THE PLACE
OF WONDERS

General Introduction

Founded in 2022, *The Place of Wonders Foundation* is dedicated to preserving, promoting, and supporting traditional Italian craftsmanship, with a special focus on the artisanal heritage of Florence, Venice and Umbria region. The foundation aims to enrich cultural heritage through educational initiatives, support for local artisans, and creating opportunities for young talents. Its activities are structured around three main pillars:

1. **Preservation of Italian Craftsmanship and Ancient Traditions**
   The foundation is committed to safeguarding and passing on Italian craftsmanship, an essential part of the country's cultural heritage. The goal is to keep these traditions vibrant, countering the effects of globalization and celebrating the uniqueness of handcrafted work, while fostering a new generation of skilled artisans.
2. **Supporting Local Communities Through Training and Scholarship Programs**
   The foundation invests in young generations by offering scholarships for various artisanal training programs. These initiatives enable young people to pursue professional careers in craftsmanship, aiming to strengthen local communities and create new employment opportunities.
3. **Promoting Mindful and Cultural Tourism**
   The foundation fosters an appreciation of artisanal culture among tourists, offering authentic experiences that highlight the value of fine craftsmanship. Through a network of extraordinary local artisans, visitors can discover hidden gems and understand the importance of quality work, contributing to more responsible and sustainable tourism. Guests are also invited to support our scholarship program through donations to a dedicated fund, providing a meaningful way to give back to the community.

Year 2022

In its first year, the foundation initiated its mission to support traditional arts through collaborations, scholarships, and the promotion of Florentine craftsmanship.

Collaboration with the Florentine School of Art and Goldsmithing (LAO)

- **3 Scholarships:** The foundation established an initial partnership with the Florentine school Le Arti Orafe (LAO), covering 50% of the scholarship costs for three outstanding students:
    - Three-Year Goldsmithing Course, First Year (€6,000).
    - Stone Setting Course (€6,000).
    - Stone Setting and Jewelry Engraving Course (€7,250).

    Total Allocated: €19,250.

Support for Florentine Artisans: The foundation also promoted local craftsmanship by forming partnerships with six Florentine artisans, offering them visibility through our communication channels and organizing private visits to their workshops for guests of *THE PLACE Firenze*.

Year 2023

In its second year, the foundation expanded its activities in both Florence and Venice, continuing its commitment to education and introducing new cultural initiatives.

Florence - Renewal of Partnership with LAO

- **4 Scholarships:** The collaboration with *L'Arte Orafe* was renewed under the same financial terms, and new scholarships were awarded:
    - Three-Year Goldsmithing Course, Second Year (€6,000).
    - Three-Year Goldsmithing Course, First Year (€6,000).
    - Three-Year Goldsmithing Course, First Year (€6,000).
    - Stone Setting and Jewelry Engraving Course (€7,250).

    Total Allocated: €25,250.

Venice - Launch of the "Mano a Mano" Project
The foundation launched a new project in Venice dedicated to the art of glass beadmaking, recognized by UNESCO as an intangible cultural heritage. A call for four scholarships for the 200-hour advanced training course was published, designed entirely by the foundation in collaboration with Master Artisans Alessia Fuga and Marisa Convento.

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Promotion of Venetian Artisans: The foundation began collaborations with five Venetian artisans who crafted a *Capsule Collection* themed around mindful travel, displayed at the Londra Palace Venezia. This initiative encourages visitors to make donations and become ambassadors of Venetian craftsmanship.

Year 2024

In its third year, the foundation further strengthened its commitment to education and the promotion of craftsmanship by launching new projects to broaden its impact.

Florence – 6 Scholarships with LAO
The foundation maintained its partnership with LAO, offering six new scholarships:

- Third Year of the Three-Year Goldsmithing Course (€6,500).
- Second Year of the Three-Year Goldsmithing Course (€6,000).
- Second Year of the Three-Year Goldsmithing Course (€6,000).
- Second Year of the Three-Year Goldsmithing Course (€6,000).
- Jewelry Design Course (€7,000).
- Stone Setting and Jewelry Engraving Course (€8,750).

Total Allocated: €39,750.

Support for Florentine Artisans: The foundation expanded its network, creating new partnerships with local artisans to build a stronger, wider collaborative network. Through our Florentine ambassador, *THE PLACE Firenze*, we organize private visits to artisan workshops to promote local culture and foster more sustainable tourism.

Venice - Developments in the "Mano a Mano" Project:

- **4 Scholarships:** Four scholarships were awarded for the "Advanced Course in Venetian Glass Bead Making."

  Total Allocated: €15,320.

- In September, the foundation organized an exhibition showcasing the works created by the students during the *"On the Occasion of Homo Faber"* event, providing them with visibility and professional contacts.

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New Initiatives:

Venice - The second edition of the "Mano a Mano" project was launched, selecting five new artisan partners and planning a new *Capsule Collection* to be completed by March 2025. Additionally, a new scholarship announcement for the second edition of the "Venetian Glass Bead Making Course" (€15,000 allocated for 2025) and a partnership with Martina Vidal were announced, aimed at supporting the ancient art of Burano lace-making and training two new lace artisans to preserve this traditional craft (€10,000 allocated).

Umbria - Collaboration with the Museo Atelier Giuditta Brozzetti: An important new initiative is the collaboration with the Museo Atelier Giuditta Brozzetti, located in Perugia, to preserve the Umbrian textile tradition, particularly linked to the "Tovaglie Perugine" typical of the medieval and Renaissance periods. Together with Marta Cucchia, the foundation is launching a training program for four young weavers within the atelier, aiming to pass on this historic craft to new generations. Guests at Borgo dei Conti are offered the opportunity to visit the atelier, creating a direct connection with Umbrian artisanal heritage.

Conclusion

Since its inception in 2022, *The Place of Wonders Foundation* has demonstrated a growing commitment to preserving and promoting traditional Italian craftsmanship through educational initiatives and partnerships with local artisans. The foundation stands out for its ability to combine financial support with cultural promotion, making a meaningful contribution to the future of these ancient arts and creating new opportunities for young generations.

Michela Canzi Blanc

Director

The Place Of Wonders