italy's artisanal crafts.